Railroading and Labor Migration

Class and Ethnicity in Expanding Capitalism in Northern Minnesota, the 1880s to the mid 1920s
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Jimmy Engren

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Preface

Working on this book has been incredibly stimulating, but in some sense, despite the many hours I have dedicated the manuscript, I feel that it is as much the product of a collective achievement as it is the fruits of my own work. Therefore, thanks are due. Financially I have received help from Vetenskapsrådet who allowed me the opportunity to do this investigation in the first place. I would also like to thank STINT for providing me an opportunity to spend one semester as a visiting scholar at the University of Iowa. The seminar at the University of Växjö in its various incarnations has greatly contributed to my work. To some degree all colleagues in Växjö has been involved, but especially Martin Estvall who has provided support when needed and who has become a good friend during the past years. Thank you Martin. I would also like to thank Lars Hansson and Malin Thor with whom I was involved in various teaching assignments at the University of Växjö. I learned a lot. I owe Marion Leffler thanks for our discussions on theory and for her work on hegemony that inspired me to this perspective. Thank you Andreas Bogatic for being a good friend.

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Without the staff at the various archives I have visited I would have gotten nowhere. Worth special mention is Debbie Miller who not only provided me with a wide range of possible sources connected with the Minnesota context, but also kindly invited me to her home during our stays in Minnesota. I would also like to thank the staff at the Emigrantinstitutet in Växjö, particularly its former director, Professor Ulf Beijbom.

Richard Hudelson was my first encounter with a genuine Minnesotan. Professor Hudelson generously shared his huge knowledge on local labor history and pro-
vided interesting perspectives on the Northern Minnesota working class. I would also like to thank Herbert Widell of Fond du Lac, Minnesota who kindly agreed on getting interviewed and generously shared his reminiscences from his West-Duluth childhood.

I would like to thank my second advisor Professor Shel Stromquist. Professor Stromquist generously shared his huge knowledge on American labor history and was an excellent mentor and discussion partner during my stay at the University of Iowa during the spring of 2006. He read a number of different drafts of the complete manuscript and helped me find the basic concepts for the two final chapters. I also owe thanks to Professor Stromquist and his wife Ann for helping me and my family with things big and small during our stay in Iowa City in 2006.

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To all the others who have inspired, helped, checked language and provided material, Thank You all of you, and as always, I take full responsibility for all errors and flaws in this book.

Jimmy Engren
Växjö, July 2007
1. Introduction

In the spring of 1910, 17-year-old Emil Andersson from Näs, a little village in Värmland, Sweden, chose to seek his fortune in the United States. He was going to see his brother Johan, who had moved there a couple of years earlier. His journey began when his siblings rowed him across Blom Lake to Kurn. From there he walked to Lennartsfors, where he was able to catch a train for Gothenburg. He reached New York on May 12, 1910. After passing the physical examination at Ellis Island and presenting the 100 Swedish kronor he had with him to the immigration officer, he was allowed access to the United States. A few days later he took a train to Two Harbors, a small town in the northeastern corner of Minnesota where his brother lived. According to Emil, it was the thirst for adventure and the chance to earn money that prompted him to make the trip.

During the first few summers (1910-1913) Emil, together with hundreds of others, worked on the iron ore docks in Two Harbors unloading the ore cars that came from the mines on the Vermillion range. The work was hard and many times dangerous as the ore tended to stick to the ore cars and had to be wrung loose by crowbars or steamed loose with steam hoses during the cold autumn and spring days when the frozen ore stuck to the cars. Emil’s job on the ore dock involved getting the ore down through pockets in the dock and down into boats waiting to take the ore via the Great Lakes to the steel mills of Pittsburgh and other Eastern industrial centers. Emil worked the dock for four seasons from early May to the closing of season in late autumn, and, like many of the men employed by Emil’s employer, the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, (D&IR) he was laid off during the winter months.

There seems to have been a shortage of work during the wintertime in the area, and Emil, like many others in his situation, became unemployed. However, one winter he was lucky and got work in the forest for a couple of months. Another winter he spent in Duluth. The diary does not tell us what he was doing there but he probably made his living as a casual laborer in that city. From 1914 to 1917 Emil got a steadier job in “factories that belonged to the railroad”. What he did there is not stated but he was happy with the work, “It was pleasant work, and we didn’t have to freeze when it was winter”. It seems to have been a job for which he gladly traded the toil at the docks.

In 1917, as the war was in full swing, the ground was burning under Emil’s feet. He had applied for citizenship when he was able to do so after three years. While waiting for the authorities to process the application and reaching the time limit he came to the conclusion that he had better not be an American citizen if the US should enter the war, “One Thursday evening I read in the paper that the Presi-

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dent had submitted a bill for passage saying that everyone who had applied for citizenship be granted it without delay.” On that Friday Emil did not go to work, but instead went out and bought a ticket to sail for Sweden on the steamer *Oskar II*. Emil’s stay in America lasted seven years and he went home to Sweden at the age of 25.

Emil’s fate as an immigrant in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century is in no way unique, as he was but one of 1.25 million who left Sweden to find land or work during the mass migration from that country. Emil shares his history with a large portion of the Swedish immigrants that made up construction gangs in Chicago, Minneapolis, Rockford, Duluth and other American cities. The Swedes were employed in many different types of jobs, all over the United States, from Pennsylvania to Spokane. The recollections and diary notes of Emil put down in words the experiences shared by many immigrants during this stage of the emigration from Europe to America. He describes an unstable labor market situation where layoffs were common. Periodic unemployment went with being unskilled immigrant labor with limited skills in English. It shows how the labor market situation and company policies for hiring had an impact on the life of Emil and other immigrant workers during this stage in the capitalist development in the United States.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the interaction between an established Anglo-American society and non-Anglo immigrants, when men like Emil made up the backbone in the “army of portable muscles” that built and ran much of American industry in the late 19th and early 20th century. The questions in this thesis concern the work force on one American railroad, and the position of immigrants in a structure that grew out of the spreading of industrial capitalism to parts of the American continent previously untouched by American institutions. My main concern is the process whereby a new ethnic and social hierarchy emerges and develops based on capitalist exploitation in land previously inhabited by Native Americans. Focus will be on the Swedish immigrant workers and their children on the railroad company the *Duluth & Iron Range Railroad* (D&IR) and in the railroad town of Two Harbors, Minnesota where workers gradually settled, experienced labor market competition and change, became citizens and in time, as they became increasingly socially and culturally adapted to their new context, came to play a role in the community and its political and cultural life. The key here is to discuss what role an American company had in the construction not only of the workers’ day at work, but also in their leisure time and worker’s own efforts at constructing an everyday culture as a response to the structures imposed by industrial capitalism.

I will try to contextualize my study by discussing the state of Minnesota as part of a distinct political economy and its specific development with regard to politics, economics, labor relations and ethnic composition during the period 1880 to the 1920s. This study will therefore deal with two separate fields of historical research. First, it will contribute to the general knowledge of American labor and its relation to American capital in a changing political economy. Second, it will
set focus on Swedish immigrants as part of the American working class and therefore also make a contribution to Swedish-American history by delving further into the class problem in relation to ethnic diversity.

The theoretical purpose is to discuss the role of a dominant ethnic group and a dominant class and their relation to immigrant labor in a multi-ethnic class society. To a large extent, this study will therefore deal with both structural issues and broad ideological and political dimensions of society and the relationship between ideological and material structures and historical actors based on class and ethnicity. The most important actors in this study are the Swedish immigrants and their children on the one hand and the Anglo-American bourgeoisie on the other. It will therefore be necessary to analyze both the structure of labor market stratification, division of labor and politics and culture as expressed in workers’ everyday life. The former offers a structural perspective on the Swedish working class immigrant experience while the latter gives an opportunity to connect cultural and ethnic stratification to social and cultural processes of class formation and assimilation.
2. Previous Research and Points of Departure

Previous research on the Swedish-Americans is vast and contains literally thousands of books and articles on the subject of Swedish migration to the United States and descriptions of Swedish life in America.\(^2\) Here I will present major trends in the research of the last few decades, and out of this presentation I will formulate my own points of departure for the study.

Previous research can thematically and temporally be divided into four different traditions. The first, intimately linked to Swedish-American identity formation, created the field and a body of literature from the beginning of the 1900s. This research was not academic in nature but was carried out by Swedish-American intellectuals such as priests and journalists. This tradition laid claim to describing a Swedish-American culture but became in itself an important part of the Swedish-American project of identity building.

The interest in the history of the Swedish-Americans was partly channeled through historical societies with an ethnic component, which were started by intellectuals in Swedish-America. The most important group in this respect consisted of Protestant clergy and parts of the secularized city-dwelling petty bourgeoisie. Byron Nordstrom has analyzed the Swedish-American writing of history at the time and has claimed that the research produced by the historical societies during the period 1905-1932 was characterized by a narrow focus, repetitive themes, and a conservative interpretation of historical events.\(^3\) This tradition of research focused on cultural and religious aspects of the Swedish experience in the United States and Swedish contributions to the new host society, while the large mass of immigrants and the situation facing them did not become the focus of attention to the same degree.\(^4\)

\(^2\) It is impossible to give a full account of this body of research here. Instead, the extensive bibliographies that have been compiled are recommended for a more thorough orientation. The most comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography is the Web-based "Svensk Amerikansk bibliografi" (http://websok.libris.kb.se/websearch/form?type=swam).


Thus, the purpose of these historical accounts was first and foremost to "create" an "official" Swedish-American history that mirrored the experiences made by the "ethnic leadership" and the need of this group for an ethnic history to legitimize its position of dominance within the ethnic group. Another role that a Swedish-American history of this kind could play was to legitimize the group in the eyes of the larger society dominated by Anglo-Americans. Ulf Beijbom claims that many of the early works suffer from a lack of objectivity and often had a strengthening of the ethnic identity in mind.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion is that research on Swedish life in America at this time was aimed to contribute to the Swedish-American group identity formulated by the secularized and religious intellectuals who dominated the ethnic scene. This perspective has had some influence on later research by creating long-lived stereotypes of the easily assimilated Swedes in America. One example is the image of the successful Swedish immigrant in the United States that, according to historian Rudolph Vecoli, has been simplified to "a saga of struggle and success". Swedish-American history is, however, not unique in displaying a certain amount of convenient amnesia in relation to the immigrant experience and in using certain themes when building an ethnic identity in the new environment.

The focus on the experience of the early immigrant period of the mid 1800s, the so-called pioneer period, is also prevalent in this tradition. The rural pioneer immigrants and religious ethnic leaders have played important roles, as two overarching themes have served as explanations to Swedish behavior in America. First, the rural background of the Swedish immigrants is regarded as important for Swedish life in the new country. Secondly, there is the importance attached to the Protestant heritage from the state church of Sweden. The result of the marriage of these two factors created an image of the Swedes as a group characterized by rural conservatism.

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9 For one example on this discussion see, Ander Fritiof O. *T.N. Hasselquist: the Career and Influence of a Swedish-American Clergyman, Journalist and Educator*. pp.3-15. See also Capps, Herbert Finis. *From Isolationism to Involvement. The Swedish Immigrant Press in America*. especially pages 10-14. The image has survived in Capps’ work on the Swedish-American press. Capps has claimed that the conservative trait is characteristic of the Swedish-American identity to the end of WW2.
This research tradition has overemphasized rural conservatism as an ideology and guideline for the entire Swedish-American group, making alternative ideas, behavior and political standpoints among Swedish-Americans practically invisible. In this way the Swedish-American group as a whole has been written into a specific social group, carrying its norms and values: the petty bourgeoisie.

The tradition of identity construction lost in strength during the 1930s, when it was replaced by an academic tradition of research that had ambitions to write “objective historical accounts” of the history of Swedish emigration. Academic historians of Swedish descent were leading figures in this tradition, and many of them were children of immigrants. One of the pioneers in this academic tradition was George M Stephenson. 10 Under his guidance the writing of Swedish-American history took on a more academic approach, but much of the filiopietistic heritage from the older period still remained as regards the themes dealt with, but also as regards the identity issue at stake. Amandus Johnson, another professional historian of Swedish-American descent, dedicated his historical writing to “leading figures among the Swedish-Americans and great moments for the Swedes in America”.11 The work of Amandus Johnson can be related to his non-academic precursors, in that the motives and ideas from this tradition live on in his writing.

Another effort in the academic tradition is the work of the Swedish scholar Helge Nelson. Nelson, a geographer by profession, who had been active in *Emigrationsutredningen* as early as the 1910s,12 made an overview of the Swedes in America state by state and presented basic facts regarding settlement, motives of emigration and occupational statistics.13 His work is important, but it is, to some extent, influenced by the earlier, biased recollections of the Swedish experience in the United States, and also perhaps by the nationalistic motives that are prominent in *Emigrationsutredningen*. The text has several stereotypical images of Swedes who made it in the United States. Some examples: “[T]he Swedes have a good reputation as farmers”, "the Swedes are Excellent axe men” 14. It is thus possible to see the heritage of the older tradition in these pioneering works of academic writing. The tradition waned after the 1950s. This second generation of research also included the reconstructed Swedish-American Historical Society that was started anew in the 1950s. The society’s vision was to present research on the ethnic group that was both academic and layman in character through its mouthpiece, *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*. Thus, the contributions in the journal display a broader focus and a will, especially evident from the

10 Stephenson, George M. *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*.
11 Beijbom, Ulf. *Clio i Svenska Amerika* pp.30-32.
12 Sundbärg, Gustav. *Emigrationsutredningen*. 1907-1914. This was a politically initiated investigation of the emigration from Sweden, and the first try to make an assessment of the effects and gather facts about the emigration to the American continent. It might be regarded as a forerunner of the academic research produced in the tradition of Nelson and others.
1960s and onward, to write the history of social strata other than the Swedish-American establishment.

A third tradition manifested itself in a large research project at Uppsala University, which was active during a large part of the 1960s and 1970s. The project has an important place in the historiography of Swedish-America. In line with contemporary trends in the United States, it started to revise the one-dimensional and rather narrow image displayed in previous research. It largely worked with statistical and quantitative methods. Most of the work concerned the dynamics of migration, but a few dissertations dealt with the life of Swedish immigrants in America.\textsuperscript{15} Deeper knowledge of settlement patterns, forward migration in America, better occupational statistics and a more nuanced image of Swedish-American organizational life were results of the project.\textsuperscript{16} Other subjects of analysis were the Swedish ethnic group and the perseverance of Swedish cultural traits in American society as the circumstances changed for ethnic identification.\textsuperscript{17} The work of the project in Uppsala was summarized Harald Runblom and Hans Norman in \textit{From Sweden to America}.\textsuperscript{18}

American efforts at revising the writing of Swedish-American history took a similar turn in the 1960s and 1970s. The method was, as in contemporary Swedish research on the subject, generally quantitative, but some of the work dealt with cultural and political perspectives on the Swedish-American experience. In 1977 a report from a conference on Swedish-American history, \textit{Perspectives on Swedish Immigration}, was published. Voting patterns of the Swedes in Minne-

\textsuperscript{15} Uppsalaprojektet (the Uppsala project) was inspired by the ambitions prevalent in the subject of history during the 1960s and 1970s to write social history with the emphasis on quantitative analysis. Another source of inspiration was Frank Thistletwaite, who in 1962 directed an appeal to European scholars to write on migration movements from Europe to America and not leave American scholars alone on the field. He developed a more euro-centric perspective on immigration to the new world. See Thistletwaite, Frank. \textit{Migration from Europe overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries}, pp.17-49.

\textsuperscript{16} Beijbom, Ulf. \textit{Swedes in Chicago}. For a critique see Olson, Anita R.. \textit{Swedish Chicago}.

\textsuperscript{17} Lindmark, Sture. \textit{Swedish-America 1914- 1932. Studies in Ethnicity with Emphasis on Illinois and Minnesota}; Lindmark discusses a range of issues of Swedish culture, and on a general level, the pressure applied from American authorities on the Swedish group. Norman, Hans. \textit{Från Bergslagen till Nordamerika}; Norman uses the American census to develop an overview of the occupations held by Swedish emigrants from Örebro län, Sweden. Among others within the project that have studied Swedish life in the United States is Hallert, Kerstin. \textit{Svenska bosättningar i Minnesota}. Uppsala, 1966. Another important contribution in the same tradition is Östergren, Robert C.. \textit{A Community Transplanted}, which shows the connection between sending and receiving society in a study of chain migration from Rättvik, Dalarna, Sweden to Isanti County, Minnesota. He makes an important contribution to our knowledge of social networks and the continuity of Swedish settlements in rural areas in the United States.

\textsuperscript{18} Runblom, Harald; Norman, Hans (ed.). \textit{From Sweden to America. A history of the Migration}; a collective work of the Uppsala migration research project. For an indication on the type of research carried out in Sweden during the 1960s and 1970s, see also Odén, Birgitta. \textit{Emigration från Nor- den till Nordamerika under 1800-talet}. Pp. 261-277. Her econometric project was, like the project in Uppsala, primarily interested in migration movements, and not to the same extent in other aspects of migration (such as cultural encounters). For an example of the work done in Lund during this period see: Wirén, Agnes. \textit{Uppbrott från Örtagård. Utvandringen från Blekinge t.o.m. 1870}. 17
sota, the ethnic press in that state, and quantitative overviews of Swedish settlements in the Twin Cities were important contributions in this tradition.19

This quantitatively dominated research qualified much of the narrower ethnocentric research of previous decades in trying to discuss new problems and aiming for a generally broader approach to Swedish-American history. In this way, new groups outside the social, religious and cultural establishment in Swedish-America became objects of study.20

In recent decades, the research on Swedish-America followed the general trend within the discipline of history and became more qualitative in nature. The interest in cultural history that was displayed by some of the researchers with the project in Uppsala had increased and found expression in studies on language and ethnic identity. A focus on Swedish American clubs, associations, education, identity formation and an increased focus on groups that had not been studied to any larger extent before, like workers and women, characterized this new work.21 Characteristic of this fourth tradition of research was that the theoretical perspectives are more explicit, that ethnicity and identity were analyzed in a way not done previously, and that there was a tendency to put into context the Swedish-American experience through inter-ethnic studies, where relations to other ethnic groups on different levels are analyzed.22 This field is a relative latecomer in Swedish-American studies, a fact that was discussed by Arnold Barton in 1995. Barton sees a trend towards more inter-ethnic studies during the 1990s. The lack of studies in this field is still marked. The first real attempt at it was the research project, *Etniska relationer i nordamerikanska städer* (Ethnic Relations in North American Cities) led by Harald Runblom at Uppsala University, which made an effort in this direction during the second half of the 1980s.23 Despite the interest-

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22 Two research projects, one in Lund and one in Uppsala aimed at describing aspects of inter-ethnic relations. The project in Uppsala: "Etniska relationer i nordamerikanska städer", was led by Harald Runblom. The project in Lund, "Encounters with strangers", was led by Göran Rystad. For a discussion see Barton, Arnold. *Where have the Scandinavian Americanists been?*, pp.46-55.

ing results from these studies, further research is necessary to acquire a deeper knowledge of the complicated relationship between the Swedish-Americans and other ethnic groups on different analytical levels. Especially interesting is the relationship between the dominant ethnic group in the United States, the Anglo-American, and the Swedish immigrants.

With the question of identity at the forefront, important contributions in recent years have been added to the research on Swedish-America.24 From three dissertations produced during the 1990s, it is possible to sketch three separate spheres of identity formation based on ideological, economic and social differences. These projects on Swedishness in America illustrate the variation and the complexity of ethnic identity. Their importance lies in their different interpretations of Swedishness in America. This research has been carried through by Dag Blanck, who has done work on the Augustana Synod, Anna Williams, who discusses Swedish identity as formulated in a Swedish-American secular newspaper, Svenska Amerikanaren, and Per Nordahl, who has described a third identity with radical overtones in Chicago.25 The spheres were of course ideal typical constructs, and it is dangerous to overstress the homogeneity within these groups, especially as earlier research has shown how the spheres sometimes overlapped.26

In the work on the Augustana Synod, Blanck points out that the process of identity formation was controlled by portions of the cultural leadership within the ethnic group, and contained Protestant pastors, writers, and cultural activists sympathetic to this project.27 These people together “created” an identity based on a mix of Swedish and American cultural markers. Among these markers, historical motives, art and religion were all prominent. Blanck regards the Augustana variant of Swedish-Americanism as part of the struggle over identity within the ethnic group, splintered by social differentiation and religious, cultural and political preferences. He also states that it might be seen as a way to compete with other ethnic groups over resources and influence in American society, and, by using religious affiliation, to distance the Swedish immigrant group from the “new” immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.28

25 Nordahl, Per. Weaving the Ethnic Fabric.
26 Nordahl, Per. "Lost and found. A place to be. The organization of provincial societies in Chicago from the 1890s to 1933". pp.65-89, especially p.85.
27 Blanck, Dag. Becoming Swedish-American.
Another effort at building an ethnic identity was formulated by the secularized bourgeoisie, whose most important vehicle was the ethnic press.\(^{29}\) Anna Williams has presented this perspective when analyzing the ethnic press as literary and cultural institutions. Williams has focused her work on a Swedish-American journalist active in Chicago and working for one of the major Swedish-American newspapers, Jacob Bonggren. Bonggren becomes representative of a specific type of literary leadership in the public sphere of Swedish-America, where literature provided a specific culture and ideology, intimately linked to the ethnic consciousness of Swedish-America, and especially in certain circles of the educated “middle class”.\(^{30}\) Bonggren is hence, according to Williams, a representative of the secularized city-dwelling bourgeoisie of the Swedish-American group.\(^{31}\) The variant of Swedish-Americanism presented by the ethnic secular press contributed to the creation of a Swedish-American culture, with traits both Swedish and American in character.\(^{32}\) Nationalistic motives therefore played an important role in the construction of this identity and were in many ways similar to the identity formation going on within the Augustana synod.

Yet another type of ethnic identity construction is presented by Per Nordahl in Weaving the Ethnic Fabric.\(^{33}\) He studies social networks among Swedish-American radicals in Chicago 1890-1940. The theoretical construct used to bind class and ethnicity together in the study is Eric Hirsch’s concept of haven. The term is used to describe the relation between a number of spheres or institutions within an ethnic enclave that, in conjunction with each other, promote the social mobility of the members. Via a number of ethnic institutions, primarily a temperance café, a painter’s union, and the ethnic club of the Socialist party, Nordahl has analyzed components in a Swedish-American radical identity that emerged in different cities in the United States, with Chicago as the center for this identity formation. Nordahl shows in his study that certain aspects of the “folkrörelserna”, i.e. the popular movements in Sweden, were transplanted into the United States. He also shows how radical Swedish immigrants could use “folkrörelsamverkan”, i.e. cooperation between popular movements, to be able to get access to American institutions, in this case the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and sometimes even acquire leading positions in the American labor movement.

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\(^{30}\) Williams, Anna. *Skribent i svensk-Amerika. Jakob Bonggren, journalist och poet.*, s.9f

\(^{31}\) A problem of a more general nature in this respect is that earlier research on Swedish-America has not used class terminology but uses more vague terms such as ”middle class”, when describing social stratification and groups such as the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

\(^{32}\) Williams Anna. *Providing an ethnic identity: Journalist in Swedish-America.*

\(^{33}\) Nordahl, Per. *Weaving the Ethnic Fabric.*
The identity formed within this radical haven became a class-based alternative to identities created by bourgeois groups of the Swedish-American community. The research also points to the relation between different spheres and class-based groups’ bid for power to define Swedishness.

Despite the large body of literature, and the importance of research made on Swedish-Americans, some areas are still problematic and need further analysis. I will discuss four themes of more general importance to my study and my work below.

First, research on the working class of the Swedish-American group is essential. In the 1980s Byron Nordstrom emphasized the problem with this lack of research, a problem that to a great extent still remains today. In Swedes in the Twin Cities, a book based on conference papers published in 2001 illustrates this. Only two contributions deal with the Swedish-American working class, while another deals with a radical journal, Forskaren. This is most remarkable, since the book sets out to give an orientation on Swedish life in Minneapolis and St. Paul, an industrial center in the Midwest.

Still, very few studies discuss the Swedish-American worker, even though some studies of the Swedish position in the labor market have been carried out during the 1980s and 1990s. Joy Lintelman has, together with Inga Holmberg discussed Swedish immigrant working class women in two articles dealing with domestic servants and has shown how migration and work as a domestic servant to some extent represented freedom and the ability to support themselves, but both Lintelman and Holmberg also emphasizes how structural aspects of the labor market channeled Swedish women to this line of work. Despite these important efforts Lars Olsson has found the general lack of research on the large working class portion of the Swedish-American immigrant group troublesome. Olsson is currently working on a project on the Northwestern Knitting Company in Minneapolis. His focus is on the Swedish women employed there, but he aims at putting into context the Swedes working for the company and their relations with other ethnic groups. He has published an article on the ethnic division of labor and the process of Americanization of the workers. Further studies in this

field are, however, essential to understand the situation of the Swedish workers in the United States, the conditions of exploitation under which they lived and a more comprehensive perspective on the conditions under which the Swedish-American community existed.

Secondly, there is still a tendency to "isolate" the Swedish-Americans in relation to other groups in American society. This is a general problem that can be illustrated by a look at Nordahl’s study of Swedish radical identity. There are, despite many positive things about Per Nordahl’s study, some problems attached to it. First, it discusses how the Swedish-American working class obtained class-consciousness, but the description of the process does not include much of other actors and events taking place outside of the Swedish-American “havens”. Havens turn into a closed community of institutions separated from American society at large and the more specific forces structuring immigrant experience in American industrial capitalist society. In short, Nordahl writes himself into a tradition, which focuses solely on one isolated ethnic group. As a counterpoint to how Swedish radicals closed together in haven’s as a defense against a hostile capitalist society, Richard Hudelson has, on the other hand, found evidence in Duluth Minnesota that points to Swedish radicals as one important component in an opposition to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance in that the Swedish radicals formed class alliances with e.g. radical Finns. This outward looking and relational view needs to be explored further. Hudelson, however, emphasizes the strength of the Swedish community in Duluth in this respect and brings forth this as an explanatory factor in differences between Duluth and Nordahl’s account of radical Swedish immigrants in Chicago where the defensive aspect is more emphasized.39

The process of class formation in Nordahl’s work is separated from the actions of other social groups in society, both within the ethnic group, and in the American labor market. The result of his study is that the Swedish workers in the United States undergo a process of class formation, but that the social process occurs in a vacuum. This is the case with much of the research regarding ethnic groups in America. Important groups and aspects that structured the immigrant experience and that are essential to a deeper understanding of the European immigrant experience are seldom visible as historical actors and have not been thoroughly analyzed when discussing ethnic identity. The Anglo-American bourgeoisie and ethnic ranking in American society often play very peripheral roles within the field of Swedish-American studies. In this respect, it might be helpful to look at the work of John Bodnar who in his book The Transplanted discussed the role of capitalism and increasing levels of industrial development as the most common denominator between the experiences of ethnic groups in the United States, in that all immigrants in some way and to some extent responded to a modern industrial capitalist society. The response looked very different as groups of people had ideologically and materially distinct experiences.

of capitalism as a system and of older social patterns. The immigrants were hence in some way interconnected through their decision to negotiate modern capitalism by migrating and separated by structural unevenness in the capitalist development they encountered, as well as the effects of differing cultural patterns pertaining religious affiliation and various nation-building processes in the old country and in the United States.40

A third problem associated with a number of other problems presented above is that the relation between the Swedish-American group and other ethnic groups in the United States has not been sufficiently discussed. In particular, the connection between intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic relations has not yet been satisfactorily analyzed. Blanck’s discussion of ethnic identity as a way to not only mobilize the ethnic group but also to present certain images of the Swedish heritage to the new host society highlights the importance of doing studies of the relationship between the Swedish-Americans and the dominant ethnic group in American society.

A fourth problem, connected with the factors described above, is that many researchers dealing with Swedish-American history have only used sources produced by the Swedish-American community. Joy Lintelman has argued for the use of other sources when writing ethnic history and has in her own research employed a broader selection of sources.41 Lintelman’s argument for using sources produced outside the ethnic group is made especially compelling by the fact that earlier research has shown that a large part of the Swedish group in America never took part in the cultural sphere known as Swedish-America. This is a problem that I will try to address through the perspective of my own research and through my choice of source material.

The Study in the historiography of Minnesotan and American Labor History

The development of the iron ore carrying railroad companies, of which one will be analyzed in this book, can be seen as a process where eastern capitalist interests exchange local ownership and influence for a steadily increasing dominance. This process by which eastern capital was invested is a well-established fact in the history of Minnesota.42

This is especially true regarding the buying and selling of land and the business of the large railroad companies. The fact that the spreading of industrial capitalism in Minnesota was promoted by politicians and by commercial interests in

41 Lintelman, Joy K. "Unfortunates" and "City Guests": Swedish-American inmates and the Minneapolis City Work House, 1907. pp.57-76
42 Harnsberger, John L.. Land lobbies, railroads and the origins of Duluth., pp.91, 92.
unison is also well known. Charlemagne Tower was but one example of many “easterners” who moved in and claimed land and resources for their companies in the state during the 1870s and 1880s. The lumber barons, mill owners, bankers and railroad entrepreneurs were often New Englanders with interests in the Frontier.43

The historiography on Minnesota labor history is quite rich, and includes works dedicated to organized labor as well as works of a more general character discussing workers’ culture with a certain emphasis on community studies. Especially the mining communities on the range have received attention. Many studies have also been dedicated to the many conflicts between labor and capital that periodically characterized the history of the state and tell us something of the disturbances in the political economy as class differences and cultural identities clashed.44 What we know less about is the everyday interaction between labor and capital in this political economy that was gradually established during the second half of the 1800s and early 1900s.

Another important discussion that is lacking in the historiography is connected to this relationship and to the fact that conflicts only in some instances occurred despite the harsh conditions for workers and their lack of security and influence. This study is not primarily concerned with strikes. Instead, it contributes to our knowledge of how labor peace was obtained and the response from workers to the efforts of employers to integrate them into a political economy that demanded their labor but that in essence wanted them to adapt to a bourgeois society with specific cultural markings. It will hence try to contribute to our general knowledge of the labor history of Minnesota by relating the well documented history of the working class of the state, to the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. The study, hence will analyze a relationship and processes by which a class structure emerged where none had previously existed and the development of this class structure in a changing political economy dominated by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. Despite the focus on relationships between groups, one group is of special interest in the study, the Swedish immigrants and their children.

One important aspect of the study is hence the emergence of a hierarchy based on class and ethnicity and how it played out on the labor market. The specific situation where eastern capital moved in and claimed land and resources in northeastern Minnesota from the 1880s has not been fully analyzed with regard to the effects on the ethnic division of labor. We know that there were Swedish and Cornish miners present in the ore mining area at this time. We also know that the Swedes rose quickly in the mining hierarchy, and by 1900 they were found as shift bosses and skilled workers on the ranges. When other groups

43 Rice, John G. “The Old-Stock Americans”. in They Chose Minnesota. p.59. For additional discussions on the role of eastern capital in the expansion of the railroad see e.g. Kirkland, Edward. Industry Comes of Age: Business, Labor and Public Policy, 1860-1897.
44 See e.g. Alanen, Arnold. The Locations, Company Communities on Minnesota’s Iron Ranges. See also the sources to chapter 4.
moved in at the beginning of the 1900s, the Swedes left that line of work. Some stayed in the mining communities, where they became the carpenters, masons, plumbers and plasterers of the range towns.\textsuperscript{45} We also know that Swedes were involved in the shipping industry as part of the work force on the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad.\textsuperscript{46} What we do not know, however, is the nature of the work carried out by the Swedes on the railroads and to what degree the situation of the Swedish workers on the railroad was influenced by the ethnic ranking prevailing in Minnesota at the time.

A study of the immigrant work force in Duluth in the 1870s by Matti Kaups has shown that the Swedish immigrants in that city formed a group of casual laborers employed by the day and carrying out a wide range of different work in town.\textsuperscript{47} Kaups’ study indicates that ethnicity was a factor in the distribution of employment opportunities in Duluth and that the Swedish workers had a distinct place in a strict labor market hierarchy. The result of the Duluth study is reinforced by research carried out on the Twin Cities that has shown how concentrations of Swedish immigrants were created around industrial facilities where blue-collar work was easy to find. It is also stated in some of the research that the Swedes, like in Duluth, had to make do with day labor in the construction of infrastructure and housing in Minneapolis and St. Paul at the beginning of the 1880s.\textsuperscript{48}

Despite this knowledge about the Swedish population and its general position in the labor market in Minnesota during the 1870s and 1880s, it is of interest to delve deeper into specific trades and lines of industry and, as is the case with this study, into one single company. There are several reasons for this. First, accounts of the immigrants as workers are often too sweeping and general to tell us much about the actual situation of the workers and their place in a larger ethnic, economic and political context.

Second, research on one single company makes it possible to conceptualize the relation between a group of immigrant workers and their employer and to see what that relation might tell us about group affiliations, relations between immigrants and native-born people and what role the labor market and the company could play in structuring the lives and opportunities of immigrant workers. These relations changes over time, as is clear from earlier research, but why they changed and what the changes entailed is not altogether clear. These aspects of the immigrant experience are fruitful and possible to discuss. One last important reason is that a study of a single company makes it possible to see how the labor market situation, as an extension of ethnic relations in general, in a specific industry and in a specific area had an impact on identity formation among the workers of an ethnic group. In other words, the local context, and more to the point, the local labor market had an impact on the construction of an ethnic iden-

\textsuperscript{45} Rice, John G. “Swedes” in \textit{They Chose Minnesota}. pp.260-261.
\textsuperscript{46} Rice, John G. “Swedes” in \textit{They Chose Minnesota}. p.260.
\textsuperscript{47} Kaups, Matti. \textit{Swedish immigrants in Duluth, 1856-1870}. pp.166-198.
tity, since ethnicity is situational and processual in character. Factors such as employment opportunities and employment practices need to be analyzed to get an idea of how the labor market situation could play a part in the construction of workers’ identity with ethnic markers in the US. This study on the D&IR is an effort in this direction.

Previous research has dictated the role of regional and even a national market for the selling and buying of labor that structured this local labor market. Shelton Stromquist has described the function of this broader labor market in the railroad industry in two case studies where he distinguishes between foreign and various categories of native-born workers who were employed in Creston and Burlington, IA in 1880. His argument for an emerging national market for railroad labor is underlined by recruitment to the running trades. Especially in the case of Creston that had a smaller hinterland of settlement and thereby had a smaller labor pool readily available, recruitment patterns show how labor was drawn from places distant. The case of both Creston and Burlington, however, indicate that they were an integral part of a regional, national and even transnational labor market since Swedes and Germans seem to have held a specific position in the ethnic division of labor at the time. Stromquist’s results pertaining to recruitment are underlined by Joshua Rosenbloom’s studies of recruitment patterns more generally in that he claims that a national market for the selling and buying of labor gradually emerged after the Civil War. Stromquist’s analysis of the two railroad towns furthermore underlines an important connection between railroad towns, the railroads for which they had been built and a regional Midwestern labor market. Given the discussion carried out by Rosenbloom on how kinship networks tied specific locations and specific job opportunities together, both ethnic composition of the region around Two Harbors and potential sources for labor supply need to be discussed. Given this regional character of the labor force and given the fact that the Midwestern labor market during the late 1800s has been described by Frank Tobias Higbie as containing few steady jobs and a large transient labor force, it is obvious that documentation of ethnic recruitment networks have to be a crucial part of the study. The meaning of the Swedish ethnic networks will be discussed with evidence from the 1910 census records and the hiring practices of the D&IR railroad.49

An indication of Swedes working the railroads as construction workers is a statement supposedly made by the capitalist James J Hill: “Give me Swedes, Snooze and Whiskey and I will build a railroad through Hell”. Despite such anecdotal evidence, very little has been written on the Swedes employed as railroad workers, and what accounts we have are sweeping and vague. However, in another suggestive reference in an account of the Irish in the Minnesota labor mar-

ket, Ann Regan notes the presence of Swedes as track laborers in two Minnesota townships.\textsuperscript{50}

In Minnesota labor history, research regarding the workers on the iron ore carriers that were built in northeastern Minnesota is virtually absent and knowledge of the work force sketchy at best. We only know in a general way that a great many Swedish workers found employment there.\textsuperscript{51} This study will try to address this gap in earlier research and deal with the building of the D&IR, the hiring procedures of that company, the composition of the work force employed in the middle of the 1880s, and in the year 1920, and with how labor relations within the company changed during the first two decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century to reflect a change in the political economy of Minnesota. Through this it is not only possible to discuss how ethnicity played a part in the division of labor, but it also offers the opportunity to discuss the overarching question of the relationship between immigrant worker and native-born employer and the role of class and ethnicity in this relationship. I will also discuss the relationship between the railroad company and the workers by analyzing the community of railroad workers that settled in the railroad town of Two Harbors.

In Minnesota, the transportation industry grew in importance from the 1860s up to the 1920s, which is an indication of the meaning and function of the American railroad in general. It had two primary functions in the political economy of Minnesota, and for the United States more generally. First, it was a vehicle by which capitalists claimed land for private ownership, not only to justify a political expansion of the American institutions, but also to expand industrial capitalism. This process was often dressed in rhetoric touching on the spreading of civilization or interpreted within a framework of manifest destiny. People who did not want to or who were not allowed to become integrated into the project of industrial capitalism were swept away. Most of all the Native American population of Minnesota experienced marginalization as a result of the spreading of industrial capitalism and its embedded ideas of whiteness. The American railroad was, hence, also connected to ideas of the spreading American civilization.

Secondly, transportation in general and railroads especially was a prerequisite for more advanced forms of capitalism, as it allowed capitalists to realize the surplus value of manufactured products on regional and national markets. It thereby tied local economies to regional ones, and the regions to the national, or even global, economy. This also held true for the labor market.

Earlier research on American railroad workers and labor relations on railroads is, to a large extent, focused on strikes in the work place. There is a vast literature

\textsuperscript{50} Regan, Ann. “The Irish” in They Chose Minnesota. Regan has used the census of 1880 to analyze some track gangs in Blue Earth County, Minnesota. She found that a large part of the workers were Swedish, Norwegian and Irish. We do not, however, get any more detailed information from that study. p.149, footnote 20.

\textsuperscript{51} Rice, John G. “Swedes”. In They Chose Minnesota. p.260
on strike activity in the railroad business, which for the most part deals with the period between 1877 and 1894, a most turbulent time on American railroads, where diverging interests between employer and employees came to the forefront. Earlier literature tends to analyze strikes from a rather narrow empiricist approach, whereas new literature on labor conflicts has a tendency to make the strike into a hub whereby cultural, economic and political forces are brought to the forefront. One study that tries to create a framework for how these strikes are to be interpreted is Shelton Stromquist’s *A Generation of Boomers*. He shows how the labor market situation was increasingly controlled by railroad companies and thereby challenged older patterns of more “artisan” behavior by railroad workers in the context of highly competitive “frontiers of labor scarcity” that led railroad managers to cut wages and rewrite work rules. He gets at the root of railroad strikes and their meaning in the larger perspective of capitalist development. He also connects a wide range of social relations to power that this system creates on local, regional and national levels.

Another work that deals with the strike, as a phenomenon is *The Pullman Strike and the crisis of the 1890s*, where a number of essays focus on the meaning of the Pullman strike in a broader perspective of economic, social and political development during the turbulent years of the 1890s. One important aspect of the book examines the role of the state in the conflict between labor and capital. Colin J. Davis also examines the state and its relation to labor and capital in his account of the railroad shopmen’s strike of 1922.

The labor process on the railroad and the character of the railroad company as an increasingly complex and differentiated body have been analyzed, especially during the period up to 1900. Colin J. Davis, however, has claimed that not much research has been dedicated to the 20th century world of railroad workers. The ethnic division of labor on American railroads has been analyzed in several studies. There seems to be a widespread agreement that an ethnic ranking system existed on American railroads, and that low-paying insecure jobs were held by African-American, Mexican, European, Japanese and Chinese workers on the large transcontinental railroads of America. These groups were typically employed as track and maintenance workers, since no native-born white American would take that work if given a choice. The ethnic and racial composition varied

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56 Davis, Colin J. *Power at Odds*. p.3

and reflected the sources of labor available, as Eric Arnesen has pointed out. This scholarship supports the point that the regional labor market and the supply of cheap labor were decisive in the specific ethnic division of labor on different roads.

Earlier research has shown how Irish and German workers made up the bulk of the track-laying force on early American railroads in the Northern states, but in some instances shortage of labor made Northern railroads recruit Black workers from the South. By the turn of the century Germans and Irishmen had been replaced by immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe as unskilled laborers, and, together with African-American and Mexican workers, they made up the section gangs of track workers on many roads in the Midwest and North. Railroads, like other branches of the economy, were characterized by a pattern where newly arrived immigrant groups tended to replace older groups as unskilled labor.

This picture presented by previous research is not completely satisfying, however. We know from general assertions such as “The Northern Pacific employed a lot of Swedish workers”, that Scandinavian workers were also employed as railroad labor. But we lack more exact knowledge of the Swedish work force on the American railroad. Knowledge of what kind of employment the Swedish worker got, and how the labor market prospects changed for the Swedish immigrants in the American labor market would offer valuable insights into the role of Swedish immigrants in the Anglo-American industrial capitalist project. This is especially true regarding the Midwest where a lot of Scandinavian immigrants settled. Marie Christine Michaud has explored Italian workers on Midwestern railroads and concludes that they played an important role as maintenance crews on a number of railroads and how railroad work played a role for the Italian American identity in the Midwest. Her study, hence in important ways connect immigrant experience of the American labor market and ethnic identity under an industrial capitalist order of production. Michaud’s analysis of identity formation leads forward to the last point of interest for this study, Swedish immigrant identity in the local community and the railroad workers and the railroad company as historical actors in Two Harbors, Minnesota.

American labor historians have, under the influence of Herbert Gutman, long been interested in the culture of the working class as expressed in local contexts and in communities based in city neighborhoods. Some of the time, these neighborhoods had an immigrant character and these class-based and culturally-based communities have been shown to develop a strong sense of solidarity. In Lizabeth Cohen’s book Making a New Deal, the role of the working class immigrant community is highlighted. Cohen shows how the immigrant working class

58 Arnesen, Eric. Brotherhoods of Color. p.6
in Chicago settled near the factories and how a community emerged where work, family and kinship networks played significant roles. One important point in Cohen’s account of the community is that working class immigrants molded their own social worlds within the confines of structures created by the demand for labor and the worker’s need to support himself or herself. Cohen divides the working class neighborhoods into distinct bodies reflecting ethnic, racial and social differences and shows their general resilience in the face of changes imposed by the Anglo-American host society, and the development of a mass culture of consumption.60

Studies of working class communities are plentiful, but most of them have been carried out in industrial cities and mill towns. John Bodnar has emphasized the construction of an ethnic community based on kinship networks in an industrial town and how these insured workers the same protective networks as are evident in Cohen’s study on Chicago.61 Within the field of Swedish-American studies, the role of community has also been emphasized. Previous research has therefore been able to establish that community based on common experience of the labor market and a perceived common cultural base has had a profound impact on worker’s lives in the United States.

Communities of railroad workers have also been a point of study and Shelton Stromquist has developed a typology in which the railroad town is one type of community that was a product of the spreading of the railroad. A railroad town, as Stromquist has used the term, signifies a community whose existence is predicated by the location of the railroad, its shops, offices and service facilities. These railroad towns in the Midwest and West generally had a small, regionally oriented “elite” and a population of less than 10,000. The railroad town, when put into the context of conflict and strike, often displayed a duality since the loyalty towards the only employer in these locations clashed with the solidarity towards fellow community members. Discussion of the actions of these railroad town communities in casting their support for strikers or for railroad companies has been regarded a crucial factor in the outcome of strikes. Gutman’s presentation of the local community that supported workers is but one possible outcome in smaller communities which offered face to face relationship between individuals who were part of them and who sometimes created a local solidarity. Stromquist problematizes Gutman’s account by showing how fleeting support could be and how local communities often ended up supporting railroad companies instead of their communities. He also emphasizes the work carried out by the railroad companies in using the local press to “plant” information in these locales. Both these examples illustrate the complex character of class relations and loyalties in these towns. Besides these aspects, Stromquist also emphasizes the

emergence of working class communities and similarities in the development of these local communities.

Despite the fact that the process of community building differed widely between railroad towns, the general development included a growth spurt in the first two decades when the population increased rapidly. During these periods, a network of social and fraternal organizations emerged. Without delving too deep into the case studies of Stromquist, a number of characteristics stand out with regard to the emergence of a community supportive of working class demands. First, social cohesiveness was an important factor as communities with a weaker petty bourgeoisie or bourgeois leadership with no intimate connections to the railroad company generated a community generally more adapted to the interests of the railroad workers. Stromquist even uses the term working class solidarity when describing group relations in smaller, more homogenous railroad towns. These homogenous communities also developed strong cross-class solidarities.⁶²

The character that the railroad town acquired makes it in many ways similar to a company town, given the fact that there was often only one major employer, who had established the town where none had existed before. The research on company towns and welfare arrangements in these towns is vast, and I will return to this historiography in chapter 9. I will, however, use David Brody’s work on the non-union era in steel as a counterpoint to strong communities. He has emphasized the mill town as a factor in creating stability to a system based on employer-control. The mill town as an entity, where the control of the company was in many instances undisputed, fit perfectly the pattern of “economic steel manufacturing”.⁶³ His is but one example of research that has emphasized the importance of company policies in company-run towns. This indicates the strong influence of companies in contexts of their own creation. One should hence, from the accounts of Stromquist and Brody be careful not to overemphasize the meaning and role of the community as it had structural limits of both ideological and economic character.

The historiography related above creates a potentially dual image of the railroad community as it is generally established by a railroad company and the interests in the spreading of industrial capitalism and the integration of new markets. These communities, as evidenced by the historiography, were of considerable interest for the railroad companies as they made up potential bottlenecks in the transportation of goods. In short, the railroad manager had a strong interest in keeping out radicalism and conjuring up a sense of mutual interest between the railroad company and the workers of a railroad town.

The railroad town that is of interest to me in this thesis, as we shall see, had traits peculiar to it as it not only harbored the railroad facilities, but also was a harbor

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⁶² Stromquist, Shelton. *A Generation of Boomers*. pp.146,147, 197-201
with ore docks. This specific trait is also paired with a seasonality of extreme proportions connected to navigating the great lakes and the mining of ore. These traits gave the community a steady influx of transient labor, both skilled and unskilled during the ore season. In this respect, it might be helpful to look at the work by Tobias Higbie as he has mapped transient workers and their relation to Midwestern communities during the period of interest for this thesis.

On the other hand the communities in Chicago that have been described by Lizabeth Cohen developed certain autonomy outside of employer control and outside pressures. In this process, ethnic leaders and the ethnic networks in working class neighborhoods played crucial roles. The historiography around the role of communities in general and railroad communities in particular presents a tension between company dominance and working class community autonomy that seems to have been under constant negotiation. Roy Rosenzweig has shown how the working class of Worcester, Mass. developed ethnic communities, which served as an alternative to trade unions and political parties and in themselves were ways to challenge the hegemony of the industrialists of the city. Rosenzweig claims that the tight ethnic communities with an infrastructural base in saloons, churches, clubs and kinship networks offered the ethnic workers “a sphere in which they could carry out a mode of life and express values, beliefs and traditions significantly different from those prescribed by the dominant industrial elite”.

In the points of departure for my study, I have stated that the relationship between the employer and the immigrant workers is the most important one, and given the character of Two Harbors that has many characteristics of Stromquist’s railroad town typology, the railroad town as an arena for negotiations is of great interest. However, one aspect that is lacking in the research on emerging railroad communities is the ethnic component in this kind of community. In this perspective, the role of the local community of railroad workers and ore dockworkers need to be taken into account in my study, especially given the community orientation of the labor policies of the local railroad, the D&IR.

This discussion on the duality in perception of working class communities and railroad towns leads up to the question of power relations. Is a working class community an autonomous body of people molding their own lives based on their cultural and social experiences or is it a group of people experiencing various degrees of oppression from a powerful employer? In this thesis, I argue, in line with the tradition of Cohen and others, that it can be both and that the ethnic base of a working class community can create very different outcomes in the distribution of power depending on the composition of the whole ethnic community and the role that class is allowed to play in the construction of ethnic identities. The railroad town typology developed by Stromquist is useful, but is in turn, structured by an overarching political economy controlled by a dominant group based on class and ethnicity.

64 Rosenzweig, Roy. Eight Hours for what We Will. Workers & Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920. p.27
Points of departure

The purpose of this study is, then, to analyze societal processes involving the spreading of capitalism, the establishing of a hierarchic society based on class and ethnicity and the impact of these social and cultural processes on Swedish immigrants and their children whose lives were shaped by their relation to a railroad company, *The Duluth & Iron Range Railroad*, in northern Minnesota. I will use the term political economy to frame the interaction between the economic and political establishment and will connect the development of this political economy to a class based and ethnic establishment. I will hence use *class* and *ethnicity* to place the Swedish immigrant workers, and their children, in a structural framework of labor and ethnic relations between the early 1880s and the mid-1920s. The time period is interesting as this period in Minnesota history is characterized by the establishment of industrial capitalism and the integration of Minnesota into a national political economy. The period is also the most intense period of Swedish immigration to the United States. Furthermore, the period also saw the emergence of political alternatives to the two established political parties, cultural ideas triggered by an expanding and intensified capitalist development in the United States and increased ethnic diversification as a result of immigration. These were all prominent traits of this period which was characterized by political and cultural opposition, but also of immigrant adaptation to an Anglo-American host society.

The book will analyze three problems connected to continuity and change in power relations between groups based on class and ethnicity and, connected to these power relations, processes of hegemony and the construction of societal norms as a way of playing down conflicts between ethnic groups and between classes.

The main questions of the study are:

What was the position of immigrant workers, especially the Swedes, working on the D&IR in 1885 and 1920, respectively?

The study uses source material from censuses, one Minnesota state census from 1885, and the federal censuses for 1910 and 1920 for Lake County, Minnesota. Payroll records from the D&IR complement this material for the years 1884, 1885 and 1920. I have done a more systematic analysis of the 1880s and 1920, and have only used an analysis of the 1910 census to find individuals and to get a more general idea of the composition of Two Harbors. This makes up my quantitative material, and the question relates to the emerging class structure and the role of immigrant workers, particularly Swedish immigrants, in the political economy of Minnesota during the period. I will touch on the question of class structure in chapters 5 and 6.

How did the relationship, in the work place and during leisure time, between the management and officials of the D&IR and the (immigrant) workers change between 1883-1884, when the building of the railroad took place, and the 1920s?

What role did the welfare capitalist program launched by the D&IR around 1900
have in a broader societal context? What role did the company play for the integration and Americanization of the immigrant, particularly the Swedish, workers on the D&IR?

To find the answers to these questions I have used company documents regulating the relationship between the employees and the company, the work rules of 1907, labor agreements between skilled trades and the management, printed speeches made by company officials, informational material printed by the company for jubilees, the company magazine and various correspondences by letter between railroad officials. I have also used material on the local YMCA. I will analyze the changing labor relations in the work place in chapter 7 and the broader welfare capitalist program aimed at the community and worker’s leisure time in chapter 8.

What role did class and ethnicity play in the development of an opposition to company dominance during the period? What was the response of the Anglo-American establishment and the railroad interests and how did the opposition negotiate the Anglo-American bourgeois leadership? These questions will also primarily focus on the Swedish immigrant group and the community of Two Harbors that emerged from the turn of the century when the railroad workers had started to settle down in larger numbers than previously. In this way it is possible to understand in what ways Swedish identities as presented in the previous research were put to use in negotiating industrial capitalism during various stages in the historic process. In particular, my interest is in a specific class based Swedish identity described by Per Nordahl for Chicago. But I will also touch on other, alternative identities that emerged in Two Harbors during the period. This broader societal perspective on class relations, ethnic relations and class formation under Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony will be discussed in chapter 9. In this chapter I will also discuss the limits imposed on immigrant identity formation as a wide range of other impulses for identification made an imprint in the local community.

I have used a broad range of sources when analyzing how class divisions and ethnic relations shaped local politics and how two distinct interest groups struggled over the public sphere. Local newspapers, biographical sketches, locally produced memorabilia are my primary sources to the local political and cultural development, but I have also used e.g. material compiled by the state Bureau of Labor Statistics to reconstruct the trade union development, the minutes of the Swedish Lutheran Congregation and the Swedish socialist Press in Chicago that occasionally reported on events in Two Harbors. The study is based on the idea of using a broad range of sources that are useful for analyzing power relations and the shaping of societal norms and values on the local level.

The analysis will not be focused on either class or ethnicity, as an either-or proposition in the analysis of how class formation occurred or was absent. Rather, I will try to analyze what forces structured the class experience of an immigrant group in a multi-cultural, industrial-capitalistic and bourgeois society.
It is therefore neither simply a question about class formation and its presence as a result of differing degrees of exploitation, nor only a question of the ethnic dominance. That would be to simplify both aspects of domination in a multicultural class society. It would be a way of misinterpreting one of the processes and reducing it to the other, and claiming that the natural order of things is a particular type of ethnic and/or class ideology. Lars Edgren’s discussion of class formation and socialism from a non-deterministic perspective has been an important source of inspiration for me in this respect, since Edgren seems to imply that a discussion of class formation and class consciousness need to take into account that these social processes are not the result of a natural development in the historical process. In my study the railroad company will be regarded as a representative of the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment in Minnesota. The study will analyze overarching processes through a micro historic study of one work place and the community of railroad workers surrounding it, but the idea has also been to put forth the lives of so-called ordinary people and making them historical actors in their own right who negotiated capitalism and the hierarchical society that emerged as a result of its expansion. The presentation, despite the micro-historic perspective, also, to some extent, is a local history of a small Midwestern railroad town.

The limited number of workers makes it possible to analyze both the establishment of a social and cultural hierarchy and the processes that shaped and reshaped these structures through the interactions of historical actors based primarily on class and ethnicity in the work place, in local politics, in claiming cultural space and in laying claim to power. As we shall see, these cultural and social processes were also gendered, both regarding the gender division of labor on the D&IR and the role that the political economy of Minnesota played in shaping gender roles outside the work place. I have unfortunately not been able to analyze this aspect of my material to the fullest.

The Swedish immigrant group and their children were crucial historical actors, collectively and individually in Two Harbors both because of the large number of Swedish immigrants in the city and the changing role of Swedish workers in the political economy of Minnesota during my period of investigation. In the study I use the term “children of immigrants”. There was indeed a generational difference between immigrants and their children but I resist the use of the term second generation immigrants.

I hence structure my study by first analyzing structural perspectives on the work place and the labor market in chapters 5 and 6. In chapter 7 I focus on changing labor relations in the work place while I deal with company involvement in a broader societal perspective in chapter 8. Finally, chapter 9 deals with worker responses to company dominance and the interaction between two main interests in

65 Edgren Lars. ‘Varför finns det ingen socialism i USA?’ felställd fråga i ny belysning. pp.35-42.
the public sphere of a railroad town during primarily the 1910s. In this account, World War I becomes an important part of the history of radicalism and company activity in Two Harbors. In short, I go from structure and the work place to processes and the role of class and ethnicity in a larger societal context. Therefore, the work place and a number of socially and culturally significant spheres of activity pertaining to the leisure time of the workers in the local context will be analyzed, primarily expressions of class and ethnicity in the celebration of holidays and in the everyday culture of the community.
3. Theoretical perspectives

Hegemony is a crucial theoretical concept for this study. It was initially used by social scientists to describe the relation between nation states and some great states’ political domination over other states.66 The Italian political philosopher Antonio Gramsci adopted the term and used it to describe the relationship between classes in an industrial society, and to explain how inequality in such a society is reproduced. After Gramsci many researchers from a range of different fields have used this theory as a tool in their analyses of different aspects of political, economic or cultural development during the era of industrial capitalism. The quite extensive use of the concept and the many ways in which it has been applied, paired with the fact that Gramsci’s own writing was vague and imprecise on the subject, have sparked scholarly discussions since the publication of Gramsci’s thesis.67 I will in the following develop my interpretation of the concept of hegemony by connecting it to the concepts of class, ethnicity, ideology and culture. Hegemony is therefore the overarching theoretical frame of this study. It describes power relations and deals with cultural issues, and in my use of the term it includes a class component, as well as an ethnic component.

Class, ethnicity and generation

The homogeneity of ethnic groups has often been overemphasized when scholars have carried out studies of ethnicity. Being for example Swedish-American in 19th century American Society did not mean the same thing to a radical painter as to a religious grocery-store owner.68 The statement might be considered obvious, but in earlier research the class dimension of belonging to an ethnic minority has most often been lost. This is the case with much of the research carried out on the Swedish group in the United States. Thus class is an important aspect of the immigrant experience for this study.

Ethnicity is not the same thing as class but a concept or structuring principle that works parallel to class. Whereas class always describes relations of power and social ranking, ethnicity does not always do this, even though social and cultural ranking between different ethnic groups occur in most societies. Ethnic ranking,

66 Williams, Raymond. Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. p.144, 145
68 Nordahl, Per. Weaving the Ethnic Fabric. p.13
in contrast to class, is not based on material circumstances, the relation to the means of production or acquired social status. Instead it is based on the fact that a group of people for historical and cultural reasons consider themselves as belonging together through a common historical heritage, a common language or a common everyday culture.

Both concepts describe relations between groups in industrial capitalist societies. Class takes its point of departure in the means of production, whereas ethnicity is a group relation based on alleged cultural differences as viewed from the perspective of the dominant ethnic group and its behavior. Both class and ethnicity can work as mechanisms for social ranking in a society and ethnic identity can, in many cases, be an important determinant for the class position.69

In the academic debate the concepts of class and ethnicity have been given a different meaning and importance by different researchers. In 1975, Daniel Bell70 wrote that the importance of ethnicity was on the increase in modern industrialized countries at the same time as people’s sense of class identification grew weaker.71 Bell, hence, tends to regard ethnicity as more important than class, since there is a stronger element of identification in it. Others, like Irving Howe and Gunnar Myrdal, represent the opposite position by stating that class is more important in the analysis of industrial capitalist development. They argue that “ethnicity” blurs the analysis of the development of industrialized countries, which makes researchers misunderstand the development and changing power relations in, for example, the United States. Howe has even stated that ethnicity is the response of the conservative forces in society who want to downplay the historical role of the class struggle.72 This illustrates the fact that academic concepts are by no means to be taken for granted. There is little or no consensus about the meaning and importance of even the most commonsensical term, or even the very use of such terms in academic research, which makes a thorough definition of these concepts and an effort of relating them to each other essential.

In labor history the concepts have at times been used parallel to each other and the tendency has been towards an increasing focus on the ethnic dimension of being a worker. This becomes clear when scrutinizing the research made by the historians of the New Labor History of the 1980s and the history of whiteness as an ideology that influenced class relations, carried out by David Roediger. By infusing whiteness as a factor into the discussion of relations between ethnic workers and native-born workers, it becomes clear that race was an important structuring factor for how ethnic relations played out from the mid 1800s. In some sense, Roediger argues that ethnic workers became Americans by jettisoning their own ethnic identity and by accepting a white American identity with specific cultural markings in its place. Whiteness is hence primarily a racial iden-

70 Bell, Daniel. Ethnicity and social change. p.157.
This research has hence shown that ethnicity is more than a false consciousness and that ethnic identity among the European immigrants were under pressure during certain stages of the mass migration from that continent.

In this study, the relation between class and ethnicity in the historical processes I am studying are important. Class and ethnicity interact with each other in modern (and modernizing), industrialized (and industrializing) societies, and both are relevant concepts when analyzing group relations in the United States. This process of interaction gives situational results as the class base, and class relations, as expressed on an empirical level, in the local context of a railroad town in Minnesota, for instance, are both heavily influenced by the ethnic component and the ethnic environment. More theoretically expressed, ethnic relations, and the ethnic division of labor, will be heavily influenced by the ethnic composition on the local and regional levels. They will, however, also be influenced by the class structure in a given area, since the influence of the class component also creates a framework for the structuring of ethnic relations through local and regional labor markets. A farming area, with its specific type of class structure will construct ethnic relations very differently than will a railroad town in the typology used by Stromquist.

In short, the construction of ethnicity must be regarded as an important aspect of the struggle between opposing classes. At the same time, the basic conditions for the class struggle must be regarded in the light of the relationship between different ethnic groups. The most important ethnic group in this respect is the one dictating the cultural norm in a given society, since this group has the power to interpret other cultures and rank them in specific ways, thus creating incentives for specific forms of ethnic relations and access to opportunities.

The interaction between these two theoretical principles whose explanatory power differs somewhat makes up two different systems for trying to explain inequalities and power relations in industrialized, modernizing societies. One of these principles, class, has material relations as its basic point of departure, whereas ethnicity has cultural and ideological relations as its base. To put it simply, class is a social identity related to certain cultural consequences, and ethnicity is a cultural identity related to certain social consequences. In the next part I will present my interpretation of the two theoretical tools. I then discuss the generational dimension inherent in both class and ethnicity. Finally, I will try to analyze how these two theoretical principles come together and interact. To be able to do that and to relate the two concepts to each other, I have found inspiration in the discussion on hegemony.

73 Roediger, David. The Wages of Whiteness. Roediger discusses class formation that takes into account race as a factor.
**Class**

Edward P Thompson’s definition of class is the basis for my understanding of the concept. I have also used parts of the class analysis made by Erik Olin Wright, who develops some of the aspects of class sketched by Thompson in the Preface to *The Making of the English Working Class*. According to Thompson, class is not a static, pre-determined state between well-defined and objectively analyzable classes, but something dynamic that ”happens” in human relations and that includes action based on experience. He claims that class experience is based on cultural, social and economic relationships.\(^75\)

A prerequisite for *class consciousness* to arise and for a formation of a class to occur is that individuals become aware of their situation and share a common economic and social situation with others, and that these individuals act together as a collective to change or uphold societal structures. It follows from this that *class formation* and the development of *class consciousness* are parallel processes related to each other. With his definition, Thompson turned his back on what he considered to be a tradition that regarded class as only objectively measurable and the class structure as a static system where classes existed independently of each other. Instead, Thompson put focus on the dialectic relationship between groups in a society, and argued that class formation does not take place in a vacuum but is a process where classes form in relation to each other.\(^76\) Thompson’s definition offers a dynamic approach to the class perspective and explains changes in consciousness better than did more traditional Marxist interpretations. The perspective is interesting for this study, since the dynamic class perspective that Thompson outlines is an important instrument for analyzing tensions between but also within classes in a society. Thompson’s interpretation of class is also in line with Gramsci’s interpretation of the class struggle in that both researchers regard the historical process as dynamic and complex. Both also try to focus on what is traditionally regarded as secondary in Marxist writing, namely the superstructure, and they both claim that cultural explanations are important when discussing class societies.

Thompson claimed that the individual’s position in the production and its relation to the means of production were the basis for class identification, but that it needed to be developed in conjunction with other aspects of class. He claimed that class experience is based on cultural, social and economic relations. All these dimensions should therefore be taken into account when deciding the class identity of individuals in industrialized societies. A class position contains many dimensions, the economic dimension being decided by the relation to the means of production. The cultural and social factors are more difficult to capture. First, because these terms must take into account cultural consumption and the specific type of everyday culture developed by different social strata in society, there is not necessarily a normative aspect in this type of cultural analysis. The social

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\(^{75}\) Thompson E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. pp.8-12.

\(^{76}\) Thompson E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. pp.8-12
dimension includes the individual’s place in community life and family and friendship ties. Here Thompson may be criticized for being ethnically blind, since he ignores labor migration and the fact that the social life of an immigrant, to some degree, was structured by ethnicity. Thompson’s own explicit focus on England made him neglect the significant number of Irish and Scottish immigrants in the “English” working class.

By breaking down class to these three dimensions we can get an understanding of how ethnicity and class interact, both in the labor market and during the leisure time of the immigrant workers. It has been shown how ethnic organizations and ethnicity could play an important part in immigrant workers’ lives regardless of class, since ties with other countrymen became important in the exposed position experienced by many immigrant workers in the hierarchical multi-ethnic United States. Thus, the social and cultural dimensions of immigrant workers’ experience might be crucial to this investigation, and, what is more to the point for this study, they might give the opportunity to shed light on the class formation of the Swedish-Americans and their actions in the United States.

In his recent work, Erik Olin Wright has touched upon the problem of how to conceptualize class in its different aspects. He creates a model for understanding how to perceive class in a discussion of subjective and objective class positions. Wright’s model tends to complement some of the vague aspects of Thompson’s interpretation, by trying to discuss and relate the different perspectives on class to each other. This separation into different aspects of class is interesting for my study, since subjective and objective are different aspects of the class experience. The objective position (the structural dimension), the relation to the means of production, according to Wright, has to be paired with subjective (processual) dimensions based on cultural and social aspects for a fuller understanding. Wright states that the structural and the processual approaches to class express different aspects and temporalities of the class experience. Wright uses two basic levels of analysis when discussing class consciousness, class formation, class action and class conflict (struggle). The micro level deals with the individual, and the macro level deals with organizations of different sizes made up of the individuals. In his model, Wright tries to connect the micro level, i.e. individual class locations (position) and class consciousness with the macro level, i.e., class structure and class formation. The macro level of analysis in his model is always regarded as aggregations of micro levels of analysis. Here, I think that Wright becomes too static as his perspective indicates a direct correlation between individual and structure. However, the macro level sometimes transcends individual experience, and “the chemistry” of class consciousness and the culture that reflects it is a creative, historical product that transcends the sum of individual experiences, so despite the accuracy in Wright’s claim that there is a

78 Wright, Eric Olin. *Class Counts*. p. 374
correlation between the micro and macro levels, Thompson’s perspective serves to complex the relationship.

The class position of the individual, the micro level, refers to the location of individuals (and sometimes families) within the structure of class relations. The sum of these positions makes up the class structure of a society. That is, the class structure refers to the overall organization of class relations in the macro level of analysis.\textsuperscript{79} I will refer to his model in this study, because it creates levels of analysis that connects historical actors with structures. The three-part model where class is connected to material, social and cultural relations borrowed from Thompson is thus possible to study on different levels.

Class formation refers, according to Wright, to “a process or an outcome”. In both cases the expression applies to the “formation of collectively organized social forces within class structures in pursuit of class interests”. He argues that class formation can be strong or weak, unitary or fragmentary, revolutionary, counterrevolutionary or reformist. It typically involves creating formal organizations, which link together the people within and across different locations in a class structure. But class formation is by no means limited to formal organizations like unions or political parties. Informal social networks, social clubs, neighborhood associations, etc, might also form a base. Wright also points out that social clubs were an important step in the formation of the bourgeoisie. His view on class formation is as a “formation of social networks within classes”. He does not regard class alliances as a kind of class formation.\textsuperscript{80} Here is, hence where Thompson and Wright separate ways. While Thompson claims that the class only exists as a consciousness is developed, Olin Wright claims that the classes are already there. I do not, however, think that the difference is as great as, by first glance, it seems to be. While Thompson opposed strictly structural approaches to class, Wright, on the other hand tries to mediate between a wide range of different perspectives on class, but basically maintains a basis in structural analysis. It seems useful to separate the two models in my work as Wright better accounts for labor market segmentation and gives work and the structure of power under industrial capitalism meaning through a discussion on how a class structure emerges and develops. His discussion on how structure and culture relate to each other is highly interesting in this respect. On the other hand, Thompson’s account of a class formation process that emerges as people join together when realizing their common experiences as workers, or members of the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie is highly interesting in that it also emphasizes the role of the world outside the work place, the linguistic connections to the society, the cultural symbols expressing various societal interests and the role of cultural and social networks in the development of specific forms of class consciousness. My account above indicates my belief that Thompson and Wright do

\textsuperscript{79} Wright, Eric Olin. \textit{Class Counts}. p.379
not dramatically clash with each other in their writings on class, but rather that they emphasize different aspects of the class experience.

The model discussed indicates my interest in the social and cultural component of the class dimension as well as the objective class position of the individual and hence the class structure of the context I am analyzing. In my interpretation then, the structural and the processual aspects of class interact with each other to mold the consciousness or “unconsciousness” of class in a given context. The model provides a possibility for analyzing the relationship between class and ethnicity, where the individuals’ social networks and cultural situations give depth to the concept of class and a better understanding of the way that the working class component of an ethnic group acted and how the structuring concepts of class and ethnicity promoted and limited certain behavior in a specific local context.

**Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is a concept that has been used to describe a specific type of group identity that emerges in certain social contexts, and that in different ways expresses the categorization of individuals, or individual’s own notion of belonging to a specific cultural group. The term is notoriously difficult to define and different researchers have used the term in very different ways. We can speak of a gradual acceptance of the term by researchers and of the importance of ethnicity in analyzing the history of the United States, both in historiographical traditions that focused on consensus and in fields where social conflict was emphasized.81

Two different traditions come to the front when discussing ethnicity. There is an older tradition that has its roots in anthropology. This tradition focused on the notion that ethnicity is rooted in human nature making the concept static.82 Other researchers have described ethnicity as primarily changeable and situational and they focus on the fact that ethnicity has been used by group members in different ways in different social settings. They describe ethnic groups as groups of interest in one respect, where people with a common experience come together to reach certain goals. Ethnicity, according to this definition, is, to some extent, instrumental for the members of the group.83 Dag Blanck has discussed these two different interpretations of the concept and draws the conclusion that the first definition is better when trying to analyze individuals, whereas the latter is better suited when analyzing ethnic groups and the way that ethnic identity is formed by interaction within the group and its relation to other ethnic groups.84

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81 For an example, see: Sollors, Werner(ed.)“Preface” in *Theories of Ethnicity, A Classical Reader*. pp. v-viv
82 For an example see: Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*.
84 Blanck, Dag. *Becoming Swedish-American*. p. 17
ter definition seems more fruitful to this study, as I am primarily interested in group identity.

Furthermore, the definition makes it possible to explain differences between different groupings within the ethnic group that are based on class and religious affiliations, to mention two of the most important. The definition also makes it possible to explain changes over time, for an ethnic group identity is never static but is constantly changing. However, the static concept as connected to individuals might also be questioned as there is ample evidence for how dynamic ethnic identity of individuals could be over a life-course.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen has claimed that ethnicity is not a condition – but as I say that class is- a term that expresses a relationship. Ethnicity therefore can be a term to describe an aspect of a relationship between groups that tend to regard themselves as separated by different cultural group identities and that requires, “a minimum of contact”. He also claims that observable cultural differences are not the most important factor for ethnicity to come into play; the most important thing instead being how these cultural differences are made socially relevant.

James McKay and Frank Lewis distinguish between ethnic categories and ethnic groups. Ethnic categories are groups of people that have common cultural traits, like language, religion, race and national belonging. These traits are not more important than other physical, cultural or social traits to be found in a specific group. When a number of individuals interact in a meaningful way, a sort of ethnic consciousness and a sense of belonging can develop, and an ethnic group can emerge.

Anthony Smith distinguishes between ethnic categories and ethnic communities. He claims that an ethnic category only has a vague notion of having a specific ethnic identity, since there is no sense of a common historical heritage or connection with a common homeland. When a sense of homeland and of a common history is developed, Smith speaks of an ethnic community. The strength of this community depends on how strong the ties are between individuals within the group and to what degree ethnic identification occurs. Others have pointed out that the connection between identity of the individual and ethnicity can vary considerably. Within an ethnic group, all variants from complete ethnic identification to disinterest in the ethnic identity can be found. Victor Greene has discussed these variants among the Swedish immigrants in America. Many never took part in the social life of the ethnic group through the ethnic institutions. In some sense the perceptions of different aspects of ethnicity are parallel to the dis-

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85 Mintz Sidney W. Ethnicity and leadership: an afterword. p.199.
86 Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. Etnicitet och nationalism. pp.21
87 Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. Etnicitet och nationalism. p.22
88 McKay, James and Lewis, Frank. Ethnicity and the ethnic group: A conceptual analysis and reformulation.
distinctive aspects of class as I have discussed the interpretations by Thompson and Wright. Ethnicity can hence be considered both as a measurable, passive category and as a dynamic and changeable basis for identity formation.

Ethnic institutions have traditionally been one way of measuring the degree of ethnic identification within a group and the strength of a specific ethnic group. Raymond Breton has discussed the development of institutions within different ethnic groups and has offered the term “institutional completeness”. Breton claims that the ethnic identification is decisive in the development of ethnic institutions, and that the more complete the ethnic group institutions are, the less contact the group has with society outside of the ethnic boundaries.

Kathleen Conzen, in a study of the Irish and German groups in the city of Milwaukee supports the argument made by Breton. While the Germans built a complete ethnic society and created a strong sense of ethnic community, the Irish did not. Instead, the Irish were more inclined to focus their energy outwards and interacted more with the larger American society, which offered an alternative to their own ethnic institutions. This caused the Irish identity to be more influenced by class position than the German one. To gain influence the Irish used the Democratic Party as a platform.

The construction of ethnicity

The debate on the immigrant experience in the United States, the relationship between the value systems of the old country and the new country’s impact on the immigrants has been going on since researchers started to dedicate themselves to the subject. In the 1950s Oscar Handlin focused in his book _The Uprooted_ on an acculturation theory that presented the immigrant experience as rootless, where the immigrant got rid of his old identity when confronted with the new society. He claims that a swift process of assimilation took place. Later scholars have criticized the theory of “uprootedness”, maintaining that the culture of the sending society is important in the meeting with American society. There was a transplantation of habits and social patterns from the sending country that

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92 Breton, Raymond. *Institutional completeness of ethnic communities and the personal relations of immigrants.*

93 Conzen, Kathleen. *Ethnicity as festive culture.* Conzen emphasizes the German festivity culture to explain the bonds between the Germans in America, which lacked other ingredients in an ethnic identity. She points to the problem of differing bases for ethnic solidarity and group construction.


95 One early attempt at defining specific aspects of the American experience is the frontier thesis launched by F.J. Turner. Turner claimed that the American identity was formed by a tension between civilization and wilderness, at the frontier and the meeting between the settlers and Native Americans. Turner put emphasis on cultural destruction, as the specifically American experience is emphasized, whereas the European heritage disappears.

96 For some examples, see: Vecoli, Rudolph. *Contadini in Chicago.* Another example is Glazer, Nathan and Moynihan, Daniel. *Beyond the Melting Pot.* Their work discusses "eternal" ethnicities in New York. A third example is Friedman-Kasaba, Katie. *Memories of Migration: Gender, Ethnicity, and Work in the Lives of Jewish and Italian Women in New York, 1870-1924.*
many times changed slowly and gradually. Studies has shown that the immigrant identity tends to be a mix of the old and the new and views the new cultural expressions as unique cultural products, where Swedish-American-ness is not the sum of Swedish-ness and American-ness, but a distinct culture with a life of its own.

To sum up, the way that researchers have regarded ethnicity and the meaning of ethnicity in American history has changed since Handlin’s days. Immigrants generally do not have a preconceived view of themselves as belonging to an ethnic group, and ethnicity does not appear out of the blue when coming into contact with a new environment, but rather, ethnic identity gradually evolves in a given context. Ethnicity can hence be regarded as something emerging from an ongoing process. Some researchers termed this process ethnification. Werner Sollors has drawn this conclusion further as he claims that ethnicity is culturally constructed. Kathleen Conzen and Rudolph Vecoli, among others, have stressed the advantages of using Sollor’s idea on constructed cultural identity when analyzing inter-ethnic relations.

An important source of inspiration for the view of ethnicity as a construction is Fredrik Barth’s theory of ethnicity as a product of the creation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. Barth argues that the cultural content of ethnicity is not the primary issue but rather the boundaries that this content creates in relation to other groups in a society. In this way, Barth makes the cultural content of an ethnic identity in some degree arbitrary and thereby exchangeable, and regards the boundaries in themselves as an important factor in the self-understanding and legitimization of an ethnic group. Barth’s discussion of boundaries is interesting for this study, since it aims to describe relations and interaction between groups in a society. His discussion also supports the view held by Sollors that ethnicity is constructed and Hylland Eriksen’s idea of relationality. It offers the opportunity to understand variants of Swedish-American culture in different cultural, political and social settings in the United States and might give clues to the ways that class and ethnicity can interact with each other. As I have tried to emphasize in this chapter, there are social dimensions of belonging to an ethnic group and a more instrumental way of interpreting ethnicity.

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97 Ostergren; Robert C. A Community Transplanted.
98 See for example: Klein, Barbro. Svenskare ån Sverige? : folkavrstraditioner och kulturarvspolitik i tre svensk-americanska bygder. pp.1-21. Klein claims that selections among Swedish traditions are made, which are then reshaped and adapted to a social strategy that develops within groups, sometimes based primarily on local community rather than ethnicity.
100 See e.g. Sollors, Werner. Theories of Ethnicity a Classical Reader. p. xvi.
101 Sollors, Werner, The Invention of Ethnicity. see also: Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge. and Anderson, Benedict Den föreställda gemenskapen : reflexioner kring nationalismens ursprung och spridning. These conceptions of culture are similar to the research on ethnicity.
103 Barth, Fredrik. Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. pp. 294-324.
Since this study aims at analyzing a specific social segment, the working class portion of the Swedish-American ethnic group, and maps the interaction between groups based on ethnicity and class, Sollors, Hylland Eriksen and Barth all become important for my analysis. However, a concept for describing relations between ethnic groups is essential to understand ethnic relations in general. I will therefore return to a discussion on power and ethnicity in American society. Now, instead, I will turn to the concept of generation, since both ethnicity and class are made more complex by the fact that different generations of ethnic minorities and workers acted in different ways based on their belonging to a specific sociological generation.

**Generation**

The structuring principle of *generation* is in this study intimately connected with ethnicity and to the degree of ethnic and class identification that different generations of immigrants display over time. My basic point of departure is the concept of *sociological generation* put forward by Karl Mannheim, who claims that the term is based on the biological rhythm of men and women with birth, aging and death as given. To give the concept a social meaning, interaction between people is taken into account. Mannheim’s idea is that people from the same generation have a common position in the social and historical processes at a given point in time.\(^{104}\) This common position limits the potential experiences of a generation and predisposes it toward a characteristic way of thinking and a historically relevant pattern of action. According to Mannheim, sociological generation is a way to structure the life cycle of groups of individuals where people with a common cycle will share values, attitudes and opinions at the same time as certain thoughts will be excluded through the collective experiences shared by the generation. The sociological generation includes all individuals born within the same cultural and historic region. The social participation that Mannheim sketches can vary in strength among different individuals, and the tie between the individual and the experience specific to a generation varies in strength. Other group affiliations might be more important than belonging to a certain generation.\(^{105}\)

Mannheim distinguishes between generational position and belonging to a specific sociological generation. The concept is similar to class in itself and class for itself. The former does not imply any consciousness or specific patterns of action, whereas the latter is characterized by participation in contemporary social and intellectual currents.\(^{106}\) In short, a collective identification with time-specific currents of thought is an aspect of belonging to a “generation for itself”. Consequently, peasants born at the same time as an urban middle class population do not generally belong to the same sociological generation. In the same way, a

\(^{104}\) Mannheim, Karl. *The problem of generations*. p.121


\(^{106}\) Mannheim, Karl. *The problem of generations*. pp. 133f
Swedish emigrant from a rural area who gets employment in a Minneapolis manufacturing plant does not necessarily belong to the same generation as a brother who stays in Sweden and becomes a farmer. Biologically they are part of the same generation, but the experiences made in Sweden and Minneapolis respectively creates ideological bonds with distinctly different sociological generations. In this study the concept of generation is central to the understanding of the relationship between different positions in the life cycle, and the attitudes and opportunities that are the result of these different positions.

This will in turn affect a person’s conception of identity in important ways, with regard to both ethnicity and class. The concept of generation is for Mannheim a way of explaining social and cultural variations between individuals corresponding to different positions in the historical process. This is one point of departure for this study, since each generation of Swedish-Americans hypothetically belonged to a distinct sociological generation. These generations of Swedish-Americans acted in different ways based on their respective experiences based on generation, class and ethnicity. I therefore use generation in conjunction with the other structuring principles.

The generational aspect of ethnicity was first discussed by Marcus L. Hansen who formulated the so-called Hansen thesis in 1938 in which he analyzed immigrants in American society and their successive generations. Hansen’s theory focuses on the first three generations after immigration. The immigrant generation, according to Hansen, generally had a need to maintain contact with the society of origin, to live close to the fellow countrymen and to preserve their language and culture.

The children of the immigrant generation tended to separate itself from its ethnic heritage and to concentrate on becoming an accepted part of the host society. The problem for this generation, hence, became an identity conflict where, in the eyes of the first generation, it became too Americanized, but society at large tended to regard them as too “ethnically oriented”, too Swedish, too Polish, too Irish etc. The problem for the third generation after immigration occurred when it was seeking to rediscover its roots in the shaping of an identity. Here the ethnic heritage tended to play an important role for understanding one’s heritage and one’s own conditions and position in society.

Hansen’s thesis has been discussed by Joshua Fishman and Wladimir Nahirny, who claim that Hansen’s ideas have to be developed to make sense of the generational aspect of ethnicity. Fishman and Nahirny argue that different generations do not have the same type of ethnic consciousness but that all of them are, in their own way, ethnically conscious. In general, the first generation of European immigrants to the United States lacked a national ethnic consciousness; it was

rather local and regional identities that were important. With the second and third
generations a change in language occurred, but the ethnic identity tended to re-
main strong. However, ethnic identity was not expressed primarily by affiliation
with the ethnic group or via the family, but rather through abstract values and
ideals. The question about the relationship between different generations is
thus important when trying to analyze group relations during the time when the
children of European immigrants came of age in the American society.

Lars Olsson has used the term generation to analyze differences between genera-
tions of workers in the printing business in Sweden, and the strategies and class-
consciousness developed by different generations of typographers. All of the dis-
tinct generations had a specific experience of the labor market and of politics
more generally. The first generation of typographers had roots in old artisan tra-
ditions and tended to be more liberal in politics and more oriented towards estab-
lishing good and peaceful relations to the employer based on “reasonable de-
mands” on wages and working conditions. Against this “older” tradition, there
emerged a Social Democratic Reformist phalanx of younger workers who was
class conscious, who had distinctly different experiences of the labor market and
who wanted to pursue a tactic based on the premise of class solidarity. A second
conflict then arose between older typographers and younger during the 1950s
where the younger generation tended to become less socialist and showed less
class solidarity than their older colleagues. Olsson explains the differences in
perspective between generations of workers by changing labor relations and
more general changes in Socialist strategies and the overall political climate.
Both the establishment of a strong Socialist movement in Sweden and the cold
war debate between Socialists and bourgeois parties, hence, played a role in the
changes in worker’s political affiliations.

Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci was not primarily a scholar, but his work on hegemony has
important analytical qualities. His writings on hegemony constitute more an
ideological program than a scholarly description and sketched a strategy for the
socialist labor movement under industrial capitalism after the revolutionary fail-
ures of the late 1910s and early 1920s. Gramsci’s writings can therefore be seen
as a critique of orthodox Marxism and an attempt at ideological regrouping.
However, his work has also the timeless quality of having added something rele-
vant to Marxist writing, since some of the fields he touches upon were weakly
developed in Marx’s own work. They are therefore in some ways a complement
to Marx and a development of the relationship between base and superstructure.
Hegemony, it can be argued, is a concept that has brought base and superstruc-

109 Fishman, Joshua; Nahirny, Wladimir. American immigrant groups: Ethnic identification and the
problem of generations. pp.266-281.
ture closer together better than orthodox Marxism, creating an understanding of
the role of what Marx called the superstructure and trying to downplay the im-
portance of structurally determined social development in the Marxist tradi-
tion.\footnote{Lears, T.J. Jackson. \textit{The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities.} pp. 567, 568.}

I will use Gramsci’s concept of hegemony and the developments of the concept
contributed by Raymond Williams and, in Sweden, by Marion Leffler. In the
form presented by these writers the concept describes a relationship between
classes. The concept of hegemony describes a state of dominance at a certain
point in a historical process which expresses a power relation between classes in
an industrial capitalist society. The power relation is, however, not primarily
built on the direct exercise of power, nor does it include violence; instead, the
ruling class tries to acquire the consent of the working class and other social
groups in society that are not in power. This pursuit of consensus, according to
Gramscian thought, is expressed in a bid for control of everyday culture and is
aimed at creating consensus about specific group interests, specific ideas, and a
specific culture connected to the ruling class. Through this process involving cul-
ture and ideology the ruling class can obtain the consent it needs to be able to
form society according to its goals, and hence become hegemonic. Through eve-
ryday culture the interest of the ruling class is in this way presented, and gener-
ally interpreted, as a societal interest.\footnote{Williams, Raymond. \textit{Marxism and Literature.} pp. 108 and 91-96.} In industrialized countries, Gramsci
claims, the bourgeoisie is hegemonic, i.e. it has achieved national leadership with
the consent of the ruled groups in society.\footnote{Leffler, Marion. \textit{Böcker, bildning, makt.} p.53}

Hegemony is, hence, based not solely or even mostly on the control of the means
of production but on the control of everyday life and the social and cultural pat-
terns that shape it. Gramsci wanted to point out that it was through everyday life
that hegemony was achieved and sustained, though the control of the means of
production shaped the class patterns. Culture was the central element of the
power base of a ruling class. It was through everyday culture that the bourgeoisie
could make the lower classes give their consent to its leadership.\footnote{Gramsci, Antonio. \textit{En kollektiv intellektuell.} p.224} Culture, ac-
cording to Gramsci, hence becomes the most important arena for the class strug-
gle. As a result of this interpretation of culture, the relationship between control
of the means of production (relationships in the base) and cultural power (rela-
tionships in the superstructure) is re-evaluated in Gramsci’s writings.

According to Gramsci, the bourgeoisie will only use the direct exercise of politi-
cal and other forms of power (dominio) during periods of crisis to get their view
of the world and its ideal form of society accepted by other social groups. The
consent is realized by making values and cultural patterns of the ruling class
common sense and “natural” to other groups in a society, presenting these ideo-
logical and cultural patterns as its “natural state”. Other forms of culture are
characterized as conservative or immoral and destructive. To spread values, thoughts and opinions, the ruling class uses a range of civil institutions like churches, schools and mass media.\textsuperscript{115} Institutions, together with their intellectuals, carry and spread the ideology important to upholding bourgeois hegemony.\textsuperscript{116} The organic intellectuals of each class are important bearers of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ideas and are those that have the power to create and sustain hegemony or challenge an existing hegemony.\textsuperscript{117}

Hegemony is, however, not a monolithic entity. It contains patterns of thought from other social groups than the ruling class. The hegemonic culture constantly interacts with other forms of culture that stem from older social patterns and older economic systems (residuals) as well as from new ones (emergers). By integrating other (new) forms of cultural patterns, it gradually changes through contact with other class cultures. Thereby it increases the acceptance of hegemonic culture among the ruled classes.\textsuperscript{118}

Since hegemony is based on consent it can never be total. Thus, hegemony cannot be achieved once and for all but is a cultural state that constantly changes and that shapes class relations through time.\textsuperscript{119} Hegemony must thus be renewed, re-shaped and defended, but can thereby also be challenged and limited.\textsuperscript{120} The struggle for hegemony is a constantly changing process, where historical agents come into conflict in a number of different arenas of society to get their picture of the world confirmed and accepted by others and to win their consent. This gives hegemony the character of an ideal type, since neither dominio nor hegemony can in reality exist in pure form.

Gramsci claimed that it was crucial for the working class to create a counter culture to the dominant one connected with the bourgeoisie. In order to create this counter culture it was essential for workers and the socialist labor movement to create alliances with groups outside of the industrial proletariat and imbue these groups with values and ideas from the culture of the working class. In this way bourgeois hegemony was to be challenged. This type of analysis, according to Gramsci, would constitute a historical bloc within which the culture of the working class was hegemonic.\textsuperscript{121} This cultural takeover of power was essential in the struggle of the working class in order for it to be able to take over political power. A cultural bid for power, according to Gramscian thought, must hence always precede a political one.\textsuperscript{122}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{115} Leffler, Marion. Böcker, bildning, makt. p.53
\textsuperscript{116} Williams, Raymond. Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. p.145
\textsuperscript{117} Gramsci, Antonio. En kollektiv intellektuell. pp.143-162.
\textsuperscript{118} Williams, Raymond. Marx och kulturen. pp.101-106.
\textsuperscript{119} Williams, Raymond. Marx och kulturen. pp.94-96.
\textsuperscript{120} Leffler, Marion. Böcker, bildning, makt. p.53.
\textsuperscript{121} Gramsci, Antonio. En kollektiv intellektuell pp.36-40.
\textsuperscript{122} Gramsci, Antonio. En kollektiv intellektuell. p.93.
\end{footnotes}
Kirby A. Miller has shown how a struggle which held distinct class markings for the meaning of cultural symbols went on within the Irish immigrant community in the United States. The Irish immigrant bourgeoisie was marginalized in the new country and chose to counter these tendencies by using nationalistic rhetoric to mobilize the ethnic group and play down class tensions. The Democratic Party became an important vehicle for this project. By using cultural values and symbols from the old country and taking advantage of the political arena in the new, the ethnic group was mobilized and thus created a platform for the Irish bourgeoisie in its efforts to become accepted by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{123}

Class-based counter cultures in the United States are not hard to find during the period of European mass immigration. But counter cultures many times took on the character of a mix of both class and ethnicity. Per Nordahl shows one example in his work on Swedish-American radical immigrants in Chicago.\textsuperscript{124} Another counter culture, based on class and ethnicity, has been analyzed by Gary Gerstle, who has shown that there occasionally developed class-based alternatives to a homogenous Anglo-American working class identity.\textsuperscript{125}

These are some examples that illustrate how class and ethnicity can interact to create counter cultures and counter identities, and that power in an ethnically hierarchical industrial capitalist society cannot readily be described from the class perspective alone. Rather, power relations are best described as based on at least two hegemonic processes, based on class and ethnicity, which both need to be analyzed when discussing a group of immigrant workers and their relation to their native-born employer. In his work on early working class Detroit, Richard Oestreicher has used the term “sub-culture of opposition” to show how ethnic workers came together and formed an oppositional culture in relation to the employers.\textsuperscript{126}

The concept of hegemony has been criticized for its ambiguity,\textsuperscript{127} and is in many ways difficult to operationalize, at least in Gramsci’s own sketchy version. The clarifications made during recent years give it more solidity by relating it to other analytical principles.\textsuperscript{128} Marion Leffler emphasizes the need to relate he-

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Miller, Kirby A. \textit{Class, culture and immigrant group identity in the United States. The case of Irish-American identity.}, pp. 96-129
\item Nordahl, Per. \textit{Weaving the Ethnic Fabric.}
\item Oestreicher, Richard.
\item Leffler, Marion. \textit{Böcker, bildning, makt.} p.55. Leffler refers to a critique presented by Perry Anderson, see also Lears, T.J.. The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities, where Lears sums up some of the critique presented by American scholars.
\item Leffler, Marion \textit{Böcker, bildning, makt.} Lund,1999. pp. 52-63. One aspect that I have tried to modify in my model is the focus on the national level, that assumes a homogenous nation state, which has not been problematized in the research I base my interpretation on.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Hegemony and its relation to power, culture and ideology

Hegemony, as already stated, is the overarching theoretical principle behind this thesis. It is more far-reaching than the concept of culture, because it relates the total social situation (described in a far-reaching definition of culture) to a society’s distribution of power. By claiming that individuals can autonomously form and shape their lives without regard to the surrounding structures, one fact is disregarded, namely that individuals constantly interact with their surroundings and that the position of the individual in society and the ability (or inability) to decode social processes is structured by this position, which thus partly controls the choices made by the individual. Hegemony is also more far-reaching than ideology, since that term signifies a formalized system of conscious thoughts and opinions, while hegemony ranks ideological traits (features) in a way that creates structure and meaning for the power relations in a society. Culture, however, is a notoriously difficult term to define and therefore needs some further discussion because of its relationship to hegemony.

In recent decades the concept of culture has both increased in use and been the object of a lively theoretical discussion. The problem of defining it (and limiting its reach) has been the focus of attention. Two views of culture have been discussed, first as a description of the fine arts and, secondly, very broadly, as a term to label all aspects of human existence. Within historical research the latter definition has been used more often than the first. Culture, hence, can describe a group of people with similar perspectives, with common ideas, attitudes, knowledge, values, and beliefs and the way in which these are transferred through symbols, rites, signs, habits, and customs in social intercourse and through language communication. Terms that can be used to sum this complex entity up are mentality, collective consciousness, life styles, and living patterns.

Furthermore, culture can be seen either as a system or a process. In the latter case the individual is not only a carrier of culture, but also an agent of change and a
builder of culture. Culture as a process makes it possible to explain changes, for example in an ethnic culture, where identity changes through redefinitions of identity as the position of the group changes in society, and where people are affected by cultural phenomena outside the ethnic sphere.

Class bound cultures have been regarded as complex entities, and the analyses of the culture of the working class in particular have been considered problematic, due to the cultural dominance of the bourgeoisie. The Swedish ethnologist Orvar Löfgren has claimed that aesthetic expressions should not be included in a cultural analysis of working class culture, since values connected with such expressions have strong connections with bourgeois values.\(^\text{134}\)

Here I agree with Marion Leffler, who argues that Löfgren’s distinction between everyday cultures and “art” as culture is not very fruitful.\(^\text{135}\) Instead, researchers should regard classic ”Bildung” and cultural products as literature and art, not primarily as bourgeois phenomena, but as part of the ”hegemonic process, and as areas for social and cultural confrontation”.\(^\text{136}\) Hence, I would like to claim that the concept of culture should contain both definitions, since both are needed to create an understanding of problems regarding classes and their cultural relations to each other. The cultural products created within every class become, in this interpretation, a concrete manifestation of a class bound culture and must be regarded as part of the hegemonic process. A connection can, in this respect, be made with Nils Hasselmo, who finds within the Swedish-American ethnic cultural sphere one ”major” and one ”minor” culture and defines the latter as an a-political every day culture. I resist the idea that there even exists such a thing as a-political cultures, since culture expresses identity, and identity expresses, or is connected, with some kind of societal interest. One interpretation of the relationship between “large” and “small” cultures is instead that hegemonic groups make the smaller ones small while promoting their own ideology and culture.

The concept of hegemony and the hegemonic process, thus, give these contrasted cultures meaning and they might in this perspective be regarded as counter cultures to the hegemony of the ruling class in a society. The counter cultures contain everything from well-defined and well-organized historical blocs to alternative cultural forms aimed at reducing the influence and power of the hegemonic culture.\(^\text{137}\)

Orvar Löfgren and Billy Ehn have claimed that one cannot regard class societies as characterized by only one, homogenous culture, but rather as a society where many sub cultures coexist.\(^\text{138}\) One way to differentiate culture is to study the cul-

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\(^{134}\) Löfgren, Orvar. *Kulturbygge och kulturkonfrontation : kring kulturförändring i 1900-talets Sveri-ge*.

\(^{135}\) Leffler, Marion. *Böcker, bildning, makt*. p. 60

\(^{136}\) Leffler, Marion. *Böcker, bildning, makt*. p.61.


\(^{138}\) Löfgren, Orvar; Ehn, Billy *Kulturanalys*. 
tural constructs of different groups and the arenas existing for cultural and social confrontation between groups.139

**Organic intellectuals**

Gramsci’s explanation of the perseverance of a bourgeois hegemony was the number of civil institutions and the role of the intellectuals in communicating values, ideas and culture through these institutions. He made a distinction between traditional and organic intellectuals. The *traditional intellectuals* are not connected with a specific time or class, but most of the time they work for or within the ruling class. Examples of intellectuals of this type are researchers, lawyers and writers. Gramsci defined organic intellectuals in a very broad way and claimed that every person who is more or less active in the public sphere and who mediates thoughts and values in a direct or indirect way is to be considered an organic intellectual. These organic intellectuals were in a different degree and in different ways connected with one of the two major classes in industrialized societies. These were not limited to bourgeois intellectuals like teachers, clergymen and journalists, but also included less obvious groups like company owners and white-collar employees. The working class had organic intellectuals in the form of union men, political agitators, educators and journalists.140

These intellectuals play an important role in the hegemonic process. Gramsci claimed that a class, through its intellectuals, could create and sustain or de-throne hegemony, and through their own hegemony transform society according to class preferences.141 In my interpretation, hegemony describes processual changes taking place in the power relation between groups in industrial capitalist societies. It is not a static entity, but is instead set in constant motion by historical changes. I also regard hegemony more as an ideal typical figure of thought than something actually possible to gain once and for all.

**The problem of ethnicity and class in a model based on hegemony**

Now, what is the role of ethnicity in this model? Is ethnicity merely a false consciousness that blurs out real power relations, something used by conservative forces in a society to keep the working class in line, or is ethnic identification, on some occasions, “rational” for the working class, too? Is hegemony even relevant in a society like the United States that has traditionally been seen as classless and based on immigrant groups with various cultures? A new conception of the rela-

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139 Leffler, Marion. *Böcker bildning, makt*. Other studies of working class culture: Lindqvist, Mats. *Klasskamraten*.; Skarin-Frykman, Birgitta. *Livet som arbetare*. For a discussion on bourgeois culture see for example: Löfgren, Orvar, Frykman, Jonas(ed.). *Den kultiverade människan*. and Åberg, Martin *En fråga om klass?: borgarklass och industriellt företagande i Göteborg*.

140 Leffler, Marion. *Böcker, bildning, makt*. p.58f

141 Gramsci, Antonio. *En kollektiv intellektuell*. pp.143-162
tion between class and ethnicity is clearly needed here to prevent ethnicity from being merely a function of class.

It seems to me important to conceptualize this as an even relationship, where the two structuring principles are placed side by side in an analysis, and where the ethnic make-up has an impact on class relations, and the class structure on ethnic relations.

Gramsci connected a hegemonic position with bourgeois leadership on the national level. His thoughts were probably guided in this respect by the focus on the nation state that prevailed in his time, and on the strategies of the socialist political movements in Europe that focused on the national level in the first decades of the 20th century. His image of the nation state when he formulated his ideas about hegemony was probably that of an ethnically homogenous body. His model for describing power relations in industrial capitalist societies is therefore ethnically blind.

Since no nation state in Europe or on the American continent has ever been homogenous but have always in some degree been affected by migration and encounters between ethnic groups, this dimension needs to be analyzed in the emerging industrial capitalist societies. This is essential, since Europe and the American continent were affected by large-scale migration when labor moved to core areas in the world system. Let us therefore turn to the development of a dominant ethnic group in the United States.

The nation has been the object of a massive body of research. Earlier research has claimed that the nation states are ideological constructs with their roots in the 19th century, aiming at constructing a sense of community that was to replace local communities and family ties that were destroyed with the advent of industrial capitalism. This process of community building has led to what Benedict Anderson calls, “imagined communities”. Two ideal typical forms of “imagined communities” exist, one based on ethnic belonging, and one on allegiance to certain political ideas. The United States belongs to the latter group.

However, later research has discussed American nationalism and its relation to cultural markings and skin color and has concluded that the nation-building process in the United States was intimately connected with the colonial heritage of England, the ethnic identity that was developed in relation to specific circumstances on the American continent and nationalist ideas that flourished after the War of Independence. Matthew Frye Jacobson has shown how the constitution was a document that took as its point of departure the goals of this emerging group that I have chosen to call Anglo-American. This is a term I use to describe

a dominant group in American society. This group was the basis for the nationalist project and despite the political content in the declaration of independence, it contrasted itself against other racial and ethnic groups on the American continent and new immigrant groups that arrived after the nation-building process had begun. A problem arose, according to Frye Jacobson, when increasing numbers of immigrants from non-English speaking countries started to arrive. When “the founding fathers” formulated the constitution, Frye Jacobson argues, they had had in mind a free white English speaking person, and not immigrants from other European countries.144

This dominant ethnic group that was intimately connected with American institutions like schools, churches and administrative bodies became the most important and influential ethnic group in 19th century America. Its position of leadership was not considered carved in stone as documents pushing for a defensive attitude pertaining to naturalization from the 1790s support a self-conscious construction of Anglo-American identity. These tendencies were also clear in the so-called no-nothing movement that was a reaction from parts of the Anglo-American group on primarily Irish and German immigration during the 1840s and 1850s. I sometimes will refer to this dominant group as made up of American-born or native-born. This group is distinct from Native Americans as this signifies the indigenous peoples who lived in the US and Canada by the time that the European immigrants started to arrive. The fact that someone was American-born does not, however, necessarily mean that individuals was part of the Anglo-American group as the group of American born children of European immigrants became increasingly large and diverse.

A conclusion to this short overview of nationalism and the establishing of a dominant ethnic group tied to the American nation-building process is that power relations in an ethnically hierarchical society are not limited to class relations. Hence, we need to integrate a dimension in the theoretical model that takes into account ethnic groups and their separate interests.

I have chosen to use the expression hegemony to describe the relation between different ethnic groups, too. This is a way of adding a material dimension to ethnic relations and to create meaning to the struggle between ethnic groups in class societies.145 The ethnic element complicates the class structure in a way that makes power relations impossible to do justice to only through the concept of class. Ethnicity must be added to understand class formation and the relation of the Swedish-American part of the working class to the Anglo-American part.

144 Frye Jacobson, Matthew. Whiteness of a Different Color. pp.205-208. See also pp.39-52 for a discussion on the ranking system for the European immigrant groups.

145 Roediger, David. The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class.; One of Roediger’s main points in the book is to make the American working class a historical agent on the race issue. He tries to show how white workers profited from a racially segregated labor market; Frankenberg, Ruth. White Women, Race Matters. Especially the introduction, where Frankenberg discusses the concept of racial geography and its material implications.
This is central to understanding the ethnic division of labor and the ranking of different ethnic groups in relation to the (ethnic) group constituting the cultural norm in a given society. One ethnic working class group can therefore not be equaled with another, either culturally or materially, because of the ranking processes inherent in the two separate hegemonic processes at play. Since I believe that there are two separate but intimately linked processes, I have chosen not to use Milton Gordon’s concept of ethclass.\textsuperscript{146} I find this concept too static to describe the relationship between class and ethnicity. One ethnic group, of course, does not have the monopoly of the means of production, but rather, control of societal institutions that created a basis for dominance, as described by Gramsci in his model of class: the school, the mass media and the church.

This control of societal institutions also creates prerequisites for control of the development of industrial capitalism. In conclusion, racial and ethnic identifications create certain material prerequisites that are a function of a certain ethnic group’s connection with and dominance over societal institutions, which in turn affects this group’s relation to the means of production in a given society.\textsuperscript{147} Furthermore, since societal institutions were adapted to this group, the institutions were culturally coded in a way that excluded the bourgeoisie that belonged to ethnic groups other than the Anglo-Americans. Therefore, class and ethnicity together reinforce the dominance of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie, which took control of the cultural and material development in the United States during the age of European mass migration. One should however, consider the porous openings for bourgeois leaders of specific ethnic groups, in line with Kirby Miller’s essay above whose mobility made them necessary and even vital adjuncts to Anglo-American ruling elites. The groups between the immigrant workers and the Anglo-American bourgeoisie, i.e. the Anglo-American workers and the immigrant bourgeoisie, hence, also plays crucial roles in the processes where an ethnic and class based leadership is established.

Based on previous reasoning, I claim that during the age of mass migration the Anglo-American ethnic group was the group in the United States that constituted the norm for all other ethnic groups. To pinpoint exactly what this form of culture consists of is difficult, as it constitutes the measuring stick for all other cultures, and therefore can only be understood as a contrast to other cultures that it have the power to define.\textsuperscript{148} Anglo-American culture does not differ from other normative ethnic group identities in this respect.

I think that the concept of whiteness might be helpful in clarifying the relationship between Anglo-American ethnicity and immigrant groups. According to

\textsuperscript{147} Frankenberg, Ruth. White Women, Race Matters. Especially the introduction, where Frankenberg discusses the concept of racial geography, and its material implications.
David Roediger, whiteness was a racial identity that emerged as a result of racial conflict, the emergence of an industrial capitalist order of production and the nation building process in the United States. Under pressures to adapt to an Anglo-American society, whiteness became a way of integrating the European ethnic identities that were transposed in the American context into a racial identity, as an important dimension of the Americanization process of the Europeans. This was the solution on how to uphold an Anglo-American national culture despite the coming of millions of non-Anglo immigrants to the United States. As the Europeans sought and eventually became "white" and to some degree lost their ethnic identity, whiteness can be seen as an emerging response from the hegemonic ethnic group during the 1800s. Whiteness and Anglo-American identity hence were not, as has been shown as being the case with immigrant identities, mutually exclusive. Instead, they show strong overlapping tendencies, illustrating the connection between Anglo-American ethnic identity, whiteness and the ongoing project of American nation building. Whiteness seems a good way of describing this group which had hegemony, bearing in mind the limits of that concept as an ideal typical construct. The theoretical concept of whiteness is in different ways connected with normativity, the power of different groups to define what is “normal” or common sense in a given society. This normative function is not won or lost once and for all but is the subject of constant negotiation.

In this role of an ethnic group lies important power in constructing a society based on specific ethnic markers through everyday culture, and creating consensus about certain ideas of how to organize a society. The power of hegemonic ethnic groups therefore lies in the fact that they can define themselves and rank other groups. From this follows that the ethnic hegemonic process and the strategies and behavior of a dominant ethnic group have an impact on how class relations are constructed.

Being such a loose term, whiteness is notoriously difficult to operationalize, and there seems to be some confusion in the discussion of it. In this study, whiteness is merely a way of supporting my idea of a hegemonic culture based on a specific ethnic identity and connected with the nation building process of the United States. The concept of whiteness has been put forward by a range of American researchers trying to define and explain the behavior of a dominant group in American society, a group based on ethnic markers and on belonging to a specific "race". In this respect, whiteness shows great similarities with the concept of hegemony as it has been developed to describe class dominance, and the "white" group in America has indeed been called a hegemonic group identity by Kincheloe and Steinberg. In this book Anglo-American signifies native-born Americans with a base in a culture on the British Isles that is transformed into a national American identity during colonial times, connects with the nationalist project in the United States, but maintaining many of the English cultural traits. This group, I argue, made a bid for cultural hegemony by forming schools, churches and civil institutions that were to secure the Anglo-American domi-

nance in America despite the existence of other “racial” groups on the American continent and the coming of millions of other immigrants from non-English-speaking countries in Europe and East Asia.

I have thus connected power with ethnicity, as it does not merely express a societal interest but sometimes expresses the societal interest, and other groups are arranged according to certain cultural patterns defined by the hegemonic “core culture” in a given society. This process of defining also creates uncertainties about the status of new comers and, among other David Roediger has called “new immigrant groups” that arrived from southern and eastern Europe in-between people a phrase that underlines how the boundaries between ethnicity and race was not always clearly defined. In this way, hegemonic ethnic groups lay claim to ideas of how a society was to be organized. The connection between power and ethnicity has some implications for my discussion of ethnicity.

I have earlier discussed ethnicity as a flexible and situational entity, something that evolves over time within specific social and cultural contexts and develops through meetings between groups that create social and cultural boundaries between each other. By the very fact that ethnicity is situational, the power relations between ethnic groups can find global, national, regional, and even local expressions, as the interaction between class and ethnicity gives different results in different social and cultural settings, and on different analytical levels. Hegemony offers the overarching framework to structure class and ethnicity to each other. In this study, hegemony is therefore made up of two separate but linked processes. Both express in different ways a power relation. I am primarily interested in the ways that the relationship between an Anglo-American employer and the Swedish-American immigrant workers was shaped by material, cultural and social conditions. These conditions were in turn shaped by a political economy established and controlled by a dominant group with specific cultural markers and a socially dominant position. Let us hence turn to the Midwestern setting and the changing political economy that shaped group relations in specific ways under Anglo-American bourgeois leadership.

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4. The political economy of Minnesota 1850-1920

In 1849 Minnesota became a territory of the United States, and by then it had 4,852 registered inhabitants of European descent. Most of them made their living as farmers or fur traders. The population figures in pre-territorial days are sketchy at best but indicate that there had been Europeans present in the area for a long time. In the census of 1850, people of European descent were a minority compared to the Native American population, the former consisting of 6,077 residents and the latter estimated at 31,700.

This society built on social and economic interaction between Anglo-Americans and other migrants of European descent and Indians was ceasing to exist in its traditional form when a central political government was set up in St. Paul, and the economy and the ethnic composition of the region changed as more Europeans arrived in the territory during the 1850s. As the economy became more reliant on farming, the older economic system that integrated, to some degree, Native Americans and Europeans with an interest in the fur trade faded away and gave way to a new social and economic order. At the same time as territorial status was attained, rights for women and non-whites deteriorated. In 1849 the legislature limited the suffrage to white males only. They alone could be elected to office.

There were two major reasons for this change in racial and gender policy. First, social relations changed very fast during Minnesota’s early years as a territory. This has to do with the steady influx of a farming population; most of whom were Anglo-Americans or Germans. Secondly, the legislature came under the control of new migrants from the Midwest and the eastern states. They were Anglo-American Protestants and came from an environment where discrimination against non-whites was part of everyday life.

In the 1850s Minnesota was under the political control of the Democrats, a party that had strong connections with federal “Indian money”, which played a central

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151 I am using the term Native born to describe the white group that had been born on the American continent, whereas Native American refers to the tribal people that had lived on the American continent before the arrival of European colonists.

role in establishing the economic and political agenda for the decade. Politicians and Indian traders like Sibley and Rice obtained their good economic standing through the Indian trade and their political power derived “from their ability to deliver the Indian expenditures to the larger community”. Hence, there was a strong connection between politics and economics, which enriched the first big businessmen in the history of the region.

Not only the ethnic but also the political map started to change in the 1850s. The new groups of migrants came from the Mid Atlantic states, New England and the Midwest outside of Minnesota territory. A population of 40,000 in 1855 mushroomed to 150,000 within three years. In the federal census taken in 1860 75,499, or 43% out of the state’s total population of 175,454 residents, came from these three regions. Most of the newcomers were settlers that engaged in agriculture in the southeastern part of the state. They supported the Republican Party from its start in the territory in 1855. A large portion of the newcomers had their roots in other countries than the United States. Over 50,000 of the total population were foreign born at this time. Most of them were British, Irish, Scots or Canadians. There was also an early German presence in the state.

Many of the upper-class newcomers in the territorial and early statehood period were “Americans of the old stock” from New England: businessmen, timber speculators, city builders, politicians and founders of schools and churches. They wanted, according to John Rice, to create “a New England of the West” in Minnesota.

This group of newcomers differed in two ways from other settlers in the state. First, their culture had roots in the British Isles. Language, institutional culture and religion played an important part in the transplanted English culture. Secondly, different cultural spheres of colonial America melted together, creating a new national culture. Clearly English in origin, this culture developed new values in the American environment. Some of these values were codified in the constitution, and we can therefore speak of a new ideological base for this form of culture, including the sovereignty of the individual, the delegation of powers to the central government and the sanctity of private property.

Most of the old stock Americans in Minnesota had their roots in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states. This made up the core of the Anglo-Americans that shaped Minnesota institutions, built cities and founded industries. Members of this cultural group were religious puritans and political Republicans with

153 White, Bruce M. The power of Whiteness, or the life and times of Joseph Rolette Jr. p. 92.
156 See my theoretical chapter for a connection between ethnic identity and political ideas.
157 This term is notoriously difficult to define. I use it to describe the culture that emerged from the English colonial heritage and the traditional English dominance on the North American continent. It blurs certain cultural differentiation but has a common base in American nationalist ideas and the ways in which British culture continued to thrive on the American continent.
strong links to the construction of an American nation separated from the British Empire. These Anglo-Americans created institutions adapted to their political goals, as historian June Holmquist put it, “Yankee enterprise determined the shape of Minnesota’s institutions”. The Anglo-American project to create a new New England can be illustrated by a speech given in 1857 before “the New England Society of the Northwest”, where one speaker hoped that Minnesota would “imitate the heroic virtues of her foster mother, till New England industry, New England enterprise and New England thrift shall build here a glorious super-structure of education and gospel truth, till Sabbath bells shall echo from hill-top to hill-top, and forests now untrodden shall be filled with the murmur of the common school, ensuring the intelligence and integrity to our people and making the land we live in like the land we left”. Hence the presence of this bourgeoisie group with certain Anglo-ethnic markings ensured a bid for political, cultural, economic and religious dominance, whose goal was Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony.

During the 1850s politics were intimately linked to the question of what the future economic system would look like in the state. The many Republican newcomers hailing from the east were mostly concentrated to the farmlands and more interested in developing agriculture in the region and in getting federal subsidies for railroads rather than “Indian money”. Hence, these new political interests had no desire to eliminate any role for the federal government in encouraging private enterprise in the soon-to-be state of Minnesota. Their desire was to change the way the economic system worked in the state and to establish agriculture as its most important trade. The development of agriculture was swift during the 1850s, and in the 1860 census there are 18,000 farms listed in areas of arable land. At the same time the manufacturing industry was weakly developed and a modest number of 562 “manufacturing establishments”, most of them small scale, is recorded in the census. The economic change also corresponds to a shift in politics from Democratic dominance to Republican.

**Statehood and new economics**

In 1858 Minnesota became the 32nd state of the union. What initially drove people to move to Minnesota were the good farmlands and the rich natural resources. When President Lincoln signed the Homestead Act in 1862, the prerequisites for immigration became even better. Paired with actions intended to stimulate immigration and movement to the region taken by railroad companies

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158 Holmquist, June Drenning (ed.). “Introduction” in *They Chose Minnesota*. p.1
159 Rice, John G. “The old-stock Americans” in *They Chose Minnesota*. p.59
162 United States Federal Census of 1860.
and politicians during the 1860s, the total population in the state grew to 439,726 residents in that decade. During the period between 1860 and 1890, the non English speaking immigrant groups were on the increase. Those who came to Minnesota were to an increasing degree from Germany or Scandinavia. The steady stream of Northwestern Europeans was complemented by a trickle of eastern Europeans like Czech and Polish farmers who took up land, and Finns who started to arrive after 1880.

By 1860 the Republican Party was the strongest political force in the state. The party’s position in the state has been described as hegemonic into the 1890s. However, the political program of the recently-constituted Republican Party was not uncontested during this period and it was constantly plagued by internal strife. The Democratic Party, by no means a spent force at the time, despite its oppositional role in the Civil War era, upheld a strong and efficient organization and worked as a counterweight to the stronger Republican Party on many issues. Republican dominance was not unthreatened by other political forces either. At the end of the 1860s, the Temperance Party launched a candidate for Governor. The party did not attract many voters, but still posed a potential challenge to the established two parties and the system on which political power was built in Minnesota.

The ethnic column in the 1870 census shows that the proportions represented by different groups had changed, including the proportions of European immigrants and native-born “Americans”. The number of native-born amounted to 279,009, while the foreign-born population numbered 160,697. This was an increase of the foreign stock from 29% in the 1860 census to roughly 36% in 1870. Many of the newcomers did not have English as their first language, due to the marked increase in German and Scandinavian immigration. The Germans and Scandinavians made up a large portion of the immigrants. The 279,009 native-born were by no means a homogenous body at the time. Many of them had at least one foreign-born parent.

The Scandinavians had, by the 1870s, a long-standing relationship with the Republican Party, which had been championed by ethnic leaders since its inception in 1855. The Germans were more divided in politics, and it is difficult to make an assessment of their involvement in Minnesota politics. Generally German Catholics voted Democrat while Protestants favored the Republican Party. An important factor in the partisanship of Germans in Minnesota was temperance. Germans generally opposed prohibition and temperance, which made them side with the Democrats on this issue. In 1870 the Germans had increased their number to over 40,000 and the Scandinavian population was on the rise, too.

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In the 1870 census the number of farms was given as 46,500 while that of manufacturing establishments was 2,270, employing 11,290 people.\textsuperscript{167} Many of the newcomers were involved in farming enterprises and were thus affected by the generous land policies launched by the Republican Party.

In the 1880 census, the Scandinavians were the largest foreign-born group with 39,176 Swedes and 69,255 Norwegians. The German-born population was at this time 67,137. These three groups made up the dominant portion of the foreign-born population. The Irish at this time consisted of only 25,000 foreign-born even though the ethnic group of Irishmen has been estimated at almost 80,000 in the state in 1880.\textsuperscript{168} Few of the Irish were engaged in farming. Instead, they were a city-dwelling population except for some areas in southeast Minnesota, where they dominated some farming communities. These pockets of Irish settlement has largely been attributed to their role as track laborers for the railroads.\textsuperscript{169}

Carl Chrislock has described these ethnic differences as “diversities of interests within the foreign-born population” which prevented the creation of “a solid immigrant voting bloc.”\textsuperscript{170} Scandinavians generally allied themselves with “native born Americans” in casting votes for the Republican Party, while the Democratic Party depended heavily on the non-Scandinavian immigrant element, especially the Catholic Irish and Germans. Anglo-Americans dominated the political establishment. During the 1860s and 1870s these ethnic voting patterns were created, and an ethno-cultural dimension was added to Minnesota politics.

Carl Chrislock calls this process where political boundaries started to follow ethnic boundaries “a process of mutual repulsion” and has shown how the political stereotypes of the time played a role in the political behavior of immigrant voters. Cultural images were created and affixed to the political parties. The Democratic Party’s presumed affiliation with “Rum, Romanism and Rebellion” provided a negative point of reference for Scandinavian voters, while the stereotypical image of Republicans created by Democrats was colored by the distaste for “puritan”, “blue- nose,” pietistic reform that emphasized individual moral responsibility for right behavior that drove Catholic voters away. As the Scandinavian element increased, so did the majorities of the Republican Party. These ethnic voting patterns came to play an important role into the 1890s, when the political map changed again.\textsuperscript{171} Chrislock’s discussion bears on the development of the so-called “third party system” which built on older political dividing lines between Whigs and Democrats.

As shown by census figures from 1870, 1880 and 1890 the region was dominated economically and socially by farming. The value of farming products dur-

\textsuperscript{167} United States Federal Census of 1870.
\textsuperscript{168} Holmquist, June Drenning (ed.). \textit{They Chose Minnesota}. p.2
\textsuperscript{171} Chrislock, Carl. \textit{The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918}. pp. 33-35.
ing this time increased from 33 million dollars in 1870 to 71 million dollars in 1889. The number of farms grew during the period from 46,500 to 116,851. The change in economic patterns was not, however, limited to farming, since this period also marks substantial growth in the manufacturing sector, largely industries involved in processing farm products, and the construction of railroads. 172

In 1879, the value of farm products amounted to $49,468,951 while the value of manufactured goods was $76,065,198. Almost half of the figures for manufactured (machine-made) goods came from the 436 flour mills that transformed $37 million dollars’ worth of wheat into $41.5 million dollars’ worth of flour products. Agro business, based on grain farming, was very profitable. At the same time 253 sawmills transformed $4-5 million dollars’ worth of logs into $7.3 million dollars’ worth of lumber. 173 These data suggest that the character of the farming community was diversified by a growing manufacturing industry based on agricultural products. From 1870 to 1890 the manufacturing industry increased from 2,270 establishments with 11,290 employees to 7,505 with 79,629 employees. By 1890, the value of machine-made goods had risen to 192 million dollars. The economic development of Minnesota during the period illustrates the gradual change from frontier isolation to integration into the larger economic patterns of capitalist development in the United States.

The marked increase in the manufacturing industry can be associated with a number of specific sectors. Most of them were part of an industrial complex based on agrarian products centered in Minneapolis, which started to grow as a result of the proximity to the farming communities and eastern investors pumping money into these enterprises. The milling dynasties of Minneapolis were founded during this period and names like Pillsbury and Washburn can be identified with the milling industry and the Anglo-American colonization and exploitation. John S. Pillsbury, one of the milling capitalists, also got involved in politics. Elected Republican governor in 1875, he thus maintained the connection between parts of the business community and politics created in the new territory.

The settlements and businesses of the 1850s and 1860s were for the most part clustered in the southeastern corner of the state and concentrated in river valleys and along waterways. One prerequisite for the expansion of agriculture, lumbering and other commercial activities beyond the river valleys was the improvement of the transportation system. Minnesota businessmen and politicians made plans for railroad-building in the late 1850s, 174 but the plans were delayed by the panic of 1857. The chain of events, however, shows that the political administration was more than willing to support the railroad companies and that interests overlapped both questioning the promotion of immigration and economic development.

172 United States Federal Census of 1870 and 1890, respectively.
173 United States Federal Census 1880.
Apart from the depression of 1873, building progressed and by 1880 most of Minnesota’s southern, central and western parts were fairly well served by 1,300 miles of track. The railroads became important in recruiting new settlers to the state and as a means of promoting existing settlements.

During the 1870s the cooperation between the Republican state government and railroad companies intensified and started to yield important results. The railroad has an outstanding position in the economic history of the Midwest from the 1880s and into the 1920s, by which time 9,000 miles of track had been built in the state of Minnesota.\(^\text{175}\)

The first railroads in Minnesota were mostly initiated by local capitalists and owned by smaller companies. As eastern capital grew more inclined to invest money in Minnesota, many of them were sold to financial capitalists. Thus, a few major stock-holding companies emerged during the 1880s. During the 1860s the *Northern Pacific Company* had established itself in the state. Together with *St. Paul and Pacific Railroads*, then controlled by the railroad capitalist James J. Hill in St. Paul, the company owned and ran most of the mileage in the 1870s. Another big enterprise was James J Hill’s *Great Northern*, a trans-continental enterprise that also partly controlled *The Northern Pacific* from the 1890s. Hence, Minnesota transportation came to be increasingly controlled by a limited number of capitalists.

The building of the railroads gradually served to integrate Minnesota into the national economy, since the railroads were, apart from the less efficient steam boat traffic, the only way that Minnesota products could be shipped to markets in the east. The shipping of the great lakes was also a crucial transportation way, but often the railroad was a prerequisite for getting goods to harbor facilities. This book will touch upon both the crucial role of the railroad and the importance of the shipping on Lake Superior.

In the national economy, Minnesota served as a depot for raw materials and agricultural products during the late 19th and early 20th century and it became increasingly dependent on the railroads. The very structure of the transportation industry, a branch of the economy that was notoriously unstable with prosperous years of operation intermingled with economic problems, also had an impact on the social climate, with great increases and sharp cutbacks in the work force on the railroad. The railroad companies became a major employer of both unskilled labor and railroad workers. This work force was to a large extent made up of immigrants.

\(^{175}\) Peterson, Harold F. *Railroads and settlers*. See also: Ljungmark, Lars. *For Sale Minnesota. Organized Promotion of Scandinavian Immigration*. Ljungmark analyzes how Swedish immigrants were recruited by countrymen already established in the state. Colonel Hans Mattson, one of the main actors in the recruiting work, worked both for the government and the Northern Pacific Railroad.
Other economic branches soon followed the boom in railroad expansion. Between 1860 and 1890 the agrarian-based economy became more and more differentiated by local cliques in the manufacturing industry, a growing industrial complex based on agrarian products in Minneapolis and eastern capitalists’ increasing interest in iron ore and lumbering. The changes in the political economy of Minnesota at this stage in history had an important impact on social relations.

One of the prerequisites for the integration of Minnesota into the capitalist economy was hence the building of railroads. The railroad also functioned to spread capitalism as a system based on private ownership. As the railroad spread across the state, new areas were settled, and previously unclaimed land passed into the ownership of white farmers and American companies. This economic, demographic and social development brought about an increasingly dire situation for the Native Americans of Minnesota. Their desperation led to a number of uprisings against the European immigrants and the Anglo-American migrants culminating in a bloody uprising in 1862, when about 500 white settlers were killed, as the Dakota tribe made a last attempt to throw the white settlers off old Native American land. The retaliation all but wiped out the Dakota people in the state, reducing a population of 7,000 to fewer than 400 in 1866. Most of the Indians died in less than satisfactory reservations or moved to Canada or the Dakota Territory.

**Capitalist development and Worker Responses**

Artisan production and culture emerged in the cities of Minnesota but also the formation of an increasing force of casual labor that was needed for construction work in the booming cities and in the construction of the railroads of the state. This new demand for workers inspired further immigration to the state. Many became part of the work force that constructed railroads and towns in Minnesota during the second half of the 19th century. In a case study of Duluth in the 1870s, Matti Kaups shows how the work force was largely made up of immigrants and that the workers can best be described as jacks-of-all-trades. These conditions meant that the worker had to adapt his skills to changes in demand and that the gangs of casual laborers did pretty much every kind of work.176

The group described by Kaups consisted of Scandinavian, German, Irish and Canadian immigrants. The railroads in Minnesota were mainly constructed by immigrants, so the Scandinavians made up a large chunk of the work force engaged in building the railroads of Charlemagne Tower and James J Hill.177 A sample of 522 railroad track workers in three townships in Blue Earth County shows that

49% of the workers were Swedes, 19% were Norwegians, 16% Irish, 5% American-born, 4% Germans and 4% were “other Europeans”.178

The changing economy created a number of regional centers. Towns grew fast in the state during the second half of the 19th century, and three of them became cities: St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth. St. Paul was the state capital and administrative center, while Minneapolis was the industrial center of the region. Duluth soon became the most important harbor facility in the state, and an important transportation and industrial center on Lake Superior.

The marked increase in working men and women in the region and the increasingly tense relation between capital and labor in antebellum America soon triggered the development of a labor movement in the state. As early as the 1850s, the first embryo was established in Minneapolis and St. Paul, when a typographers’ union was organized. A handful of other unions formed during the 1850s, folded during the civil war, and not until the late 1860s did continuous labor organizations emerge in the Twin Cities.

First were tailors, cigar makers, plasterers and bricklayers, but the “Brotherhood of Railroad Engineers” also had an early presence in the state. In the 1870s and 1880s both Germans and Scandinavians started ethnic workingmen’s organizations. In the 1870s unionization started to spread outside the Twin cities and the number of strikes increased markedly due to the organizing activities. It is difficult to estimate the number of active union men and unions, since most of them met in secret because of the hostility from many employers. At the beginning of the 1880s central labor unions, the “Trades and Labor Assemblies” came into being in St. Paul and Minneapolis. In their records it is possible to identify some 73 unions in Minnesota in 1884, 17 in Minneapolis, 27 in St. Paul and 29 in other parts of the state. All of these unions were based in specific trades and many of them had roots in the artisan tradition of unionism. From 1885 to 1890 union activity surged and more than ninety new unions were organized statewide.179

The preeminent organization was a union of a different kind, *The Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor*, which tried to organize workers under their banner of one big union. The first local assembly began in Minnesota in 1878 and grew very rapidly. Local units sprang up in many towns and cities, including St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, and Two Harbors. In all, at least 38 communities in Minnesota had local organizations of The Knights of Labor at its peak in the late 1880s, when the Knights claimed 7,000 members in the state. “The Knights” played an important part in the economic, political and social life in Minnesota during the 1880s, and developed an organization that had an impact on union development long after the national movement had fallen into serious decay.180

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179 Lawson, George W. Organized Labor in Minnesota. pp.7-10
180 Lawson, George W. Organized Labor in Minnesota. p.11; Engberg, George B. The Knights of Labor in Minnesota. p.375
Minnesota groups were never involved in any general strikes, and the organization at large tried to promote education and arbitration. The local assemblies did not always follow this policy, as they were often “face to face with employer opposition”.

The founding of The American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1881 accelerated the decay of the one-union idea and hastened the decline of The Knights of Labor, as unions of skilled workers surrendered their charters and joined the AFL. The Knights, however, was one of the organizations that founded The Minnesota Federation of Labor (MFL) in 1890 together with the craft unions, The State Farmer’s Alliance, the State eight-hour league, the Trades and Labor assemblies in St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the nationalist clubs of those two cities. The federation came increasingly to be dominated by the trade unions of the AFL as that organization grew stronger. In 1894, it included 60 unions: 37 AFL affiliated, 17 Knights of Labor local assemblies, four city trades and labor assemblies, one local union of the American Railway Union (ARU) and an organization named “The Nationalist Club”, inspired by Edward Bellamy’s Looking Backward.

In 1892 the Federation adopted the principle of not supporting political parties and thereby took the same official standpoint as the AFL had done in prior years. In 1896 some members of the Socialist Labor Party were seated after a close vote, but lost their seats after another round of voting and were ruled out as members of a non-trade-union body.

In all about 160 new unions were started in Minnesota and nearly 100 lodges of the Knights of Labor were organized between 1856 and 1889. Although substantial in number only certain groups appear to have joined unions in the state. The American-born work force was overrepresented among union members during this early phase. In 1893 they made up 58% of the members in unions, while amounting to 38% of the total population.

The union presence began to restructure the relationship between capital and labor during this period, and the frequency of strikes in this era in Minnesota history tells a story of a tense relationship between employers and employees. The frequency of strikes rose sharply in the 1880s. While only 15 strikes were registered in the St Paul newspapers in the years between 1849 and 1881, no less than 70 were registered during the 1881 to 1884 period, half instigated by unions, and half for the purpose of procuring better pay. In the decades between 1890 and...

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184 Engberg, George B. The Knights of Labor in Minnesota. p.381.
1920 strikes became a recurring theme of labor relations, and they tended to become more violent as time passed.\textsuperscript{186}

The farmers in the state also organized themselves in the 1870s, not as a political force but as a secret society called \textit{The Grange}. The Grangers, several thousand strong during their heyday at the beginning of the seventies, worked for railroad regulation. \textit{The Farmers’ Alliance} was also an organization aiming to protect the farmers from big corporations. It was a pressure group that had a broader program than the Grange. In 1886 the Alliance sought to incorporate labor in the form of the Knights of Labor in its struggle.\textsuperscript{187} Another example of popular protest was the \textit{Greenback Party}, initiated and led by Ignatius Donnelly, a former Republican politician.\textsuperscript{188} These various organizations established a popular opposition to the established parties in Minnesota and in the other Midwestern states, based on small farmers and workers. Political entities established during the progressive era such as the populists and the non-partisan league inherited traits and ideas from these earlier organizations, so the roots of third party politics has rightly been traced back to these older organizations.

All these efforts at organizing people in the state mirrors the tendency towards a more diversified economy, where workers became a more prominent part of the population and where the share of farmed goods in the economy as a whole decreased. It also mirrors the growth of the urban centers and new economic and social structures in Minnesota, with large companies representing a major part of the economic output. Changes in the ethnic make-up are also evident, but immigrants still took a minor part in political and union activities of the kind sketched above.

The different attempts at organizing workers and farmers and the increasing strike frequency indicate the strong popular displeasure with the development of the political economy of Minnesota which emerged after the civil war with increasingly large and dominant companies. By the 1880s an Anglo-American bourgeoisie dominated the political economy and expressed its interests in the political arena through the Republican Party.

\section*{The Progressive era}

After 1890 Minnesota, like many other areas of the United States, experienced a shift in immigration. Even though a steady stream of Swedes and Norwegians continued to come, there were also immigrants from Southern and Eastern

\textsuperscript{186} There is a vast literature on labor conflict in Minnesota. See for example: Alanen, Arnold R. \textit{Early Labor strife on Minnesota’s Mining Frontier, 1882-1906}. pp.246-263.; for the more well known strikes see also, Eleff, Robert M. \textit{The 1916 Minnesota Miner’s strike against US Steel}. p.63-74.; Betten, Neil. \textit{Strike on the Mesabi-1907}. pp.340-347.

\textsuperscript{187} Chrislock, Carl. \textit{The Progressive Era in Minnesota}. p.10

\textsuperscript{188} Folwell, William Watts. \textit{A History of Minnesota}. Book iii. pp.117,118, 126-128
Europe. These newcomers were, among others, Finns, Russians, ethnic Poles, Jews, residents from Austria Hungary, and Italians. These groups were still largely outnumbered by the older immigrants, but in some local areas they were to make up the majority of the immigrant population from this time on. One such area was the Iron Range in Minnesota.

By 1900 the population of Minnesota had reached 1,751,394. Of these 425,780 were native-born whites. An additional 806,321 were native-born with foreign-born parents, while 504,935 were born in countries other than the United States.189

The “Colored” population at this time amounted to 14,358. Some 4,959 Minnesotans were entered into the “Negro” column of the census.190 The African-American and the “colored” population constituted a small group compared to the European immigrants, and the large force of immigrant workers dwarfed the “colored” portion of the work force. Most African-Americans came to be employed in low-wage service occupations as janitors, cooks and sometimes as porters on the railroads. They were for the most part dwellers in the cities, and St Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth hosted a large number of the African-Americans in Minnesota.191

The largest groups of foreign-born still came from Scandinavia, primarily Norway and Sweden, while the number of German and Irish immigrants, grew smaller, since practically no new immigration from those countries reached Minnesota after 1900. In the 1910 census the number of foreign-born residents from Germany, Sweden and Norway outnumbered all others as more than 340,000 people from those three countries still made up the mainstay of the foreign-born. To that may be added the number of native-born of foreign parentage from those countries.

The number of “new immigrants” and their impact on Minnesota life should not be underestimated, since most of them tended to cluster in industrial neighborhoods and made up groups of a close-knit ethnic fabric. The iron ore fields were one area that in time came to be characterized by the influence of groups from Southern and Eastern Europe.192 Many of them, hence, became miners in the ore districts while others worked in the transportation trades as railroad laborers or moved to the three big cities in search of work in the growing manufacturing industry.193 The Finns gravitated to the young cities on the Iron Ranges around the turn of the century, where they became an important part of the mining work force, together with Italians, Austrians, Scandinavians, Poles and a variety of other ethnic groups. In Duluth, Eastern Europeans dominated in the steel works

189 United States Federal Census 1900.
190 United States Federal Census 1900.
as they became employed by *United States Steel* to work at the “Morgan Park Plant”.\(^{194}\)

Food processing remained the most important branch of the manufacturing sector. The flour industry expanded in Minneapolis and meatpacking grew as Chicago capitalists made investments in large packing plants in south Saint Paul.\(^{195}\) The lumbering business, traditionally one of the most important economic trades in the state, ranked third nationally in the value of lumber produced in 1900. After the turn of the century the lumbering capitalists were faced with tough decisions as the deposits of lumber in easily accessible areas were running out. The leading lumber industrialists made the decision of moving a mainstay of logging operations and tried to develop a wood-based industry in the state. The replacement was the paper industry, a concrete proof that the state was gradually moving out of its frontier phase.\(^{196}\)

Changes in the economy were also of a structural nature. Farming per se became proportionally less important, while manufacturing, the transportation of goods and the processing of the products grew in importance. The corporate structure that had gone through a gradual change towards larger enterprises during the period after the civil war continued to change in the early 1900s. In 1900 many of the manufacturing enterprises still were small firms where the owner worked alongside the employees. But the following 20-year period, an increasingly large portion of the workers were employed in medium-sized to large scale industrial plants. One example of this development was the establishment of the *Morgan Steel Plant*, which opened in 1915. It was the largest manufacturing plant ever built in Minnesota and eventually employed 3,000 workers. The *Hormel meatpacking industry* developed from a small firm where the owner George A Hormel “split hog carcasses with a cleaver” in 1899 to a large-scale industry in 1920. This was also the time when companies like *3M* (Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing) and *Mando* were established. The companies thus grew larger, and a trend towards diversity could be traced in their production. The flour millers found markets for new products, as did the paper industry and others. The textile industry also expanded in this period, as *The Northwestern Knitting Company* grew to the largest employer of women workers in Minneapolis.\(^{197}\) This development towards larger firms can also be traced in the expanding interests of the US Steel Corporation as it acquired mines and transportation facilities in order to be able to secure the control of raw material and its transportation to the steel mills in Pittsburg and in other places.

\(^{194}\) Holmquist, June Drenning, Stipanovitch, Joseph, and Moss, Kenneth B.”The South Slavs” in *They Chose Minnesota*. p.395.

\(^{195}\) Jeffrey, Kirk. *The major manufacturers: From food and forest products to high technology*. p.225.

\(^{196}\) Jeffrey, Kirk. *The major manufacturers: From food and forest products to high technology*. p.227

\(^{197}\) Jeffrey, Kirk. *The major manufacturers: From food and forest products to high technology*. p.231ff
The economic system in Minnesota hence changed in dramatic ways between 1890 and 1920. Economic diversification created new social identities which in turn energized new political movements that brought these social and economic changes to bear in the sphere of politics. During the 1880s the political challenges to the Republican Party had increased, as people started to look for alternatives to the reign of the “Republican machine”. The trend towards regarding the political establishment, both Democrats and Republicans, with skepticism grew, and Minnesota with its many small farms and labor-intensive agrarian industry did not differ from the national patterns in this respect.

The two established political parties had different, through their respective ideological and cultural platforms, appeal to the immigrant groups. The connections are complex, but the Democrats generally appealed to catholic voters due to the non-religious platform of the party while the Republican Party tended to appeal to protestants. These affiliations also had important economic and geographic dimensions. But the advent of populism was fair warning of change. At the end of the 1880s leaders of the Farmer’s Alliance had discussed the limits of political pressure groups and launched the idea of a third party as a viable option to the two established ones. In 1890, the Alliance spawned an Alliance Party, which role after 1892 was taken over by the Peoples’ Party. It did not, however, gain the same support as in neighboring states to the West.198

The “progressive tendencies” started by earlier protest organizations established the presence of a political alternative in the state, which, in the 1890s were channeled into the Populist Party. Despite the party’s rather poor results at the poll, it had a large ideological impact, since many politicians in the state were influenced by its platform. Its mere presence forced the established parties, most notably the Republicans, to adopt parts of the populist platform during the 1890s.199

In 1898, the election of the Democratic candidate John Lind, a Swedish-born politician, heralded the progressive era in Minnesota. His opening message to the legislature has been called “an inventory of Minnesota’s life and problems at the turn of the century”. It also served as a blueprint for reform for the following two administrations. Even though Lind as a Democrat won the governor’s office, both houses and all congressional seats remained Republican. Lind rallied voters that were not satisfied with the Republican rule, challenged their nearly forty-year tenure in office, maintaining that the Republicans had been too generous to railroads and other big business enterprises.

The idea of severing the bond between big business and politics was not new and was well in line with the programs launched by the earlier popular protest organizations. Carl Chrislock has stated that Lind’s greatest political achievement was to have the populists’ ear and still give the political ideas respectability and

198 Chrislock, Carl. The Progressive Era in Minnesota. pp.10-11
199 Chrislock, Carl. The Progressive Era in Minnesota. p.4
credibility in the eyes of a city-dwelling middle-class population, something that the movements before had not accomplished.

The heritage of Lind furthermore dictated a looser attitude towards party affiliation. Divisions between progressives and conservatives by no means followed party lines during the decades after Lind’s inauguration, and there were conservatives and progressives inside both the established parties. Even though Lind failed to implement his program, it became “a norm, a point of reference for the policy making of succeeding administrations”. Progressive reform was hence on the political agenda of Minnesota politicians of all political camps during the progressive era of Minnesota history (1900-1918).

The “progressive era” in Minnesota was part of a larger “progressive movement” that swept over America from the early 1890s. What constituted this broad social movement has been the subject of some scholarly discussion, and both the interpretation of the progressive era as connected to certain corporate ideals as well as the idea that is was driven by middle class anxiety has been put forth. Shelton Stromquist has discussed the elusive character of this “movement” claiming that it constituted itself in response to the mounting social crisis of the late 19th century, that its “core component” was held together by a common “language of reform” and that it was made up of “diverse and overlapping networks of intellectuals, social gospel reformers, young educated women, labor activists, and insurgent politicians” and that it in effect constituted a cross class model of reform. These groups in time developed a sense of participation in what they called “a movement”. Carl Chrislock claimed that the progressive movement in Minnesota was firmly rooted in a small town “middle class” that feared big business and urbanization, but given the broader interpretation of the movement made by Stromquist this image is not completely accurate.

Stromquist has also discussed a duality in the movement where one part, the dominant “core group” fell into a meliorist tradition, while the other had connections to the class character of the producers’ movements that emerged in the decades after the civil war. Despite the differences between the two groups, both agreed on the basic problem as rooted in the capitalist development in the United States that tore the country apart and eroded public virtues, but the remedies to the ills of this development differed markedly. As “meliorist” middle class reformers sought to negotiate a middle ground between labor and capital, a basis was found for the movement in the language of reform. In expressions such as “the people”, which were undifferentiated by class interest, and a notion of public interest as opposed to “the interests” embedded in large companies and the class partisanship of workers, proponents of the movement sought to find remedies for the class struggle, in effect reinventing an earlier notion of an American people.

200 Chrislock, Carl. The Progressive Era in Minnesota. p.14
The language of class was effectively ruled out of this reform language as the mutual interests between labor and capital was emphasized. The class partisan minority on the other hand, put the language of class to use in a number of movements such as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the socialist parties, parts of the AFL and by the movement for industrial democracy in the 1910s and early 1920s. The more dominant “meliorist” tradition had, hence, their prescription clear in that the language of class needed to be marginalized together with the alternative politics of class. The progressive movement came together and reinforced their common identity through organizations such as the National Civic Federation and a range of others, and the movement drew heavily on the cultural baggage of the native born working class and the middle class. The ethnic dimension of the movement is hence obvious, and the rhetoric of the movement also underlined this connection as the term “the people” often was defined in a way as to exclude the “new immigrants” and African Americans on the grounds of their slow social progress and lack of capacity to assimilate. 201

The movement, without having an outright anti-capitalist content, opposed the influence of large companies such as railroads, and the powerful political machines that emerged after the Civil War. The political climate, influenced by new cadres of voters and political declarations, like Mr. Lind’s, changed the political agenda in important ways during the first decade of the 20th century. An illuminating example is Chrislock’s recapitulation of the history of John A. Johnson, a Democratic governor who successfully adapted to the new political environment. 202

The broad definition of the movement as connected to native born working and “middle class” interests and the cross class alliance of the reformers, however presents a problem of who opposed the movement. This is especially true given the success of the language of reform that became part and parcel of much political rhetoric during the 1890s and beyond. The movement itself defined its enemies as being “the interests” embedded in large corporations and political boss-ism that corrupted the political system.

Despite this surge of popular reform ideas in Minnesota and with progressives at the helm of state power, the ideas seldom resulted in major reforms. The labor movement in Minnesota was increasingly dominated by the Minnesota Federation of Labor, which followed Samuel Gompers’ voluntarist line regarding union political activity, allying it with a broader tradition of nonpartisan reform. The few socialist unions affiliated with the federation were marginalized. The Minnesota Federation of Labor cooperated during certain periods with the city labor councils, and, at times, with radical political parties on the city level. The connections within the movement as well as the differences are clearest on the state

level. Most influential became the councils of Minneapolis, St Paul and Duluth, but councils also existed in smaller working-class towns like Two Harbors. Although sometimes marginalized the work of the councils, like that in the city of Duluth, became important political and social forums. Not all groups of workers were welcome in the federation. One example is the miners on the Mesabi Range. The federation did not organize them, due to the fact that many of the workers were regarded as unskilled. Another reason for this was the resistance to unionization by the steel company. The skilled workers of the MFL did not want industrial unions to dilute their influence. The large unskilled body of workers in mining therefore had to turn elsewhere. For many the answer was the radical Western Federation of Miners, the WFM, and more radical alternatives. Among these the Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW), was active in recruiting workers in the lumbering and mining industries in the state after 1907. A number of reasons lay behind the anti-union stance of the capitalists of Minnesota. One was the growing tension between labor and capital in a context of increasing social polarization, whether the interests were based on differences over bread-and-butter issues or focused on ideological issues aiming at more far reaching societal change. The steady strengthening on the national level of the labor movement in general and socialism in the United States in particular from the turn of the century and into the 1910s was one aspect of this development. Another reason for anti-unionism was a decrease in the profit margin, especially in the transportation industry as the inability to control freight rates and an overbuilding of branch lines had an impact. Added to this, the reform agenda of the progressive movement had had an impact on federal policies directed at railroads, a fact that is illustrated by the Northern Security case which involved James J. Hill’s Minnesota-based Great Northern railroad. This development made many industrialists regard the union organization drives as salt in a recently sustained wound. Added to this anti-unionism was the lack of support for the trade unions from the “petty bourgeoisie” and broader segments of Americans regarding themselves “middle class”. Even though the progressive movement was sympathetic to the hardships endured by the working class and its problems they shunned socialism and had, in line with the language of reform of the “core movement”, no intention of supporting any radical labor organizing. Carl Chrislock illustrates the “progressive” line by analyzing the actions of a progressive governor during the miners’ strike on the iron range in 1907. Governor Johnson tried to find peaceful

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203 Chrislock, Carl. Watchdog of Loyalty. The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I. p.17
solutions to the conflict, but in the process questioned the right of workers to organize collectively. This middle class ideology, hence, first and foremost argued for the free individual that was supposed to be buying and selling labor at his own convenience. Johnson regarded the class partisanship of these unions as a way of decreasing individual freedom in the labor market and not as an organization for defense of their rights and interests, as the members tended to regard it. Such views convincingly illustrate the sharp divide between class interests within the progressive movement in Minnesota. Progressivism and its core element, hence, not only represented social reform, but also constituted a strong bulwark for how far social reform could be pushed and whom it should include. Furthermore, the anti-unionism of parts of the progressive movement secured a space for employers to fight it out with trade unions during the first two decades of the 20th century. Given the ethnic composition of the workers in US Steel’s mines, “new immigrants” from Italy, Eastern Europe and Finland, it seems safe to say that many of these were defined, by their ethnicity and their class position as “outside the circle of the people” during the strike, and hence were regarded by the middle class reformers with suspicion.206

There was some labor representation in different posts in the progressive administrations during the early 1900s but it was limited. Instead of reducing the pressure on unions, the non-partisan stand of the core group of progressives ensured those anti-union pressures remained the same or, in some locations, even increased. One such location was Minneapolis, where anti-unionism took on violent forms.

The anti-unionism of capitalists in Minnesota reached its zenith in the period of the Citizens’ Alliance (the CA). This was a national anti-union organization with local branches and in 1903, the year that the alliance was formed, Minneapolis, the industrial center of Minnesota at the time, was declared an open shop town.207 This declaration intensified the already intense struggle between labor and capital that would span the rest of the pre-World War I era in that city. The Minneapolis Alliance eventually branched out to other parts of the state.

The high-water mark for antisocialist and anti-union activity in Minnesota came during the World War I years. One activity of the CA was the spreading of information and propaganda; another was providing an employment agency for “free labor”, which was to supply non-unionized workers to members. A third branch was directed against organized labor. This work took many forms, but the most spectacular was probably the spies that infiltrated workers’ organizations.208 The clashes between labor and capital in Minneapolis continued well into the 1930s and culminated with the violent Teamsters’ strike of 1934 when

206 Stromquist, Shelton. Reinventing the People. p.9, 10
the CA created vigilante groups that were to break up demonstrations. Another source of anti-union and anti-labor activity is documented in *Spies in Steel*, which describes US Steel’s efforts at crushing the radical movement on the Iron Ranges and in the steel plants.209

On the basis of existing research we can draw the conclusion that progressivism was a response to changes in the economic base of the state and the rapid change in its social structures as tensions between farmers, big business and labor increased during the last decade of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th. The proletarianization of small farmers and the increasingly large force of manual laborers created opportunities for a third party to establish a presence in the state and to be a political voice for the large portions of immigrant workers in the mills, the mines, and on the railroad tracks for capitalists like J.P. Morgan, James J Hill, Samuel Washburn, John Pillsbury, E.H. Gary, Charlemagne Tower, and others. The progressive era was hence at the same time a period of social reform and a period of rising tensions between labor and capital, especially between the immigrant portion of manual laborers in the state and their employers. This is illustrated by two strikes on the Minnesota Iron range in 1907 and 1916, when radical unions like the WFM and the IWW tried to organize workers on the Minnesota Iron Ranges.210

The seeming paradox between a politically progressive tradition in power and violent labor disputes in the more industrialized sectors of the state, as well as in the lumber industry, is hence no real paradox as it was both a matter of ethnicity and class. Instead, tensions between labor and capital in Minnesota constitute one part of a process of change in the realm of labor relations, and is an expression for the ethnic and racial limits on who progressives deemed to be “the people,” in the sense of individuals carrying out the full responsibilities of citizenship. The result of the changing political climate formed in part by a national context and opinion makers on the national level, but also in part by the changing conditions in Minnesota, meant in reality the curtailment of the political power of Anglo-American capitalists on the state level.

This was expressed as demands to sever the connection between business interests and the political arena. It also meant that at least some of this political power was transferred to other groups in society; in the words of progressives: to a civic-minded group of reform-oriented people. This group is of course difficult to reconstruct in anything resembling an exact manner, but by looking at the groups who were clearly outside the circle of “the people” its contours becomes discernible. The strike in 1907 is, together with the miner’s strike in 1916, the most telling example of how progressive reform failed to bridge the gap between labor and capital. These conflicts had a strong ethnic component, and, as I will

209 Palmer, Frank L. *Spies in Steel: An Expose of Industrial War*.
show in this book, were played out as one part of the conflict between the language of class and the language of reform manifested in welfare capitalist schemes and other progressive reform initiatives during the 1910s. The conflicts, together with what happened on the local level in the railroad town I will analyze in chapter 9 also illustrates the limits of the reform program of the core progressive movement, mainly connected to what is generally vaguely called “the middle class”.

The ethnic composition of Minnesota with its large old immigrant population fostered some ties between the largely American-born progressives and socially mobile members of the immigrant community. However, large numbers of ethnic workers also seem to have been inspired by the language of class, which created an ethnic dimension to the struggle between labor and capital. This ethnic dimension is further underlined, when one analyzes the relationship between Anglo-American-dominated trade unions and unskilled immigrant labor that were not admitted into these organizations. A survey of early trade unions indicates that Anglo-American workers were over-represented, despite the large influx of Germans and Scandinavians.

The progressive era therefore not only sported social reform, but also made a marked change in the political arena, from a political climate where the political machines were strongly influenced by Anglo-American capitalist interests to a bid for political influence from new ethnic and class-based groups coming together in various protest movements. The most important incarnation of protest was probably The Minnesota Farmer and Labor Party, (MFLP) which rallied both Swedish and Norwegian immigrants to its ranks during its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s. Governor Floyd B. Olson, a man of Norwegian and Swedish descent and leader of the party, drew immigrants to the polls. The MFLP, however, was but one link in a long chain of oppositional political groupings where new alliances emerged that transcended ethnic boundaries and class lines. Some of the oppositional elements included the 1890s populist movement and the establishment of the Socialist Party in some municipalities and cities in Minnesota. One of these cities was Two Harbors.

In 1917, when the prospects for American participation in World War I loomed ever closer, state commissions were formed to secure popular support for the American war effort. In Minnesota, “The Commission of Public Safety” was very active in carrying out this task. The Republican governor Joseph Burnquist, a son of Swedish immigrants, initiated and headed it. He and the men around him interpreted their mission very broadly and wielded the power of the com-

mission against a wide range of groups that they regarded as disloyal: socialists, peace activists, German Americans and the organized labor movement. It also “moved relentlessly” against the Non-partisan League, an organization of protest firmly based in the interests of the working class and small farmers.

The Commission of Public Safety did its best to instill Americanism and loyalty into the citizens of the state, and in so doing targeted immigrant and radical groups for persecution. The progressive middle class in their mission to establish “democratic reform at home” were absorbed into a broad patriotic coalition that included their former enemies in big business. The war both promoted new ethnic and class alignments and encouraged many middle class reformers to align themselves with the business interests that they had opposed before the war. In Minnesota this re-alignment promoted a raging debate in the press around the status of the ethnic groups in the state. The Scandinavian and German press tended to challenge the dominant role of the Anglo-American establishment that pushed increasingly hard for the assimilation of immigrant groups into the Anglo-American core culture. This debate was the fuel that ignited the strong anti-German and general, anti-immigrant sentiments during the war. The work of the commission played a significant role in the realignment of class and ethnic relations during the war, and as a result the postwar political context in Minnesota was distinctly different. But the commission did not do it alone. It enlisted a wide range of helpers in its struggle to secure the loyalty and support of the citizenship. In this fight, the business community played an important role.

The Iron Ore Country, Lake County and St Louis County

When ore deposits were found on the Vermillion range, capitalist interests sought to acquire land grants between the mines planned and the shoreline of Lake Superior in order to secure land for a railroad. Apart from a vague hope of finding gold in the area, the ore deposits and the railroad alone gave life to Lake County. This is suggested by the slow agricultural development. In 1890 there were six farms, which produced farm products at a value of only 2,830 dollars. This indicates that the large influx of people between 1880 and 1890 was due to the ore industry.

When the construction of the railroad started from Two Harbors to the Vermillion in 1882 the number of inhabitants in the area was small. Only 106 people were living there in 1880, according to the census for that year. 65 whites and 41 Native Americans. Of the 65 persons designated as white, 33 were foreign-born while 10 were described as coming from “British America”. 19 were born in

Germany, 3 persons were born on Ireland and 1 in France. Not a single person was of Scandinavian origin, at least judging by the census. There were 4 registered farms at this time.\(^\text{215}\)

In 1890, after the railroad was constructed, the population increased manyfold. Many were railroad workers. Lake County had 1,299 registered inhabitants: 618 persons were registered as native-born, 348 men and 270 women (making up 44% of the American born). Of these 205 were born of native-born parents, and 394 of immigrants. At the same time the population of foreign-born persons were 677: 466 men and 211 women (31% of the foreign born). A large part of the population in Lake County lived in Two Harbors. The township was platted in 1885 as Agate Bay, but already in 1883, a post office known as Two Harbors was established. In 1888, Two Harbors was incorporated as a village, and in 1907 as a city.

In 1900, the number of farms had grown to 19 and the value of farm products had increased to 6,539 dollars. The value of livestock held in the county was below 5,000 dollars.\(^\text{216}\) Five manufacturing firms are mentioned and the value of goods produced was 835,327 dollars in 1900. The number of people that worked in the establishments amounted to 415 men, and no women. This leads us to two conclusions about Two Harbors. First, women were not gainfully employed at all in the manufacturing sector, even though they were likely employed in other types of work and second, it seems that a rather high number of people were employed in a limited number of companies. Through a payroll from the summer of 1890 it is possible to deduct that the D&IR was by far the largest employer as more than a thousand workers were employed during the high season in that year.\(^\text{217}\) The formal labor market for the manufacturing industry in Lake County at this time seems to have been completely dominated by men.

The total wages for men employed in the county amounted to 209,686 dollars. In comparison with the expenses for farm labor of 700 dollars in the county the same year, we get a hint of the economic structure and its reliance on a small number of manufacturing companies. The total population in the county amounted to 4,654. The number of native-born was 1,511 men and 893 women, and the number of foreign-born 1,622 men and 628 women. Of the native-born, 951 men and 657 women were born of foreign parents. The corresponding number for those with native-born parents was 544 and 218. The number of dwellings was 702 and the number of families 794, with 3,413 individuals living in families as dependents or boarders.

In 1910, 210 farms had been established in Lake County, out of which 185 were owned by immigrants. In 1920, 208 farms and 13 manufacturing establishments existed in Lake County. Of these 208 farms 142 had less than 100 acres, whereas

\(^{215}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1880.
\(^{216}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1900.
\(^{217}\) D&IR Payroll for June, 1890.
50 had between 100 and 174 acres. The 13 establishments produced goods at an amount of 1.6 million dollars. At the same time the agricultural output was 135,000 dollars. So agriculture in the area had risen in importance as more settlers moved in, but most farms were small and probably only used as one of many possible sources of income. Working for a fishing company, with logging or for the railroad became an important addition to the farming income for many. Foreign-born white persons owned 170 of the farms, while native-born whites owned only 38 farms. Consequently, the figures for this sector indicate an over-representation of immigrants as farm owners both in 1910 and 1920.

In the 1910 census Lake County consisted of 8,011 inhabitants- 5,172 males and 2,834 females- and the number of families were 1,477. By 1920 the total population had increased to 8,251- 4,922 males and 3,329 females. The native whites of native parentage were 1,331, making up approximately the same proportion of the total population as they had in 1890. The number of native-born of foreign-born parents was 2,919, and those whose parentage was ethnically mixed numbered 756. Foreign-born white males made up 2,128; whereas 1,026 immigrants were women. In 1920, 1,630 registered dwellings were found, and 1,745 registered families.

I have chosen in this study to focus on the town of Two Harbors and Lake County that was the primary center of concentration for most occupational groups on the D&IR. Two Harbors held the large locomotive stables, roundhouse facilities, repair shops, and the ore docks. There were also other stations along the track which were located in St. Louis County, as did the mines. The ethnic composition of Lake County in the years 1890, 1900, 1910 and 1920 are summarized in table 1.

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218 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1910.
219 As the railroad line of the D&IR crossed a county boundary and went through a number of towns on its way between Two Harbors and the Vermillion range, it has not been possible to do thorough primary research on the ethnic composition in this whole area within this study.
Table 1. The ethnic composition of Lake County 1890-1920.

<table>
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<th>Year/Category</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Native born parent-age</th>
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<th>Finnish</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
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<td>130</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>1188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Federal Census, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

* This group includes immigrants from Russia, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia (and Bohemia), Italy and Greece.

^ This group includes immigrants from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Denmark, France, Switzerland, Holland and Belgium.

As we see in table 1, Swedes and Norwegians constituted two large groups in the county in 1890 making up more than half of all immigrants. Another large group was the Canadians. The Irish group consisted of 31 persons, and people born in England, Wales or Scotland were 37 in numbers, whereas the Germans counted 22. The picture becomes more or less complete if we add 14 Russian-born, three Poles, one Austrian, and three Swiss.220

It is clear that the town of Two Harbors, from the 1890s and onward, had an immigrant population that was dominated by three foreign-born groups: Swedes, Norwegians, and Canadians. Between 1900 and 1920 the Finnish group, too, became a large group in Lake County, as the number of Finns increased dramatically between 1900 and 1910 and was ten times higher in 1920 than in 1900. The other groups I have lumped together as Eastern and Western Europeans. The Western European group together with the Canadians shows a marked increase in population up to 1910. The figures for these groups then dropped, in some cases dramatically. At the same time, the marginal Eastern European group increased in number between the censuses of 1900 and 1910 but then became smaller again in 1920. The largest part of this group came from Russia and Austria. Both these categories made up more than 2/3 of the Eastern and Southern Europeans in 1910.

The relation between Two Harbors and Lake County is interesting too in respect to total population growth. In 1900, Two Harbors, according to census figures had 3,278 residents. Ten years later, this figure had risen to 4,990 according to the census. Another source, Two Harbors in 1910, gives the number of residents to close to 6,000 persons.221 This meant that 63% of the population in Lake County resided in Two Harbors. In 1910, the native born of foreign parentage

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220 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1900.
221 Two Harbors in 1910. p.18.
were 2,448 in numbers. Of these, 866 had parents who had been born in Sweden. So the Swedish born and the children of Swedish born persons made up more than 2,000 of the total of 8,000 persons in Lake County by 1910.

The male population of voting age in Lake County in 1910 consisted of 3,554 persons. Of these, 2,422 were immigrants. 873 immigrants had been naturalized and 366 had taken out first papers. So, the immigrant voters in the local elections hence consisted of 1,239 persons. This made the impact on local politics by the foreign born population significant in Lake County by the 1910s.

The labor market situation seems to have changed significantly in Lake County during the 1910s, as a new generation of Americans sought employment. In 1910, the age group 6-14 year olds in Lake County, i.e. a group that was not on the labor market, but who would enter it in 10-15 years time or less, consisted of 1,252 persons. Out of these, 913 were of foreign or mixed parentage while 138 were foreign born. To these two groups can be added another 193 who were American born by native-born parents. The group with immigrated parents was by far the largest. Given the large number of children of Swedish immigrants in Lake County in 1910, it seems as if a significant portion of the children of Swedish immigrants entered the labor market from the mid 1910s and into the early 1920s and, hence, they became old enough to vote.

Not much has been written on Lake County, apart from a fine county history and a centennial book that presents the main developments in the area. Both emphasize the central importance of the railroad. Some academic literature exists on the ore fields, the mines in the Iron Range, and the city of Duluth. Accounts of the ethnic composition in the area tell us that many of the miners that came to the region at the beginning of the 1880s were recruited from the ore fields further east, in Michigan, and that the composition of this force was largely made up of English and Swedish immigrants but there were also smaller contingents of Finnish and Eastern European workers. These groups were the first to establish themselves on the Iron Range.

After the turn of the century an influx of Southern and Eastern Europeans changed the ethnic composition in the area, as Finns, Russians, Austrians, Slovenes, Croats, Italians and other groups moved in. These made up the mainstay of the population in the mining communities on the range from this time on. In 1910 46% of the population in St. Louis County was foreign born, reflecting the industry’s demand for, and reliance on, immigrant labor. In that year, the Finns constituted the largest group of the 50,000 workers on the Iron Range, while Slovenes and Croats were the second largest. Also, Italian and Scandinavian workers also resided in these communities. In St. Louis County more gener-

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ally, the composition of the foreign born in 1910 was heavily Finnish and Scandinavian, as 16,381 Finns are registered together with almost 20,000 Scandinavians. Austrians and Italians made up 11,444 and 4,184 respectively.

A primary concentration of labor for the entire region around the ore fields was provided by the city of Duluth, where heavy construction work had been going on since the 1870s, when the large railroads were drawn to the city and the build-up of efficient harbor facilities was going on. Duluth was a place where advertisements for labor were published in the newspapers to draw workers to the railroad. The early work force in Duluth was also of a strong immigrant character, and a large part of it was Scandinavian: Swedish, and Norwegian. Judging by the large Scandinavian population in Lake County there seems to have been some mobility of Scandinavians between Duluth and Two Harbors as the connection by railroad ensured fairly easy movement after 1887.

The railroad companies that established themselves in Duluth constructed, with the help of immigrant labor, an immigrant house that would function as “temporary housing for incoming immigrants”. The city of Duluth experienced heavy growth during the 1880s, which attracted increasing numbers of immigrant workers. Richard Hudelson has shown how immigrant communities were established in the city during the decade by looking at the establishment of ethnic churches. He documented the fact that the Swedish population of the city founded five churches while the Norwegians and Danes also established congregations. So, we have some reason to believe that some of the Swedish workers that built the D&IR in the 1880s came from Duluth or via Duluth. As we shall see, the owners of the railroad also tapped the Scandinavian labor supply in other cities in the state. Duluth, hence, became an important recruiting ground for the railroad as well as for the mines. The reception of immigrants in Duluth was made efficient through the establishing of an immigrant house, which in itself indicates the recognized importance of immigrant labor for the growth of the region around the city.

Another important economic asset in the region was timber. The lumber camps were, to a large extent, filled with immigrant workers during the busy season, and these seasonal lumbermen had to get other work during the spring and summer months. Judging by the census taken in Lake County during the winter of 1920, the primary employers, in the county during the winters, apart from the D&IR, were the lumber companies. The townships of Fall Lake and Cramer, which were located in Lake County, are good examples. In Cramer 25 out of 45 men with specified work places are said to have been working in lumber camps as foremen or laborers. The rest of the 45 worked for the railroad or farmed. In Fall Lake, the composition of the winter force was divided between lumbering, iron mining and the railroad while the city of Two Harbors itself was more char-

225 Hudelson, Richard/ Ross, Carl. *By the Ore Dock. A Working People’s History of Duluth*. pp.6, 8
acterized by railroad work during the winter too. But there are some roomers who are involved in lumbering in the city.226

As my main concern in this study is not the lumbering industry, I have not made any more thorough analysis of this work force, but judging by the ethnic composition of the workers, the Cramer Township Loggers were primarily Scandinavian and Anglo in character, whereas the Fall Lake workers were Finns, Scandinavians, Eastern Europeans and Anglos. The latter group is clearly connected to administrative functions in white-collar occupations but is also found as laborers while the Swedish born and Norwegian born are primarily connected to more skilled work as saw filers or as teamsters. The ethnic group with the most loggers seems to be the Finnish group but the group described as laborers in the lumber camps seem quite diverse as all of the above ethnic groups are represented.

The connection between railroad work and logging hence seems relevant as logging operations were concentrated in the winter months because it was easier to transport the logs during the snowy period, while the railroad offered more employment during the summer months between May and November/December. In this way the labor market functioned as a season-bound system for transient labor. There was also farm work to be found, but given the limited scope of farming in Lake County, this kind of toil was not a major factor.

A look into the 1910 census further strengthens the connection between railroad work and logging. As this census was taken in May when logging operations wound down and the ore season commenced it gives us some idea of the mechanics of the labor market in the region around Two Harbors. In Silver Creek Township in 1910, there are a number of men recorded in the census as “Laborers” who have stated that their work included both logging and work for the railroad company. I interpret this labeling of the men as both railroad workers and loggers to indicate the transition from logging to railroading that was happening during the month when the census was taken. There are also occasions where pages upon pages in the census are filled with “laborers in logging camps”, but in these large blocks of men I have found men listing themselves as section hands or involved in other types of railroad work. I interpret these as being men who had worked as loggers during the winter, who were still staying in the lumber camp when the census was taken, but who had been able to secure employment on the railroad during the coming summer. Many of these men are Swedes and Norwegians.227

The transient laborer is an elusive character in American labor history and he has been described both as a threat to Midwestern piety and as a necessity for a capitalist driven agriculture demanding a flexible work force as has been argued by historian Toby Higbie. Between 10 and 20 per cent of the transient agricultural


227 United States Federal Census for Silver Creek Township, Lake County, MN, 1910.
workers were immigrants, and out of these, more than 80% were estimated to have been Scandinavian. Many migratory laborers only worked through the summer and tried to make enough money to spend the winter in inexpensive boarding houses in larger cities. These men were generally out to make “a winter stake”, while others were only interested in making enough to “hold them over until the next job”. Higbie discusses farm labor, but his discussion is more general since common laborers shared characteristics with the seasonal workers in the wheat belt as they too supported themselves by taking temporary low-paying jobs.\footnote{Higbie, Toby. \textit{Indispensable Outcasts. Harvest Laborers in the Wheat Belt of the Middle West, 1890-1925.} pp.404, 409.} The connection between railroading and the mining industry is more difficult to say something certain about, but given the ethnic composition of the railroad workers in 1910 and 1920 and the mining industry during the same period, there seems to have existed a strict division of labor, where the Eastern European miners had a difficult time establishing themselves as workers on the railroad.

This evidence indicate that there were a number of sources of labor already in the region when Charlemagne Tower planned a railroad “through the wilderness” in the early 1880s.\footnote{King, Frank. \textit{The Missabe Road;: The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway.} p.15} It further underlines the importance of Duluth as a source of labor for the entire region and the fact that the logging operations and railroading could, in some cases, offer year round employment in Lake County for transient workers, at least around 1910. A general overview of the ethnic division of labor and the absence of Eastern and Southern Europeans from railroad work on the D&IR also indicates an ethnic division of labor between the ore fields where the workers were primarily from Eastern Europe, while on the railroad, as we shall see, most were Scandinavians, Anglo-Americans and Anglo immigrants and Finns.

The ore fields quickly became one of the economic centers in the region, and by 1910 the three Iron Ranges in Northern Minnesota stood for 58% of the total dollar value of ore mined in the United States.\footnote{Schofalk, Donald J. \textit{Organized Labor and the Iron Ore Miners of Northern Minnesota, 1907-1936.} p.218} Agriculture in the region was weakly developed due to the harsh climate and the less than suitable soil, but fishing and livestock farming developed into an important asset as meatpacking plants and fish factories were established in Duluth and along the coastline on the North Shore of Lake Superior.

To get some idea of the cultural life and the composition of a public sphere in the railroad town of Two Harbors it is necessary to shortly discuss the cultural development in the community. Administrative institutions in Two Harbors were weakly developed during much of the 1880s. At the same time there were a number of churches established at the end of the decade and the beginning of the 1890s and, according to one account, more than 20 saloons existed in the little
town. Add to this that the majority of the population was male, and the conclusion is that Two Harbors during the 1880s had the character of a frontier society. The railroad company put its imprint on the community from the very beginning. The churches were also complemented by some “elite” societies during the 1890s. The fraternal orders and the churches were hence, together with the labor organizations for railroad men and a short period of Knights of Labor presence in the late 1880s along with the saloons what was constituting Two Harbor’s public life during the period before 1900. A number of newspapers were also established during the decade.

By the early 1900s, indications are that Two Harbors had achieved some degree of stability and that railroad workers had started settling on a more permanent basis. The population increase from 1,200 to over 4,600 persons illustrates this together with the marked expansion of the railroad that came under new management during the late 1880s. The period after 1900 was characterized by increased political tensions in the community, but also by various schemes from the company to bridge class and cultural differences and maintain political control. The establishment of a Socialist presence and the Welfare Capitalist program of the D&IR are the most marked expressions of the tensions that reached its zenith during the mid and late 1910s. The commercial club became important in local politics from the 1890s. The organization is described in the volume Two Harbors in 1900 as “a private social organization with a membership restricted to thirty individuals”. It seems to have included railroad officials and local businessmen. The politics in Two Harbors will be analyzed in detail later on in this thesis.

Culturally, the community of Two Harbors, with its major ethnic groups composed of Swedes, Norwegians, Finns, Canadians and Anglo-Americans was quite socially divided. The churches, most of which were established around 1890 suggest that ethnicity functioned as a visible and important component in the everyday life of the community. There was one Catholic, two Swedish, one Norwegian and three Anglo-Lutheran churches in Two Harbors by 1900. The fraternal lodges also became an important social component of the everyday fabric of the community, and they were social arenas for their members as well as a source of stability as they offered the possibility of insurance and sick and benefit arrangements.

Susanna Frenkel has emphasized the importance of the lodges and secret societies for railroad workers and railroad officials in Two Harbors. Judging by the records of these lodges that were printed in the local newspapers, the first to establish themselves in Two Harbors were bourgeois enterprises such as the A.F & A.M., a Masonic lodge with the name Fortitude Lodge, No. 188. Judging by a

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preserved list of members, this lodge attracted primarily railroad officials, local businessmen and some Locomotive Engineers. The General Manager of the D&IR was one of the members. Other orders represented in the community by 1900 included the *Modern Woodmen of America*, *Knights of the Maccabee* and *The Knights of Pythias*. The orders often arranged social events such as dances, excursions and picnics for the membership. According to *Two Harbors in 1900*, there were also “several Scandinavian orders”. These were probably of the same character as the others in that they offered a social arena and an opportunity to acquire sickness and relief insurance. The latter was especially important for workers as both railroad work and the toil on the ore docks were dangerous and many workers were injured each year.

After the turn of the century a string of such societies was established, and one of them, *The Loyal Order of Moose*, even arranged a Labor Day celebration in 1916 indicating the character of its membership. The examples of the Moose and the Freemasons illustrate how the associations were socially coded, as the membership was drawn from distinct social groups. The same held true for a lodge of the Druids that primarily organized Scandinavian workers on the ore docks indicated by the name “Iron Dock Grove”. The lodges hence became a meeting ground for people in the community but the social and cultural coding of the lodges often ensured that the membership was drawn from specific ethnic groups or certain social circles in the community.

The Swedish lodges included one section of the *Wasa Order of America* that was established in 1913, and was the largest Swedish fraternity in the community. In 1918, the business directory in the Journal News lists nine different societies of which two were Scandinavian. Around 1910, there were 25 societies in Two Harbors, including the railroad brotherhoods with their auxiliaries. At least three of these organized Scandinavians. The Swedish ethnic churches also played an important role in the Swedish community of Two Harbors. In 1910, the Lutheran Augustana congregation had 348 members and had 180 children enrolled in 27 Sunday school classes. As we shall see later on in the thesis, the ethnic church wanted to take on a fostering mission in its relation to the Swedish workers in the 1890s, and the fact that the Swedish congregation had three distinct bodies that worked on fund raising illustrates the importance of the church in the Swedish community in Two Harbors. The Swedish group was, however, not uniform. Some Swedish workers, as I will show in chapter 9, seem to have preferred the Scandinavian Socialist club. The pattern observed nationally, whereby the

233 Membership listing for the Fortitude Lodge No. 188 of Two Harbors Minnesota.
235 Iron Trade Journal 2/11, 1905, p.5. In 1905, the 7th annual ball of the organization was held at Norden Hall.
236 The Journal News. 3/1, 1918, p.2.
237 *Two Harbors in 1910*, p.16.
238 *Two Harbors in 1910*, p.23.
church community only organized part of the Swedish immigrants, seems to have been true for Two Harbors too.

During primarily the 1910s sharp differences of opinions characterized Two Harbors and the conflict seem to have been related to both the issue of class and ethnicity. So, gradually from the turn of the century when railroad workers started settling down in the community, there emerged two distinct political and cultural groupings, where class and ethnicity in different degrees structured the community. In this process, the role of the company is important, as it was the major carrier of the industrial capitalist project in Two Harbors.

In 1910, the structure of the community can be analyzed through that year’s federal census records. By then, the city was divided into four wards, which were distinct by virtue of their respective ethnic make up and the class differences that they displayed. As this census is taken at the beginning of an ore season it also offers us a possibility of assessing the relationship between settled and transient workers. In 1910, most immigrant Scandinavians were found in the third and fourth wards of the city, whereas the first and second ward primarily harbored Anglo immigrants, children of Scandinavian immigrants and newly arrived Finns who resided in various boarding houses in primarily the second ward.

This ethnic and generational division also had a social dimension, and most unskilled workers were found in the Scandinavian wards, whereas many skilled railroad workers and white-collar workers were found in wards 1 and 2 together with a majority of the petty bourgeoisie. However, the situation is complicated by the fact that most business owners such as boarding house owners are found in wards one and two, and a large number of unskilled workers, not least Finns, were found at these boarding houses during the ore season. The housing of the transient laborers also reveals interesting characteristics as the transient workers found housing primarily within their respective ethnic networks. Settled Swedish workers and foremen tended to have unskilled boarders and roomers, while ethnic boarding houses such as the one owned by the Swedish Socialist Axel Lyon primarily hosted Scandinavian workers. There was even a division between Norwegians and Swedes in this respect, even if Swedish lodgers on occasion chose a Norwegian landlord. The same pattern can be found within the Anglo groups. The reminiscences of Herbert Widell whose parents had a boarding house for primarily Swedish workers in West Duluth during the 1920s underline this observation of ethnic networks. I will return to the function of these networks in discussing the hiring procedure on the D&IR in chapter 6.

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{239} Hudelson, Richard; Widell Herbert. \textit{Värmland in West Duluth. Memories of a Swedish Boarding House}. Duluth, MN, 2006.
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The coming of the railroad

The history of the ore carrying railroads in Minnesota starts in the 1870s. With the construction of railroads came eastern capitalists willing to invest in the state and exploit the rich natural resources found there. One aspect of this influx of capital was the race for what would later be known as the Iron ranges of northern Minnesota, i.e. The Cuyuna range, The Messabi range and the Vermillion range, and for the iron ore assets found there in the 1870s. The first interest in the area north and west of Lake Superior and Duluth was shown by a group of investors headed by a Michigan capitalist. They managed to get ownership of land on the Mesabi range and in December 1874 it incorporated the *Duluth and Iron Range Railroad Company* that was supposed to carry the iron ore down to the city of Duluth. No track was ever built and the ownership was soon taken over by the Philadelphia capitalist, Charlemagne Tower, who started mining operations on the Vermillion range at the Tower and Soudan mines in 1882.

Tower was the major owner, but through a list of other investors it is possible for us to see that a group of rich Philadelphians also put money into the project. Judging by the addresses, the investors were concentrated in a small section of Philadelphia and most of them lived on the same street as Tower.\(^{240}\) Construction of the railroad between the mines and Agate Bay, later called Two Harbors, was started in 1883 and was finished in July of 1884, when 68 miles of railroad had been built. On August 18, 1884, the first shipment of iron ore was loaded on the steamer *Hecla* for further transportation to the steel mills in Cleveland. Later extensions of the railroad were built from Two Harbors down to Duluth. The railroad took the name *Duluth and Iron Range Railroad* (D&IR).

In 1887, the Tower group lost its ownership, when the firm was taken over by *Illinois Steel Company*, at that time a company owned by Marshall Field, Henry Porter and the Rockefeller group. Under the new management, the company experienced steady growth during the 1890s as additional ore deposits were found on the Mesabi Range south of the D&IR’s tracks. As competing interests moved in, the major owner, Henry Porter, chose to expand the operations of the D&IR, hence increasing the work force. The ore tonnage shipped with the railroad also increased steadily, and reached a million in 1892. In 1901 the railroad became a part of the *United States Steel Corporation*, when *Federal Steel*, a successor to *Illinois Steel Company* was incorporated into *US Steel*.

A group of Duluth capitalists spearheaded by the Merritts, a regionally important business family, started the building of the second iron ore carrier in the area in 1891. The Merritts had acquired large quantities of railroad land and wanted to connect these locations with the harbor facilities in Duluth and Superior. The *Duluth, Missabe and Northern Railroad Company* (DM&N) stood ready in October 1892. In 1894 the Merritts lost control of the railroad and the mining operations on the Messabi range to the Rockefeller group, and the firm became part of

\(^{240}\) Charlemagne Tower Papers, *List of Bond Holders of the Duluth and Iron Range R.R Company*.
the **Lake Superior Consolidated Iron Mines Company**. In 1896 all Rockefeller interests in the region were leased to the **Carnegie Steel Company**. **DM&N**, like its railroad cousin further north, became part of the **US Steel Company** in 1901 after some financial maneuvering. The mines on the Iron ranges and the ore carriers were hence established with the help of eastern capital and in time taken over by a New York-led business empire.

The **US Steel** had an interest in the railroads because they formed the only serious bottleneck from the ore mines on the Minnesota ranges and the company needed to secure its supply of raw material for its steel production further east. During the US Steel period, the railroad and the ore fields became increasingly important as it provided a large portion, 58%, of the dollar value of iron ore mined in the United States in 1910. In the year before, the D&IR had transported close to 10 million tons of iron ore.241 These figures indicate the strategic importance of the railroad operations and the ore docks in Two Harbors in a national perspective. They also suggest the importance of securing a loyal work force dedicated to the company and engaged in transporting the iron ore to markets further east. The national importance of the railroads as a transporter of iron ore became even more obvious during times of war as the D&IR, as a result of World War I, transported more than 10 million tons of ore in 1916 and amounts almost as high in 1917 and 1918. In 1915, the two railroads combined transported twice as much as in 1914. But, as a counterpoint, the industry was sensitive to economic fluctuations. The D&IR was connected to the steel industry as a whole and during the recession of 1921, only 3 million tons were shipped.242

The D&IR was run by a president in Duluth that from 1901 was located in the same building that housed the management of both the sister railroad and the mining companies. The first president of the railroad, Charlemagne Tower Jr., was the son of its first owner and was president between 1883 and 1887. The superintendents were located in Two Harbors for the most part, but they were all tied to the United States Steel and the directives that came via the postal route from New York City. In the 1890s, Jacob L Greatsinger became a legendary character in Two Harbors as he carried the title General Manager of the railroad between 1892 and 1901. In the latter year, he was replaced by “veteran railroader” Francis E House, who ran the company until 1926, when he passed away and was replaced with a long time employee, Horace Johnson, who had worked for the company as both auditor and vice president.243 A legendary vice President of the DM&N, the sister railroad to the D&IR was William A. McGonagle who had started as an engineer for the D&IR in the 1880s. He replaced William J. Olcott as President of the DM&N in 1902 and headed the company into the 1930s. Olcott moved on and became the president of the Oliver Iron Mining Company,

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241 *Two Harbors in 1910*, p.17
242 King, Frank. *The Missabe Road*. pp.97, 198
one of the most important mining subsidiaries of the *United States Steel* in Minnesota.

Strikes were uncommon on the D&IR. Only occasionally did they erupt. These strikes were mostly connected to the ore docks and the first documented strike is from 1884. Then two strikes hit in 1907 and 1913, when the ore dock workers struck for higher wages.\(^{244}\) Yet another one occurred in 1916 during the iron miner’s strike in that year, while a fourth strike hit in 1920. This last strike was the only one where the ore dock workers were organized into a union. Two documented strikes of railroad men also occurred; one was of firemen and one of brakemen, and both occurred around 1890. All strikes were resolved within days which underlines the importance of the railroad as a bottleneck between the mines and the markets. It also underlines the generally quite conflict-free relationship between the workers and the company during the period, at least in the work place.

The First World War was a quite prosperous time for the railroads, but it also produced some administrative changes. Like other railroads nationally, on December 17, 1917, the D&IR and the DM&N were placed under the direction of the United States Railroad Administration. President House of the D&IR was placed as federal manager of both railroads, and William McGonagle temporarily became their president. The federal control lasted for 28 months, until March 1st, 1920 and the period has been described by Frank King who wrote a company history of the two railroads in 1972 as a time that was “not beneficial, nor…harmful” to the companies.\(^{245}\) What is clear, however, is that many occupational groups employed by the D&IR organized trade unions in the wake of the war years, and in 1919, many of the trades that had previously not been organized got union representation. The increased focus on welfare arrangements on the D&IR, however, started, as we shall see in chapter 8, well before federal control was established.

The two railroads, of which I will focus almost solely on the D&IR were run as a connected system from 1901 until a formal merger in 1937, even though they were two separate railroad companies. After the merger the *Duluth and Iron Range Railroad* was dissolved and the surviving company, the *Duluth Missabe and Iron Range Railroad* was operated as two separate divisions, the Missabe division, operating the track of DM&N, and the Iron Range division, operating the track of D&IR. The two divisions shared not only the track, but also personnel policies. They had the same welfare arrangements for the employees, the same company paper and the managers of both were interested in developing cooperation with the YMCA.\(^{246}\) The employees in both companies were also able

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\(^{244}\) The Journal News. 8/5, 1913. p.1


\(^{246}\) Young Men’s Christian Association. This organization had a special branch that cooperated with railroad companies. See Winter Thomas. *Making Men, Making Class: the YMCA and Workingmen, 1877-1920.*
to participate in welfare programs initiated by the US Steel. Furthermore, they supported the same organizations and were, together with the mining companies, regarded by people living in the area as one production system run by one company, the \textit{United States Steel Corporation}.

The railroad, hence, primarily transported iron ore, but in time, it also became a hauler of other goods and passengers and got a more all-season character. Due to the harsh climate in Northern Minnesota, the ore season, the busy time of the year, was limited roughly from May to November of each year. This period was, however, dictated by when it was possible to use the lake and to mine the ore.
Map of the D&IR, with the railroad town Two Harbors in the center. From the late 1890s. Courtesy, MHS.
The construction of the railroad, the work force and the division of labor in the 1880s

The established procedure for building railroads at this time was to put the work out on contract, and there were a number of contractors making bids for getting the job of constructing Charlemagne Tower’s railroad in northern Minnesota in 1883. The task was given to John S. Wolfe and Company, an Iowa-based company led by a Pennsylvanian railroad builder. When the bidding was over, one of the Duluth newspapers wrote:

Wolf and his son (who have received the contract) will return at once to Reithsburg [Iowa] where they have a complete railroading outfit, horses etc. which they will start for Duluth as soon as possible. They expect to return here with forty teams, all their tools and a large number of men, within ten days and get work well under way by the first of June.

The optimism in the statement is obvious and it is clear that enthusiasm for the project among the local establishment was high. The railroad officials in Two Harbors duplicated the reaction, when Wolfe and his team arrived in the summer of 1883:

Wolf and Co. has come! Six hundred men actually at work upon the road. They have agreed to forward men and teams to points beyond 11th mile. Character of work is good and everything looks workmanlike. Track out on secondly mile. Will probably take greater part of August to get out, by which time Wolf+ Co. can have at least 13 miles of track to lay.

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248 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 16th of May, 1883.
249 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from R.H. Lee to Charlemagne Tower 3rd of August, 1883.
The work on the road was carried out in three steps. First the stretch that had been planned for the railroad had to be cleared from trees. Sub-contractors, who in turn employed lumberjacks, organized this work for Wolfe. We do not learn very much of this type of work as the sources stay silent on it. We do learn, however, that one of the sub-contractors was an Irish-born man by the name of George Kinsella. He was one of the pioneers doing business in the community in the 1890s and early 1900s.250

Secondly, the railroad bed had to be graded. This was the heaviest and most time-consuming part of the job and we get an idea of what the work carried out on the line consisted of more specifically from what the chief engineer reports to the owners during his travels to the area:

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\text{[T]he character of materials to be moved in construction of your railroad will be for the most part, loose earth, gravel and boulders, or loose rock…Solid rock will not be encountered to any large extent…Timber for bridge construction, ties etc. is easy to find… As almost the entire length of your line is through a timbered country, the clearing and grubbing of the line will be a work of considerable magnitude- this work, as well as corduroying the swamps, getting out and delivering at convenient points, ties, bridge material etc. can best be done in the winter. The heaviest of the grading work can also be done in the winter, the lighter in the summer season.}^{251}
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Thus, the wooded country was broken through in some places by depressions that had to be bridged and by swamps which made the grading work difficult and involved keeping the road bed from sinking into the swamps at too fast a rate. The work also involved quite a lot of transportation of materials and, as we shall see, men, through a wilderness on the rim of industrial society. A large force of unskilled workers carried out this pushing of dirt, corduroying and lumbering with a limited access to machinery. This force would, as we shall see, decrease and increase as work progressed.

The third part of the work consisted of the laying down of props and track. This job seems to have been considered to demand more skill than the shuffling of dirt, since Wolfe brought his own track-laying crews to the area. This final part of the construction process also involved strengthening the line with surface gangs and a ballast crew that followed the track layers to “fine tune” the bed and to get the track in full working order.252

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250 Burwell, H. *Two Harbors in 1900*.
252 Charlemagne Tower papers, Letter from From Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 16th of May, 1883.
Recruitment, force size and track work

When the railroad construction was started during the summer of 1883 there was, as sketched by Kaups, already a low-waged, unskilled and mostly immigrant work force in the vicinity of the ore region. Among these there was a considerable number who had for some time worked for other railroad constructors. Wolfe, the contractor, had just finished another job in North Dakota and Minnesota and had some of his crews with him when he arrived in Agate Bay (Two Harbors).

In August of 1883 R.H. Lee, the Chief Engineer and Superintendent for the D&IR, made an estimate of the amount of labor currently employed. 509 men were carrying out preparatory work on the first 29 miles of railroad. To this work force of mostly unskilled labor came a track-laying force of about 40 men and another 50 who were not accounted for, since they changed camps on the day of the report. At this point ¾ of a mile of track had been laid. The workers had camps all along the line. Two weeks later Lee told his employer that over 500 men were employed and were “moving earth and rock”.

The number of workers employed at any one time fluctuated wildly during the summer and autumn of 1883 and into the spring of 1884. On July 23, 1883, Charlemagne Tower Jr. states that Wolfe has over one thousand men working on the road. A few weeks later the chief engineer, as we have seen, stated that some 600 men worked on the road. This either means that desertions among the workers or layoffs in the work force is close to 50 percent in two weeks, or that the company officials had little idea of how many workers were actually employed at this time. Either way it gives some insight regarding the relation between the company officials and the work force building the road. Fluctuation rates of this magnitude are not completely unlikely, since it is stated in the correspondence of 1884 that the turnover rates were a problem for the company during the construction of the road. The other explanation is probably also important at this time. The contract system at play can explain some of the behavior of company officials, as Wolfe and his company were the ones responsible for work on the road being carried out. This indirect relation between the railroad company and the workers has the effect that the officials are not particularly interested in the work force, only in the work actually carried out.

Furthermore, of the company officials Mr. Lee, who was married to one of Charlemagne Tower’s daughters, as well as the company president Charlemagne

254 D&IR Payroll records, May 1884.
256 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from R.H. Lee to Charlemagne Tower August 27th, 1883.
257 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower, 23rd of July, 1883.
Tower Jr., the son of the owner, were probably interested in presenting the owner in Philadelphia with good news regarding the road in order to remain in good standing. On the other hand, the letters do not withhold bad news relating to the work force, when the lack of workers employed on the road became a problem during the following year. The interpretation should therefore take into account, but not overemphasize, that the letter writers to some extent want to make a good impression on their employer/ father in law/ father. Going back to the two possible interpretations, it is safe to say that both of them indicate that the railroad company had no particular interest in the men who did the work. My conclusion is that those who built Charlemagne Tower’s railroad were probably regarded as a force of easily exchangeable workers with low skills by the officials of the D&IR.

At the beginning of December Charlemagne Tower Jr. stated in a letter to his father that Wolf and Co. had 850 men and 65 horses actually at work along the line. There was also a note that the company was recruiting more men and that they were doing this by advertising in the Duluth papers. The number of immigrant workers in Duluth at this time made it hardly impossible not to employ Scandinavians. The hiring of Swedish workers from Duluth falls well into line with the picture sketched by Kaups in relation to the quality of work carried out by Swedish workers in Duluth during the 1870s. The ethnic environment therefore played a role in the hiring of workers to the Tower project, since some of the recruiting was carried out in the area itself. It also means that the ethnic groups already in place in Duluth and its surroundings influenced the company’s ability to recruit workers.

The relation between the contractor and the Tower group seems to have been somewhat tense during the fall, as Junior stated that he had to press on Wolfe to get the job done: “[T]hey are active in carrying out the work and we are active in pressing them up to it”. Five days later the work force was still numbering 850, but the progress was slowing down with the coming of winter, and on December 20 layoffs in the work force were made because of falling temperatures and frozen ground. The work of laying down track was halted for the winter due to increasing costs.

By then 20 of the 68 miles had been laid out. Some work, however, continued through the winter: “Work goes along quite fast, in spite of the bitter cold weather, which the people in this country do not seem to mind”, Jr. tells his father. In the following spring, the workers cleared 60 miles of forest, and finished 30 miles of grading. The clearing work continued through the winter, but it

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259 King, Frank. *The Missabe Road*. p.17
260 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 5th of December, 1883.
262 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 20th of December, 1883.
was not until spring that the contractor could continue the work on the actual grading and laying. On April 11 Charlemagne Tower Jr. writes his father in Philadelphia and tells him that 600 men are employed and that all clearing is finished. The workers had used dynamite during the winter to remove earth from the hard frozen ground. Some stonework has been carried out on two of the “miles” of the road.263

During the spring tensions between Wolfe the contractor and the Tower group became more evident. Ely, a Cleveland capitalist that had invested money in the railroad project, wrote to Tower Sr. that the work was suffering from a terrible manpower shortage. Ely was of the opinion that it would take 1,500 men to finish the railroad by August 2, the date when the road was planned to be finished, and that there were only 400 men working at that time.264 Only two weeks earlier, chief engineer Lee wrote to Charlemagne Tower Sr. that more than a thousand men were at work on the road.265 How, then, could the discrepancy in the perception of the work force between the different letter writers be so large? Again, two interpretations are possible. Either desertions were more than 50% or the officials of the company, or Ely made an error of judgment based on disinterest, or perhaps a difference of interest. Ely, the investor and steel mill owner, was interested in the road being finished on time so that he would get access to the ore deposits, while Lee was interested in conveying an image to the company managers that all was well on the road and that he was in control of what was happening. This was not the case, however, as events afterwards will show.

The president of the railroad company, Charlemagne Tower Jr., discussed the manpower shortage with the contractor during the month of May but he seems to have been more or less ignored by Wolfe at first. Wolfe said that the number of men was more than enough to finish the road. During a count of the men on May 17 it was revealed that Wolfe employed 465 men.266

Because of the signals sent from Ely and the reluctance of Wolfe to hire more men, Charlemagne Tower Jr. decided to employ men on his own to get the job done. Through the correspondence between Charlemagne Tower and his son regarding the recruiting of men, we obtain some facts about hiring practices on the roads at the time and about the speed at which an employer could drum up willing workers. The process of hiring men during the spring of 1884 also reveals how and where the workers were recruited. In mid-May 1884, Tower Jr. sent recruiters to contact employment agencies in St. Paul to hire 200 more men. The workers were parceled up into teams of fifty, supervised by a foreman and sent

263 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower Sr., 11th of April, 1884.
264 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Ely to Charlemagne Tower Sr., 15th of May, 1884.
265 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from R.H. Lee to Charlemagne Tower Jr., 2nd of May, 1884.
266 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 17th of May, 1884.
to the roadwork. Tower Jr. hoped to be able to send in 300 men within ten days.\textsuperscript{267}

Evidently, the recruiting campaign met with instant success, since a letter of May 19 reveals that his recruiter, a Mr. Sargent, telegraphed from St. Paul that he would send fifty men by the train up to Duluth on the same night, and that he would send a hundred more that same week. On this day, the contractor and the president agreed that there was a shortage of workers for the railroad and that it was to be finished by August 2. They agreed that they had to hire approximately 700 men within weeks to get the road finished on time. Wolfe had been recruiting and had found thirty more men in Duluth, but even though the number of men was almost up to what Tower Jr. had initially expected, he stressed in another letter:

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\text{I can not count upon them all, even after they get there,- for some will desert. I think that will be as much as I can do for a time, because if I send them in too fast they can not be provided for… but shall begin again very soon and shall send in men as long as there is standing room for them… In addition to this I have had Mr. White to organize a ballast force of about forty men who are now at work on the first six miles… they will follow along up the line after the track layers.}\textsuperscript{268}
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It is clear from the letter correspondence that desertions were a problem for the D&IR all through the spring of 1884. One of the recurring themes in the letters is the constant sending-in of men. On May 28, Tower Jr. wrote that he was still

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\text{sending parties of men in three times a week… thirty to forty five men; and Wolfe and Co. are doing the like. Discontent however and the brutal treatment of men in railroad camps, drive a great many away so that I am not yet able to say where the force stands- I think it is increased considerably since I took hold of it ten days ago.}\textsuperscript{269}
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At the end of May and the beginning of June additional men were sent in. Wolfe had sent for men all the way from Chicago. The president of the company still judged that even more workers had to be recruited, and assured the owner that he would “send in thirty men today and forty more on Saturday”.\textsuperscript{270}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{267} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 17th of May 1884.
\item \textsuperscript{268} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 19th of May, 1884. My underlining.
\item \textsuperscript{269} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 28th of May, 1884. My underlining.
\item \textsuperscript{270} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 28th of May 1884.
\end{itemize}
As already signaled by the letters quoted, the management had a very vague idea about how many men actually carried out work on the road. This was in part due to the many desertions, brought about, according to the president of the company, by the bad treatment and harsh conditions in the railroad camps. In part it was also because of the geographical spread of the workforce, and Tower Jr. concluded that “the men are distributed over forty miles of the line so that it is difficult to count them”. Implicit in that statement is that the workforce was not only difficult to count, but also to control for the officials of the company.

On May 31, Tower Jr. stated that he had sent in 250 men during the previous two weeks, allowing for those who had deserted upon arrival or shortly thereafter. He estimated that 700 men were employed with the grading, while the track force numbered 100 men at this point. He was, however, to send in more men and said that he had directed Wolfe to employ another 450. On June 4, Wolfe wanted 100 more men in addition to the 50 sent some days earlier. A few days later, Tower Jr. said in a letter that 1,400 men were on the job, and that he had 450 men on the company payroll, i.e. in addition to those who were paid by Wolfe. He also stated that he could find men without great difficulty, since his agent, Mr. Sargent, traveled between Two Harbors, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Stillwater and back the same way again, gathering men along the way. Still, the desertion of workers had to be met by further recruitment and the management continued to pump in labor to the area. Small lots of 15-20 men had to be sent in “every now and then” to make up for the workers who dropped out. The recruited men were brought by train to Duluth, where they were loaded into company-owned boats that took them up to Two Harbors.

The company’s work force in 1884

Through the letter correspondence between the railroad officials in Duluth and Two Harbors and the owner of the D&IR in Philadelphia, we get some understanding of the relationship between the construction workers who were building the railroad and their hard employer. We also get some insight into the working conditions on the D&IR. However, we learn very little about the composition of the workforce constructing the railroad. One important aspect of this study is to analyze ethnicity in the work place and the mapping of ethnic relations in the company in order to get a better understanding of the power relations between ethnic groups on the railroad, and exploitative mechanisms at work on the D&IR. The question for the following part is then, what workers were employed

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271 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 29th of May 1884.
272 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 31st of May 1884.
273 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 4th of June, 1884
274 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 1st of July, 1884
by Charlemagne Tower during the construction of the railroad? The main information comes from the Minnesota state census of 1885, and D&IR payrolls for 1884 and 1885.

The first preserved payroll of the D&IR is from May 1884 and gives some clues as to the ethnic composition of the work force that constructed the D&IR, since it includes Tower Jr.’s extra recruitment. A total analysis of the ethnic division of labor is not possible, since no census material for the area around the railroad had been taken at this time. However, it is possible to get a rough estimate of the composition by analyzing the names on the payrolls. Scandinavian names are, most of the time, very distinct from Anglo, which makes it possible to divide the force into one part made up of people born in the United States, on the British Isles and in the Anglo parts of Canada, and another part containing people born in the Scandinavian countries. This method of analysis is definitely not exact but it provides some pointers to the ethnic composition of the payroll, and to what extent the railroad company used Scandinavian workers. The payroll in 1884 was divided into a track roll, a train roll and a miscellaneous roll.

Out of the 222 workers on the track roll, 96 have Anglo names, while 106 seem to be Scandinavians. To this can be added people with names that do not seem to belong to the two major groups, I have labeled these ten workers “other Europeans” and French Canadians. The track roll also consists of foremen, seven with Anglo names and one with a name that indicates Scandinavian heritage.

On the same payroll we also find the train force, i.e. the men working with running and maintaining the engines and cars of the company. The occupations represented on this roll are conductor, locomotive engineer, fireman, brakeman and wiper. This force consists almost solely of Anglos except for two of the wipers who can be identified as Swedes. Of the workers that are possible to identify in this department, twelve were American-born, one was English-born and one Canadian-born, i.e. 14 out of 36 are identifiable from the Minnesota state census of 1885. This survey of names indicates a distinct ethnic division of labor where the Anglo portion of the workers hold the most skilled jobs.

The Anglo dominance is underlined by an interview with Kenneth Brobin, whose father was born in England, brought up in Canada, and came to be foreman on the D&IR. Brobin states that there was a saying at the time when additional workers were in demand: “I will write my cousin Jack”, a nickname for English immigrants. According to Brobin, English immigrants were very popular with employers in the area, especially as foremen on the railroads, because their language skills gave them an advantage over the Scandinavians and Germans. Brobin also says that it was easier for them to advance up the company hierarchy. This fast social mobility created tensions between this and other ethnic

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275 There is not one really good term, but I am using this one in analogy with earlier research to describe these workers with English names that can be either Canadian, British or American born.
276 Comparing the state census of 1885, and the payroll for 1884 and 1885 makes it possible to draw this conclusion.
277 Brobin, Kenneth. Interview, MHS Oral History Collection
groups on the railroad. The term itself, “Cousin Jack”, also has something to say about the relation between English immigrants, English-speaking Canadians and Anglo-Americans, indicating that these groups had a close and special relationship to each other and, as a collective, had a particularly strong position on the labor market, even though there was a distinct cultural difference between them.278

The image is, however, not completely coherent, since a large number of track workers have Anglo names and since Scandinavians only barely dominate the force employed to build and maintain the railroad. How can this be explained? It is possible to get an idea of hiring-practices by looking at two facts. First, a statement made by Charlemagne Tower Jr., who in a letter to his father writes that he is not so keen on hiring locals for the most important jobs: “I am anxious to find good men from the east… for the important places out here. I think we can count on such better than western men to support our interests”.279

What Tower specifically means by “western men” and “eastern men” is not stated, but one interpretation is that he referred to the United States and divided it into a western sphere closer to the frontier and an industrialized region on the east coast. This statement indicates that the ethnic division of labor is by no means a coincidence and that the hiring practices are carried out in accordance with an idea emanating from the management of how different groups are supposed to function and how loyal they are presumed to be towards the company. It also indicates that other factors than language was decisive in hiring. The more highly industrialized part of the country is regarded as a better recruiting-ground for employed workers and officials.

Shelton Stromquist has convincingly shown how radicalism was more widespread among western railroad workers than among their eastern contemporaries and has explained the difference by differing experiences of the labor market. Given the success of the Knights of Labor during the early 1880s the interpretation of the statement as an expression of fear of recruiting radicals is not far-fetched.280 The statement might also imply that Tower Jr. considered individuals from rural regions inferior as workers to people molded by Industrial America. The statement, hence, has connections with the tension between industrial and pre-industrial society, discussed by Herbert Gutman. Gutman explained anti immigrant sentiments, and tensions between groups of immigrants in American society as being, to some extent, conflicts between preindustrial culture and industrial discipline.281 Many of the immigrants from Europe at this time, and the Swedish immigrants were no exception, had no earlier experience of work in industry, but came from the agricultural sphere. Given the ethnic composition of

278  Holmquist, June Drenning. They Chose Minnesota. p.111.
279 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 8th of April, 1884.
the region at the time, there might also have been an ethnic edge to the statement as the region around the ore fields and in the rest of St. Louis County was heavily immigrant in character.

The second factor is the way the payroll is organized in May 1884. The steady influx of extra labor was an ongoing process in the company for months, even though the heaviest recruitment campaign was carried out in May of 1884. On the first three pages of the track roll for this month Anglo names dominate. These men were presumably hired in the first batch, since there is no other system in the payrolls. Out of 83 names on the first three pages of the track roll I have identified 51 to be Anglo, 31 to be Scandinavian, and 1 to be French or French-Canadian. Anglo workers hence dominated the first groups of men hired. Scandinavians, on the other hand, dominate the last three pages. Out of 103 names on these pages, 71 are Scandinavian, while 32 are Anglo.\textsuperscript{282} This indicates that the Anglo workers was the prime target of the recruitment campaign, while other ethnic groups were hired when this group was not sufficient in number to satisfy the demands of the company. This can also be linked to the letters referred to written by Charlemagne Tower on the subject, where batches of men were taken in piecemeal. The structure of the payroll of 1884 hence indicates that Scandinavians had a complementary function in relation to the preferred Anglo workers.

Conditions at Work

The work force that had been built up during the spring and numbered close to 1,500 workers in the summer of 1884 was hastily discharged when the work was all but finished at the beginning of August 1884. The Wolfe Company had kept the deadline that paid out a time bonus to them.\textsuperscript{283} The rules concerning the laborers that had built Charlemagne Tower’s railroad seem to have been nonexistent, as in other parts of the country at the time.\textsuperscript{284} In the contract between \textit{John S. Wolfe and Co.} and the Tower group, not a word of workers’ rights is mentioned. By using a contractor like Wolfe, the railroad company did not need to worry about anything in relation to the work force. The contract is a strictly economic document regulating the contractor’s duties to the company and the time frame that the contract is valid. A case can be made of this being an indication that the otherwise seemingly patriarchal Tower had adopted modern management ideas in the construction of the railroad.

Many of the unskilled workers were laid off and had to go somewhere else in search of a new work, which is indicated by the large number of men employed in August 1884 more than 1,500 and the payrolls of 1885, which come nowhere

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{282} D&IR Payroll, May 1884.
\textsuperscript{283} History of Duluth and Iron Range Railroad, Duluth Missabe and Northern Railway, and Duluth Missabe and Iron Range Railway Co. Reprinted from Missabe Iron Ranger, July, 1959. p.3.
\textsuperscript{284} Charlemagne Tower Papers. I have gone through a range of material from this collection, and have found nothing to indicate this.
\end{flushright}
near that figure. However, some personnel categories seem to have stayed, since at least two of the men employed as firemen in May 1884 were still with the company in 1885.\textsuperscript{285}

The greatest concern of the managers of the railroad company at this point was how to pay the final bill to the contractors and the wages to the laborers. R.H. Lee in a letter to President Charlemagne Tower Jr.:

\begin{quote}
We have been getting on nicely, having means enough to meet the… needs from day to day. Luckily most of the men who were discharged on the 1st, have found their way into the hands of third parties. If any of these are presented he stands off the holder until after pay-day. This is conclusion. Everything is moving… well on the road under the new order of things. Watt is doing good work with the small force he has. At Two Harbors work is going on moderately on the shop building, which is now roofed in. The turn-table is finished and, in… a week or so, the tracks will be laid to the stalls in the round house.\textsuperscript{286}
\end{quote}

These economic difficulties were a result of the problems encountered during construction when everything was slowed down because of the difficult terrain and the very harsh climate. The company got help from third parties like grocery dealers that granted credit to the workers who did not get their wage payment. The company had the power to mobilize this group of small merchants in Two Harbors, since they controlled transportation and provided the dealers with their lifeline to “civilization”.\textsuperscript{287} Problems with the work force would not stop there however. Throughout the fall the company had to withhold payments to part of the force, mostly track workers. What the workers thought about this is not hard to imagine, but the president of the company, Charlemagne Tower Jr., stated that the workers had been pleased with the situation and that no one complained. Payment had been made for September and October and that ”nobody has made a complaint against our delay in paying… the men who have been discharged feel satisfied with this action of the Company and most of them wish to come back when the winter is over”.\textsuperscript{288} The president of the company, hence, claimed that there were no problems in the relations between the workers and the employers during this time of layoffs and withheld payments.

That is in any case the image that Charlemagne Tower Jr. wants to conjure up in his father’s mind. There is, as stated before, a risk in using this letter correspondence as the men writing to Charlemagne Tower Sr. in Philadelphia wanted to present the situation so that they would appear in a good light. They did not want

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{285} D&IR Payroll records, May 1884 and May, 1885.
\textsuperscript{286} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from R.H. Lee to Charlemagne Tower Jr. October 15\textsuperscript{th}, 1884.
\textsuperscript{287} King, Frank. The Missabe Road: The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway. pp.34-37.
\textsuperscript{288} Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. October 31\textsuperscript{st}, 1884.
\end{footnotes}
to alarm the owner but wanted to present themselves as being in control of the situation in Minnesota, despite all difficulties. One of the differences between this case and the problem of recruiting workers during the spring of the same year was that the officials, including Lee and Charlemagne Tower Jr., were directly responsible for labor relations, and had to touch upon issues that had been taken care of by the contractor Wolfe when the railroad was being built. Now, they were responsible for the running of it.

The statement that all workers were happy with the situation during the late summer of 1884 does not seem completely accurate however, as workers’ displeasure with the company got an expression in the first known strike in Two Harbors on September 25, 1884. Chief Engineer Lee reported to Charlemagne Tower Jr. what happened on the Two Harbors’ ore docks:

*We had a ´strike´ here on Wednesday. The Dumpers on the ore dock, some 15 in number, struck for 1.75 per day, and for all over or extra time, nauted time and half time etc. Mr. White discharged the whole party, and formed a new crew from men otherwise employed and by taking on other men, the strike did not inconvenience us in the least and could not have happened at a more opportune time. There were no vessels waiting to load and we shall not have any until tomorrow.*

The two groups of workers, the ones being laid off due to lack of work and those who worked for the company but did not get paid or were underpaid, were therefore played out against each other during this short and, for the railroad company, early labor conflict. The strike of the dumpers on the ore dock was probably a spontaneous action, since no labor organizations were yet established in Two Harbors. The strike seemed also to have been unplanned and badly coordinated, because Mr. Lee describes it as a fiasco for the workers. It shows, however, displeasure with company policy towards the workers and served as a harbinger of the organizational activity of the railroad men in the town that was soon to come.

Four years after the little incident at the Two Harbors’ ore docks workers in that town began to unionize. In the late 1880s, one *Knights of Labor* lodge was established and it was replaced by three railroad brotherhoods after its demise. I will return to the trade union development in chapter 9.

The incident can be connected with labor policies towards workers on the D&IR, the cancelled payments and the huge layoffs during the winter because of the company’s bad financial situation. Company finances were in a bad state after a long winter that had cost the company more money in wages and material than

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290 Engberg, George B. *The Knights of Labor in Minnesota.*
expected, because of the terrain in the area, and because the railroad company
and the contractor had underestimated the difficulties it would cause. This is il-
illustrated by the correspondence above and by the tensions between the contrac-
tor and the railroad company. The railroad was finished at the end of an ore sea-
son, which made operation difficult. Despite this, more than 60,000 tons of ore
was shipped out before the closing of the season. Adding to the financial trouble
was a slow iron ore market during 1884 and the first half of 1885, which almost
forced the Tower group out of business. Many investors regarded the enterprise
as speculative, and Tower had a hard time to find “men of means” to help financ-
ing the operation. Not until the spring of 1885 did the economy of the company
become more solid as a result of the ore of the Vermillion range getting known
for its high iron content.\footnote{King, Frank. The Missabe Road;: The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway. p.27.} It might also be an expression of the increasing strife
between labor and capital in the railroad industry as a whole. This increasing
strife led to a number of large strikes and a myriad of smaller ones during the
time from 1877 well into the 1890s.\footnote{See f.ex. Schneirov, Richard, Stromquist, Shelton and Salvatore, Nick (ed.). The Pullman Strike and the Crisis of the 1890s. pp.4-7. The Authors discuss the time from the Civil War until the 1890s (the Gilded Age) as a culmination of social change and the resulting social and political un-
rest.} Even this remote corner of Minnesota ex-
perienced this strife, and indeed, it cast doubt on the image of social harmony in
Lake County and on the D&IR that Tower Jr. had presented.

The working conditions on the railroad in northern Minnesota cannot in any way
be considered as good, if judged by the letters of the president of the company.
Many men took employment only briefly and the company had a problem of
maintaining numbers despite constant recruitment in several cities and towns in
Minnesota, and even taking in some out-of-state labor. The climate added to the
physical burden on the men that lived out in the camps by the track. The weather
was extreme during both the winter and summer months. Many times the work-
ers experienced hard treatment by shift bosses and foremen and nothing was
done to prevent the “brutal treatment” of men in the camps that the president of
the company commented upon. Many of the workers lived in huts or tents for
months.

The living-conditions were harsh and the social environment brutal. Most of the
time the men boarded in the camps or in a boarding house in Two Harbors. Due
to the lack of housing in the area, the cost for housing was drawn from the work-
ers’ wages and paid to the company that owned the facilities. The company also
rented space from workers with houses of their own that functioned as boarders
for other workers, when the company experienced growth during its first
years.\footnote{D&IR Payroll records for May and June 1885 indicate that workers let their houses for the com-
pany in order to secure enough housing.} An added burden on the workers was an outburst of typhoid fever that
struck the railroad workers in the fall and winter of 1883-1884 and “claimed
many victims”.\footnote{King, Frank. The Missabe Road: The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway. p.18}
The living-conditions of the workers did not encourage permanent settlement. Most temporary were, evidently, the camps, where workers spent their time in an all-male environment out in the woods and shared living conditions with lumberjacks and other groups on the rim of industrial society (both spatially and socially). The only group where we find women paid by the company is among the board keepers. The living conditions had an impact on the patterns of recruitment, because of the many desertions, but also created an environment for the workers affecting the social situation. It is not possible to deduct any information on marital status from the payrolls, but it is possible to see if the worker owned his own house, since the boarding fee reveals if a boarding house or a camp was the worker’s home in Two Harbors.

On the 1884 track payroll, no less than 172 out of 222 workers (75%), paid fees for board to the company. At the same time five out of seven track foremen arranged their boarding without the intervention of the company. This leads to the conclusion that only a few of the workers had a steady enough job and a steady enough place to stay to be able to support a family or to bring their wives to the area. Most of the men were therefore probably “bachelors”. The workers, thus, were highly mobile and had probably no previous connections with the region. They were seasonal migrant workers, who moved to locations where they could find jobs. Many of them were immigrants. The many desertions also indicates the workings of a regional labor market offering alternatives to railroad work. I have touched on these alternatives in my background description. These results are well in line with the labor market situation in Minnesota and the Midwest described by Tobias Higbie who has shown how a large proportion of the force of “laborers” as late as 1900 made up 30% of all employed men in Minnesota, Iowa and the Dakotas. The role of these “floaters” was exactly what managers on the D&IR demanded of their workers and they filled an important function during the period when the D&IR was constructed.

Besides supplying the workers with some type of lodging, the company also hired a doctor who would provide medical attention to workers who were injured while carrying out their jobs. The doctor issue was discussed at length by Charlemagne Tower Jr. in letters to his father. By charging each man 50 cents per month out of his wage, he financed the doctor. This seems to have been standard procedure in the railroad business. Tower Jr., however, maintained that there was a problem with the system and that older and more established doctors who got contracts with railroad companies never did any actual work themselves. Instead they hired younger colleagues to go out to the line to take care of injured work-

Montgomery, David. *The fall of the house of labor*. pp.58-60
D&IR Payroll records, May 1884.
D&IR Payroll records May 1884.
ers. He therefore made sure of hiring a doctor from Duluth who did the job personally, which is made clear as he reports to his father:

\[T\]he way this is usually managed is, to appoint one man, who never goes out to the line of the road at all, but to hire another physician without practice to go and take his place- while he makes a large profit by the business… Doctor Richards will be in Two Harbors during the building of the ore docks and the railroad to Vermillion and will serve the company and the workers need of medical attention.  

This behavior indicates that Charlemagne Tower Jr. was what Walter Licht has described as a typical character among 19th century railroad managers, namely, a product of patriarchal structures and laissez faire capitalism.

The ethnic composition of the work force

The purpose of this part of the thesis is to analyze the ethnic division of labor one year later, to get an overview of the extent of the Anglo-American dominance in the company. This chapter also analyzes the wages paid to different occupational groups and the stability in the work force as indicated by turnovers and time worked for different categories. The following is based on two sources, payroll records from the D&IR for May, and to some extent, June 1885, and the Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and for Breitung Township in St. Louis County in 1885. That material has great advantages in being manageable in size, fairly exhaustive and in that it gives a good picture of the work force. It is, however, also plagued by a few flaws, which create methodological and analytical problems that need to be illuminated.

First, the character of railroad work itself creates some problems. Many times the workers on the D&IR were spread out over a large area. In 1885 the track force was spread out over 68 miles of railroad that crossed one county line and included at least two towns, Two Harbors and Tower, then belonging to Breitung Township. This created problems for the census-takers, who tried to identify people in the area. The work force was also quite mobile inside this area, as they often changed campsites and traveled the line carrying out reparatory work. The census-takers therefore had to travel outside the towns and the company offices to find the workers. This demanded quite a lot of effort on their part. Paired with the generally high turnover of labor of this character, this created a measuring problem for the census-takers that has been carried over to my analysis. One thing to keep in mind is, however, that the census-taker was often an inhabitant

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299 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 2nd June, 1883.
of the area and had self-interest in seeking out all heads because of the will to develop it, and eventually, found a real township. This was especially important in a sparsely populated area like northeastern Minnesota at the time.

My analysis is therefore based on the assumption that most of the teams of workers have indeed been counted, if in place, and that the census-takers have tried to get a complete survey of the whole area. The limited number of inhabitants makes it possible to cross-index the census with the payrolls, since the whole population only amounts to some hundred people, most of them affiliated with the railroad or the mining business. Very few peasants were established in the area at this time, and the fishing industry had yet to experience its boom on the north shore of Lake Superior.302

One problem with the state census of 1885 is that professional titles are missing. On a few occasions, this has sometimes led to one name in the census being impossible to relate to one on the payroll, because there have been more than one person carrying that name, representing different nationalities. This has been a problem on a few occasions with Swedish and Norwegian names (3) and on others with distinguishing American, Canadian and Irish names (2) from one another. When in doubt I have used the ethnic environment to identify their nationalities, since national groups seem to be clustered together even within the same department on the payroll. One source that has been of some help in this respect has been a jubilee pamphlet: Burwell, H. Two Harbors in 1900. This book lists some of the pioneers who settled when the railroad was being constructed, and who stayed in or returned to the town.303

Because of the problems with the sources, I have chosen to use two methods of analyzing the payroll records. First, a cross-indexing of names in the census of 1885 and of the company payroll from the corresponding month. This is the base of my analysis of the nationality of the workers, but it also gives a rough estimate of the worker’s marital status and age. These are unfortunately very sketchy but will be analyzed when possible. This will, hence, give a rough social profile of the workers present in the town at this time.

Secondly, I will try to complement this analysis by analyzing the names of the workers whose identity I cannot establish. This will give a column that states a likely nationality for the workers by analyzing the naming custom in different European countries at this time. This is no exact method and I will get much broader categories, since different Scandinavian workers cannot be identified for certain, nor is it possible to tell from which country a worker with an English-sounding name came. I have chosen to categorize workers as Scandinavian, Anglo, French Canadian and other European. Conclusions are possible only by ana-

302 Greve. Edward F. The Development of Lake County. P35f.
lyzing the way the names fit together with the naming custom in different European countries in the middle of the 19th century and the way some names have a meaning in a certain language. Some immigrants have Anglicized their names, which creates further problems. To what extent that happened is impossible to tell. I have found that some of the Scandinavians who changed their names seem to have kept part of the old name, and I have encountered hybrids like Eric Ludblassom (Lundblom) on the payroll of the D&IR. I will try to use this method to confirm or discard the result from my cross-index method discussed above.

A Survey of the Work Force in 1885

The indications of ethnic division of labor in 1884 are verified when one looks at the payroll records for May 1885 and the Minnesota state census of 1885 for Lake County and for Breitung township in St. Louis County. The census records analyzed are the only ones taken along the railroad. Two Harbors was the location of the ore docks, while Breitung was the only township between Two Harbors and the Iron Mines. The purpose for this part is to get a better assessment on the role of an ethnic division of labor on the D&IR and the relations between the employer, the Anglo workers and the immigrant workers with a special focus on the Swedish immigrants.

A breakdown of the work force is possible to make, and an analysis of the ethnic and gender division of labor shows that the work force was all male. Not one single woman was registered on the regular payroll. There was, however, as already mentioned regarding the payroll of May 1884, at least one woman providing the company with boarding facilities, a Mrs. Flynn. So women paid by the company made some of the cooking and cleaning for the workers. Another woman that is mentioned as being related to the company in cooking and boarding for workers, was “Ma Blake”, referred to in the memoirs of an engineer employed by the company in the 1880s, who later became president of the DM&N. So, women were indeed paid by the company to carry out cooking, cleaning and boarding for workers. Since some employees owned their own house, providing board for workers, we can state that the wife in those families cooked for the boarded workers. Gender and gender division of labor, hence, played an important role in company management during this first period. The company was dominated by men and the D&IR work place was an all-male environment in the 1880s. Women played an important role in company policy, but were referred to as providing service functions for the railroad men, sometimes as wives, but more often as hired by the company. Gender is not the primary focus of this thesis, but it is clear that it plays a role in defining the work place from the very beginning of settlement in the area, and is, hence, an important

304 King, Frank. *The Missabe Road: The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway.* p.18
305 Railroad work was a male sphere. See for example: White, Thomas W. *Race, ethnicity and gender in the railroad work force: The case of the far Northwest, 1883-1918.* p.267.
part of the social relations I am interested in. The role of gender will be further discussed in chapter 8 that deals with changing labor policies on the D&IR as this arena, and the role of unpaid work carried out by women at home became an increasingly important factor for the railroad.

The work force contained about 320 names, and a wide range of occupational groups, divided into three sections on the May 1885 payroll. The train roll contained locomotive engineers, firemen, conductors, brakemen, and a number of other groups that worked in the so-called running trades or had administrative duties in train yards. The track force basically comprised two categories, laborers and foremen. The third part was made up of construction workers of different kinds, who were employed for building facilities like the round house, locomotive stable, offices, and the ore dock at Two Harbors. This roll was simply called “Miscellaneous roll”.

In the following, three dimensions of the payroll information are used to describe the position of the category of worker in relation to the railroad company: time worked per month, form of wage payment and pay per hour. The three dimensions indicate the demand of the company for a particular type of worker. A steady employment would therefore be an indicator of a high status and the company’s demand for this type of employee where they needed specific types of skills that were scarce on an unstable labor market.

This is a question concerning the skill level of different occupations. We must also take into account the special character of certain railroad trades during the pioneer period of the railroad.

Skill as a distinction between different groups of workers has been used in various class models, and discussions of managers’ usage of skill as a way of increasing productivity have been around for some time. 306 Eric Olin Wright says that “employees who possess high levels of skills/ expertise are potentially in a privileged appropriation location within exploitation relations”. He discusses two separate mechanisms for the influence of skill levels. Skill is frequently scarce on labor markets, and this puts a restriction on the supply of labor. Therefore, owners of scarce skills are able to receive a wage above the costs of producing and reproducing their labor power. Wright underlines that “this ‘skill rent’ is a way by which employees can appropriate part of the social surplus”. 307 The other mechanism is related to control. Workers with specialized skills had an advantage in that their labor effort was difficult to monitor. The effective control over knowledge by employees of this kind meant that employers had to “rely on loyalty enhancing mechanisms in order to achieve desired levels of cooperation”. Skilled workers can therefore appropriate surplus both from their position in production, based on knowledge, and their position on the labor market. 308 This

306 Braverman, Harry. Arbete och monopolkapital. p.76.
308 Wright, Eric Olin. Class Counts: Comparative Studies in Class Analysis. p.22, 23
discussion of skilled and unskilled work is essential to me, since I will analyze the division of labor, particularly the ethnic component and its impact on the labor market in Northern Minnesota.

Eric Hirsch has analyzed various ethnic groups in the Chicago labor movement and their strategies with regard to labor activism and its impact on the American labor market. He claims that the Anglo-American labor force made use of its access to trade skills to bargain with employers and limit competition from immigrant groups by excluding them from the trade unions. This created a segmentation of the American labor market into one skilled segment dominated by Anglo-Americans, and one unskilled segment where we find a high percentage of immigrant workers. On a theoretical level a case can thus be made for a division into two different segments of the American labor market. This theory seems to have a timeless quality in that it has been used on Swedish conditions during the 20th century when analyzing immigrant access to the Swedish labor market. Studies of ethnic division of labor in the United States have shown how different ethnic groups tended to cluster in certain areas of the American railroad labor market, and that immigrants tended to be found as track workers.

The Train Roll

The train roll of the D&IR contained some of the most prestigious occupations in the railroad industry. A yardmaster supervised work at the yards, where the loading, unloading and switching of trains took place. This was traditionally an occupation that carried with it authority over other employees. Belonging to the occupations of locomotive engineer or conductor meant that you belonged to a privileged group with a high status in 19th-century America, and most of the workers employed in these trades regarded themselves as being above other occupational groups in the railroad business, a fact that is illustrated by the sometimes tense relationship between trade unions representing different occupational categories on the American Railroad. The engineers have sometimes been described as part of a labor aristocracy, however, in time even this group experienced an increasingly clogged up labor market and recently promoted locomotive engineers were often given irregular runs. As a result, their pay fluctuated wildly and they could have quite low job security. In this study I will not make this distinction pertaining to the group as the occupation of locomotive engineer generally represented what less skilled groups aspired to be, both in terms of pay and social status. The conductors did not have the same status as the engineers but held a position of power since they were in charge of the train and the brakemen working there, in the same way that the engineer was in charge of his

310 For an overview of the relations between the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and other trade unions on the American railroad, see Stromquist, Shelton. A Generation of Boomers. pp. 50, 57.
engine. The firemen and the brakemen traditionally made up a middle ground among the workers. They were generally paid higher wages than track work, and they offered some career possibilities, as the recruitment of locomotive engineers was done among the firemen, and the recruitment of conductors among the brakemen. The reverse side of the coin was that the jobs were dangerous, especially the work of brakemen, and involved bad working conditions. These groups of workers are hard to define, but the terms generally used are “lesser skilled” or “unskilled work in the running trades”. The jobs of baggagemen and wipers are to be regarded as unskilled service work. However, these occupations many times made up the recruiting ground for firemen and brakemen. A list of the occupations, the wages and the workers’ place of birth is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Occupations represented on the Train Roll of the D&IR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wage per hour</th>
<th>Average hours worked (h)</th>
<th>Probable origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conductor</td>
<td>$0.27-0.37</td>
<td>173.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brakeman</td>
<td>$0.19</td>
<td>143.8</td>
<td>5 Anglos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yardmaster</td>
<td>$0.27</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switchman</td>
<td>$0.17</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>$0.27.5-0.37</td>
<td>239.4</td>
<td>2 Anglos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireman</td>
<td>$0.17.5-0.22.5</td>
<td>155.9</td>
<td>5 Anglos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiper</td>
<td>$0.15-$0.16</td>
<td>222.5</td>
<td>2 Anglos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baggage man</td>
<td>$0.19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16 Anglos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on the Train Roll of the D&IR, May 1885. State Census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

A look at the pay and the average work hours shows that the highest paid man on the roll was one of the conductors. He made 37 cents per hour, but had a monthly wage of 90 dollars for 260 hours work. He was the only worker with a fixed

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wage on the payroll. The highest paid men on the payroll were the engineers, because their rate per hour was as high as the chief conductor’s and because of their many hours of work. Three out of eight engineers made over 100 dollars per month, since they all worked from 290 hours per month and all the way up to 345.5 hours. This corresponds to a working hour of 14.4 hours for 24 days of each month and 13.3 for 26 days per month. The other positions never came close to these sums, since their working hours were never as long. The yardmasters made 27 cents per hour, like the conductors, but they had a larger number of hours put in per month than most of the conductors.

The firemen, the brakemen and the switchman have generally lower wages and shorter working hours than the yardmaster, the engineers and the conductors. This indicates that employment in these trades was characterized by high turnover rates. They were, however, generally considered better than being casual labor. One reason was the pay that was considerably higher.314 There also seems to have existed possibilities to advance from these positions and become a locomotive engineer or a conductor, when staff was expanded or when there were retirements. First, at least one fireman, an Irishman, had been employed as a foreman on the track force during that month. Furthermore, one of the Anglo-American firemen was promoted locomotive engine during the month, which also has an effect on the total result. Secondly, the single Swedish fireman, John Johnson, had been recruited from among the wipers.

This part of the payroll seems to have been extraordinarily fluctuating this month, probably as a result of the ore season coming to a start during the spring. On the payroll for June no new names have been added, but the force of firemen has gone down from fifteen to eleven. Only four of the eleven firemen on the June payroll have worked less than 300 hours, which makes the firemen put in nearly as long hours as the locomotive engineers during this month. Four of the men employed as firemen during the month of May 1885 are also working as locomotive engineers in June. The ten locomotive engineers are identical when comparing the May payroll to that for June. Therefore, a conclusion may be that a large number of promotions occurred during the month of May as the demand for locomotive engineers increased, which opened up spaces among the firemen. These were taken largely from other parts of the company.315

The turnover rates at a first glance seem high in these occupations, but when scrutinizing the payroll, is seems that internal recruitment has taken place during this period, reshuffling workers within or between different departments of the company. At least one of the engineers on the payroll for June 1885 worked occasionally as a fireman in May that same year.316

315 D&IR Payroll, May, June, 1885.
316 D&IR Payroll for May and June 1885.
These examples underlines that there existed a practice of internal recruitment that became standard procedure with many American railroads in the skilled trades towards the end of the 19th century, as a way of securing a loyal force of workers.  

The lowest wages were paid to the wipers, who had an hourly wage of less than half of what was paid to engineers and conductors. These and the baggage man were employed in unskilled jobs. This is signaled by their low wages and, in the case of the baggage man, the short hours put in. There is a rather large difference in the hours worked between different categories of employees. However, the wage of a worker and the hours worked correspond quite well with each other when comparing different occupational groups on this payroll. High hourly wages correspond to long hours of work except for the group between the skilled workers and the common laborers, which seems to be characterized by fairly high wages, but fewer hours put in compared to the wipers.

The group with the lowest wages also displays the strongest stability with small changes in the work force and many hours put in by the workers. Only the engineers and the yardmasters put in longer working hours on average than the wipers. How to explain this? One factor that might have an effect on this is that there was new employment of people in the running trades. During the month of June, at least two Anglo-Americans were promoted from the track force, one being promoted fireman, and the other brakeman. These two groups were consequently less stable than the wipers. This means that the average time put in for these workers became less. One factor in the turnover was that there were career opportunities and hence competition for the jobs in the running trades, whereas being a wiper was only regarded as slightly better than being a track worker, and the wage was the same as for track work.

When only looking at the May 1885 payroll, the image of the wipers is that it was a stable work force as the men employed puts in so long hours for the month. When comparing with the June payroll we get a different story, though. Only four out of eight of the wipers remain in their occupation, and one of these, an Anglo worker was promoted to brakeman during the month. The career opportunities for the wiper category seem not to have been bad, as at least two Swedes, and one Anglo were promoted during the two months examined. These workers were replaced by laborers from the track force. Most workers seemed to have preferred being a wiper to being a track worker. Wipers could spend most of the time indoors, and most of the time they were located in the town and did not have to go out in the woods carrying out work in bad weather. It did also give opportunity for social mobility. The ethnic factor also has to be calculated with in regard to this. The upward mobility inside the company is generally re-

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317 Stromquist, Shelton. *A Generation of Boomers.* pp.242-243. A system of seniority, promotion from within would encourage workers to stay with the same company rather than to move to a new employer, thus enhancing stability.

318 D&IR Payroll, May, June, 1885.
served for the Anglo group, with but two exceptions, the two Swedish firemen. A number of the conductors have been recruited from among the Anglo foremen from the track force. The ethnic division of labor is, however, distinct, as are the chances of promotion for different ethnic groups. The two Swedish workers that were promoted firemen replaced two Anglo workers that were promoted to become locomotive engineers. The position of wiper is the only category of workers where Scandinavians dominated on this roll, whereas the occupations of conductor, engineer, fireman, and brakeman are all reserved for the Anglos.

Since my analysis of the ethnic composition of the work force on the D&IR is not complete, I will first turn to this problem. The conductors are the only ones for whom I have been able to track down all of the names. The other ones suffer from some shortfall on account either of the turnover rates (with the resulting changes in the company) or of the census-taker not being able to locate all of the workers. I have, however, been able to identify 13 out of 18 firemen, 8 out of 10 engineers and 6 out of 8 wipers. All the shortfalls are presented in the last column of table 2, labeled “Probable origin”. In this I have used the names of the men on the payroll to get a rough estimate of their ethnicity. See the discussion of this method above.

The result I have got from the analysis presented in table 2 is fairly coherent, since all the names I have found sound Anglo and most probably represent an Irish, Canadian, British or American nationality. This raises the already high percentage of Anglo-Americans, Canadians and workers from the British Isles in the train department. With 29 American-born, 5 Canadians and 1 British-born worker, this department is clearly dominated by an English-speaking group with common cultural ties. If we add the 16 supposed Anglos, this dominance becomes even greater. Only five Swedes, three Norwegians and two Irishmen have been found on the train roll. All three ethnic groups are concentrated to the maintenance department and mainly employed as wipers. One Swede was employed as a locomotive engineer while another one was employed as a fireman, and one Norwegian as a switchman. None of the Canadian-born workers in this department have French-sounding names, which points to the fact that these men were, like their American contemporaries, deeply embedded in a culture with its roots on the British Isles.

The reason for the relative absence of English workers in the train department might be a work culture among the British in the area. Previous research and interviews made with miners on the range show that many of the miners on the Vermillion range in the 1880s were English with their roots in the British mining industry, who after immigration had established themselves on the ore fields of Michigan, and then moved on to Minnesota when the Michigan fields became less productive. There was, however, a massive Anglo-American and Canadian dominance in the train department of the D&IR. But the ethnic division of

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labor still allowed for some inroads by non-Anglo immigrants, as illustrated by the one Swede who worked as a locomotive engineer.

The ethnic division of labor is evident. This is in line with research carried out on other railroads at this time and also with aggregated studies of the American railroad labor market at the beginning of the 20th century. The special circumstances in northern Minnesota must, however, be taken into account when discussing labor issues in this area. The work force and its behavior contain interesting differences from the overall patterns shown in earlier research. One thing is the influx of Canadian labor to the railroad, which can be explained by the proximity to Canada and the contacts between Minnesota and that country via Lake Superior. This illustrates how ethnic variation can create local patterns for employment and ethnic ranking.

Very few of the workers in the train department have a family, according to the census taken on Two Harbors and Breitung Township. One of the conductors, two of the engineers and two of the firemen, all of them American-born, had an identifiable family. Five men out of a total of 58 is too small a number to state anything for certain about family patterns. It seems, however, that the American workers to a larger extent than the others were family men and that the immigrant workers tended to be single. It is also clear that the occupations with a higher status and higher wages contain more family men than the others. It is also evident that most of the men on the D&IR at this time had come to Two Harbors on their own and that most of them were probably bachelors. This conclusion can also be drawn from the age of the workers. Out of 22 workers whose age has been possible to establish 20 are between 20 and 30 years of age. Only two workers were more than thirty years old, and no one was younger than 20.

**The Miscellaneous roll**

The miscellaneous roll contains a wide range of different positions, mainly with employment in maintenance and construction work in Two Harbors, and in the office in that town. These workers did not ambulate as much as the others but were the most concentrated ones, since the construction of facilities was mainly done in Two Harbors and at Tower station up on the range. I have divided this roll into a number of sub-departments to get a better understanding of the nature of work carried out and of power hierarchies between different groups of workers. I have thus chosen to distinguish between some major groups, and have used their work place or occupational title as a basis. A survey of the different positions, wages, number of hours worked and ethnic composition, is hence presented in the following part. In table 3, the occupations in the offices and at the ore scale are presented.

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321 Minnesota State Census taken in Breitung Township and Two Harbors, 1885.
Table 3. Occupations represented in the Offices, and on the Ore Scale of the D&IR with wages, hours worked and country of birth, May 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/ wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wages</th>
<th>Work hours per month</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Probable Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asst. Train dispatcher</td>
<td>83.33 dollar per month ($0.27 cents per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket agent</td>
<td>50 per month ($0.16 per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale clerk</td>
<td>50 per month ($0.16 per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator $0.14.5</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line repair</td>
<td>$65 per month ($0.21 per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock clerk</td>
<td>$60 per month ($0.19 per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock laborer</td>
<td>$0.15 185,6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk $83.3 per month ($0.27 per hour)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchmen $0.16</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Scandinavian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 Anglo/ 1 Scandinavian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on Miscellaneous Roll of the D&IR, May 1885. Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

In this department there are a high number of workers with a fixed wage. What is notable is also the discrepancy in pay between the categories and the high rate of hours worked during the month. Eight categories out of ten reach 310 hours per month. All these employees have jobs that are not directly involved in the running of the railroad and that are mostly of a supervisory character, including the watchmen. The two remaining categories have a more unskilled character and involve the actual work with the scales and the transporting of iron ore. The dock laborers have on average worked 185.6, the lowest figure in this department. The scale operators with their 14.5 percent lower wages per hour are slightly more steadily employed with 217 hours of work put in. Wages and the amount of hours worked correlate with each other and create the impression of a segmented labor market.

The dominance of Anglo- Americans in this department is obvious and this ethnic group’s connection with the office at Two Harbors is undisputable. All of the men employed as clerks, a white-collar occupation, are Anglo-Americans, as are the assistant train dispatcher and the ticket agent. These occupations are paid a
monthly wage of 50-83.3 dollars per month. The ethnic division of labor is further underlined by the fact that the three identified Swedes were employed as laborers and as a janitor. However, all laborers were not Scandinavian, but there was a clear dominance of Scandinavians in the low-paid groups. Despite the low wages and the character of casual labor there is one factor that makes this work a little more attractive than track work, and that is the fact that the workers were able to spend their working and leisure time without having to be out in the woods along the track.

The same situation held true for the shop workers, who included both skilled and unskilled workers. In the shops a variety of reparatory work was carried out, new machinery was constructed and so was metal details needed to keep the construction of facilities going and trains running. A survey of the shop force is made in Table 4.

Table 4. Occupations represented in the shops of the D&IR with wages, hours worked and country of birth, May 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wages per hour</th>
<th>Time worked in one month</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Probable Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td>$0.31</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinist</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>$0.22.5-0.275</td>
<td>270.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Helper</td>
<td>$0.195</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinist Helper</td>
<td>$0.10-$0.175</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Finland/Sweden</td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Heaver</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>205</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Scandinavian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
<td>1 Scandinavian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on Miscellaneous Roll of the D&IR, May, 1885. Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

This department included a shop foreman who had the highest wage and most hours. One machinist and four blacksmiths made up a work force with wages that were 50 to 100% higher than those of a regular workman. These two groups had a working time of about 275 hours. The blacksmith helper was just below his
seniors in pay and time, while the machinist helpers took out the lowest wages in the whole company, only ten cents per hour. Both men employed in these positions were American-born, one was a 15-year-old boy. The company also employed both of the helpers’ fathers. The older helpers had better pay, and made just below the amount of a blacksmith helper. One out of three identified helpers was foreign-born, while the other two were American-born. Altogether, a breakdown of the ethnic groups working in the shop shows the dominance of Anglo groups in this line of work, too, even if it is not as clear-cut as in the offices and at the scales. The American-born did not dominate the best-paid positions, i.e. as blacksmith and machinist, in this department. The only machinist was Anglo-American, while all the blacksmiths were foreign-born. Two English-speaking blacksmiths came from Ireland and Scotland, while the third was Swedish. The blacksmith helper was a Norwegian, the machinist helpers were one Swede and two Anglo-Americans. The fourth has not been identified, but in the column “Probable origin” I have defined him by his name as Anglo. Both of the coal heavers were Scandinavians.

The ethnic division of labor is obvious in this part of the company, too, but a few of the results need to be commented on further. The positions as blacksmith and machinist are the two best-paid jobs, and they had the highest status in the shops. The blacksmiths were, however, primarily European-born, two of them from English-speaking countries and one from Sweden. One interpretation is that the character of the work and its status in industrializing America explain the fact that the European groups dominated the blacksmith trade while the machinist was American-born. In his book *The Fall of the House of Labor*, David Montgomery has discussed the process of proletarianization in the metal trades. His survey shows that the status for skilled metal workers declined along with wages, as competition from unskilled groups and machinery became stronger. This tended to render marginalized skills carried by groups such as blacksmiths obsolete. This trait in the labor process indicates that blacksmiths were then a dying occupation that had little place in industrial capitalism. This might explain the ethnic division of labor on the D&IR at the time, and that recruitment of increasingly marginalized trades was done among European immigrants. Furthermore, the apprentices of the old days were now called helpers, a title associated with industrial capitalism, rather than with traditional artisan production. The apprentice was a person who was learning a skilled trade while the function of helper was primarily an unskilled person who was the assistant of a more skilled worker.

It was, however, still around in the company in 1920 when the company hired 9 blacksmiths. That is a triple increase between 1885 and 1920. The machinists, on the other hand, had gone from 1 to almost 70 during the same period and other

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322 D&IR payroll records, May, 1885 and Minnesota State Census of 1885.
323 The process of proletarianization of the metal trades with a focus on molders and blacksmiths has been analyzed by David Montgomery. A survey is presented in: Montgomery, David. *The Fall of the House of Labor*. pp.22-29.
specialized metal workers like the boilermakers and pipe fitters had been added.\footnote{Payroll, D&IR, June, 1920.} This comparison over time shows that, even though the proletarianization of the blacksmiths began during the decades after the civil war, this explanation is not by itself satisfying. The blacksmiths were not a dying occupation as indicated by the increase in their numbers on the D&IR, even though their relative importance diminished in industrial capitalism. Colin J. Davis, however, has shown how the occupation of blacksmith, since it was characterized by dirty working conditions and, as already stated, increasing proletarianization, did not attract Anglo-Americans to any large extent, but was an occupation for immigrants and African-American workers during the 1910s.\footnote{Davis, Colin J. \textit{Power at Odds. The 1922 National Railroad Shopmen’s strike.} p.21} Given the 1880s context, the process of proletarianization of the work had not generally gone as far as in the 1910s. This might explain the proportion of Anglo immigrants in these occupations.

The labor-market and the character of the work that faced these occupational categories during the 1880s have also to be taken into account. Despite the fact that Two Harbors and its surroundings experienced fast growth and a large influx of people, the region was part of a remote corner of a state close to the “frontier” in the United States. Hence, the fact that the D&IR was constructed on the rim of industrial society might have made the selection of workers limited. The fact that the railroad only hired people for seasonal employment and the limited labor market in the area during the winter period for metal workers created a climate where recruitment of Anglo-American workers was difficult, and the groups at hand, i.e. immigrants, became a replacement force in the skilled trades.

\textbf{Construction workers, car repairers and painters}

The connection between immigrants and skilled work with its roots in artisan production becomes further underlined, when one turns to other occupations on the miscellaneous roll, such as the carpenters and stonemasons employed by the company in 1885. These, together with the occupations of construction foreman, painter, laborer and car repairer, are presented in Table 5.
Table 5. Painters/ Construction workers and carmen on the payroll of the D&IR with wages, hours worked and country of birth, May 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/ wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wages per month and per hour</th>
<th>Hours worked</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Probable origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>$0.30</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter Helper</td>
<td>$0.15-0.20</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Anglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td>130 dollars per month ($0.50 per hour)</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1 (English)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>$0.175 - $0.30</td>
<td>222.7</td>
<td>11 (French)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 French-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Mason</td>
<td>$0.30</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer (constr.)</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car repairer</td>
<td>$0.175 - $0.20</td>
<td>175.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 2 (French)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on Miscellaneous Roll of the D&IR, May, 1885; Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MH, St. Paul, MN.

Table 5 gives further evidence of the ethnic division of labor, but also of a strong difference in wages between the best-paid and the lowest paid worker. The foreman got the highest wage (50 cents per hour). He put in most hours, had the privilege of monthly wages, and was one of the best-paid men on the company payroll in May 1885. He probably was the man in charge of the construction work carried out in Two Harbors. The painter, the best paid carpenters and the stonemason were all paid 30 cents per hour, being the highest skilled categories in this department, but did not have the privilege of monthly pay. The carpenter and the painter have quite similar amount of work hours, while the stonemason only put in 120 hours. The laborers made the smallest amount and, together with the painter helpers, they put in the least number of hours. It is a fact, however, that the force of laborers in this department was taken from other departments. At least four of the five workers are also employed on the track force during this month, so their total work time was higher. This shows that laborers were shuffled around as needed between different departments inside the company.

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326 D&IR Payroll, May 1885.
The painter helpers and the car repairers had slightly higher wages than the laborers.

An interesting aspect of the ethnic division of labor is the make up of the skilled workers. All of the carpenters were French Canadians, while the stonemason was German. The pattern of immigrants holding jobs of a traditional artisan character is thus obvious in this department, too. The carpenters in the company are one example. More than half of the French-Canadian carpenter workers had brought their families with them to Two Harbors. This not only made them the most family-oriented group employed by the company but also reveals their status as lifelong wageworkers. 327 On the payroll there is no distinction between carpenters of different skill levels other than the higher rate of pay for older, more experienced carpenters. There is no difference in marital status between the different levels of pay, either. 328

A conclusion of this discussion is that the D&IR of 1885 was a work place where industrial labor relations had made a breakthrough, and where occupations associated with an artisan mode of production had already experienced part of the process of proletarianization when they came to Minnesota. Being a carpenter meant being a wage-earner and not a craftsman. Thus, skilled workers like the carpenters had already to some degree experienced the structures created by industrial capitalism in their home country, when they came to work for the D&IR. These workers, therefore, had probably experienced the economic and social pressures of proletarianization in their old countries, and were, to some extent, used to an industrial capitalism mode of production with its specific form of exploitation.

The ethnic character of the other occupations provides clear evidence of the ethnic division of labor in this department. Of the five laborers, all were immigrants from non-English-speaking countries, as three Swedes, one Norwegian and one German worker were stated as laborers on the payroll. The five car repairers constituted a more diverse work force, as two were French Canadians, one was Scots and one was Anglo-American. To sum up, the laborers were largely made up of Scandinavians, whereas other immigrant groups dominated as car repairers. To be a car repairer was slightly better paid than working as a laborer, but it was also one of the occupations that employed many immigrants on American railroads, due to the dirty working conditions and the fairly low wages paid. 329 The painter and his two helpers were all American-born, whereas the foreman was a Canadian immigrant.

In conclusion, the position of foreman, the most prestigious and best paid job in Table 4, was held by a Canadian English-speaking immigrant, who by his lan-

328 Payroll, May, 1885. Minnesota State Census for Lake County, 1885.
329 Davis, Colin J. Power at Odds. The 1922 National Railroad Shopmen’s strike. p.21
guage and ethnic heritage had strong connections with Anglo-American culture. His presence indicates the previously discussed Anglo-American dominance. The lowest paid group, the laborers in construction work, consisted of a rather homogeneous group of non-English-speaking immigrants, primarily Scandinavian in character, while the car repairers were French Canadian, Scots and native-born men. The latter category had better pay and a more secure employment.

The role of the Scandinavian work force as a low-wage segment is thereby further underlined, and so is the Anglo-American dominance to some extent. However, the impression of the relations of ethnic dominance gives a somewhat complex picture, as all of the eleven carpenters were French Canadians, whereas the stonemason was a German immigrant. This gives a distinct ethnic division of labor relating to the skilled occupations that is similar to the one found in the shops at this time, i.e. with immigrant labor holding traditional artisan occupations like blacksmiths and carpenters. These occupations had, however, no formal power or authority over other workers like the foremen.

The Sawmill

The sawmill workers were stationed in Two Harbors and the work carried out was aimed at making the company self-supporting in building material for constructing company facilities in Two Harbors. This part of the company was completely dominated by Swedes and Danes. The sawmill workers included one foreman, one sawyer, one engineer, one setter, one edger and fourteen laborers. The foreman’s wages were 25 cents per hour, the sawyer and the engineer made 20 cents an hour, whereas the setter and the edger made 19.5 cents per hour. The sawmill laborers made 15 cents per hour, or slightly more than half of what the foreman took home. The hours worked indicate that the sawyer, the engineer and the edger had the most stable work situation, as they worked 227, 225 and 175 hours, respectively, during the month of June. The foreman is stated as working only 50 hours, and the setter 30. The laborers put in on average 46 hours during the month. The foreman of the mill and the setter were Danish, whereas the rest of the identified workers were Swedish-born. Out of 14 workers I have been able to identify 9 as Swedes, and on the basis of the names I have identified the other 5 as Scandinavians. This result further underlines the connection between Swedish workers and manual labor on the D&IR. However, the engineer and the sawyer, two occupations that in some respects must be defined as requiring certain skills, were Swedish-born. So, this is the only work place on the D&IR that is completely dominated by immigrants.

The ethnic division of labor on the sawmill therefore seems to be of a horizontal rather than of a vertical character, as no Anglo-American workers are present. This result might bring some implications with regard to the connection between the Swedish workers and work related to the lumber industry.

330 Burwell, H. Two Harbors in 1900.
331 Payroll, May 1885. Minnesota State Census for Lake County, 1885.
The Ore Dock

The docks that were constructed during the first years of the operation of the railroad demanded an increasing input of labor. Three occupational categories employed on the ore dock are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Ore dock workers, wages, hours worked and country of birth, May 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wages per hour or month</th>
<th>Hours worked</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Probable Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td>75 dollars per month</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asst. Foreman</td>
<td>50 dollars per month</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laborer</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>152,8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 Scandina-</td>
<td>2 Anglo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 Anglo</td>
<td>5 Scandina-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on Miscellaneous Roll of the D&IR, May, 1885. Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

The foreman and the assistant foreman both have monthly wages, of 75 and 50 dollars respectively. The foreman was Canadian-born, whereas the assistant foreman was American-born.

There was a strong dominance on the ore dock of Swedish immigrants, as no less than 7 of the 8 identified workers were Swedes, whereas only one was an English-speaking immigrant, a Canadian. The tendency to an ethnic division of labor is further underlined with 5 other workers of probable Scandinavian origin and 2 workers with a probable Anglo origin employed as laborers. Judging by the hours worked, the work situation for these men was less than stable, and their wages, only 15 cents per hour, were the lowest paid by the company save those of the painter’s helpers. Those workers made only 23 dollars per month on average.

So, like in the other departments, workers born in the United States, Great Britain or Canada with English names held the best-paid jobs, the jobs with generally longer hours and the security of having a fixed monthly pay. On the ore dock they also held an authoritative position as they were to a large extent employed as foremen. The Scandinavian immigrants, most notably the Swedes, on the other hand, were to be found in low-wage, unskilled subordinate positions. The result from my analysis of the ore dock further underlines the subordination of the Swedish immigrants to the Anglo-American work force, which was mainly employed in supervisory positions and as skilled workers.
The track roll

The track department was the most problematic to analyze, since many names on the payroll are missing in the census material. First, it is evident that the census-taker has not been as thorough in collecting information about these workers. This is evident when looking at the workers missing from the census and what part of the track they were working on. Sections 1-4 are fairly well covered by the census. These sections were the ones closest to Two Harbors. Sections 5-7 had a shortfall of more than 50%, while only 10 to 20 percent of the workers on the 8th to 11th sections, the most distant areas, appeared in the census. In “Tower Yard”, the terminus of the railroad, more than 50% of the workers could be identified. This result was probably gained because of the difficulty for the census takers from Breitung Township and Two Harbors to get out on the line to find the workers in these remote camps. I have only analyzed the gangs belonging to certain sections of the track, and not the extra workers with no stated section.

Another factor, partly intertwined with the other one, that can explain the absence of track workers in the census is the high turnover rates, mentioned by Charlemagne Tower Jr. as a problem as early as 1884, due to the brutal treatment and the harsh living conditions in the forest camps. There is no indication in the correspondence that any changes have occurred during the time up to May, 1885.

A third explanation might be that the workers on the track had been counted somewhere else, where they had a more permanent situation than during the working period on the D&IR. One probable place could be Duluth. The company used Duluth papers to advertise for workers, so there is a distinct possibility that the workers came from that city and had their residences there. Which one of the three factors was the most important is impossible to tell from the material I have used. That the turnover rates were high might by itself explain the behavior of the census-taker. The workers in this very mobile work force would not stay for long anyway, so taking a census for them did not make much sense.

Sections 1-4 will become one unit in this investigation while 5-7 and the Tower Yard will be another. Of the others, 8-11 is almost impossible to analyze, but a survey of the names of the workers will be made. A foreman headed each section gang, and a general foreman in charge of the track work headed the whole track force.

The general foreman for the track workers was American-born and had a monthly wage of 80 dollars. There were 13 track foremen on the May 1885 payroll. Of these, 5 have been established as American-born, 2 Swedish-born and 1 Finnish-born. To this can be added 5 men whose identity I have not been able to establish, but whose names indicate that 3 were Anglo and 2 were Scandinavians. The wages for section foremen were 50 dollars per month. The foremen and their places of birth are presented in Table 7.
Table 7. Foremen on the track roll of the D&IR, Wages, work hours and country of birth. May, 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/ wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wage</th>
<th>Hours worked</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Probable origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreman dept.</td>
<td>80/ month</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section foreman</td>
<td>50/month</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 Anglo 2 Scandanavian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on the Track Roll of the D&IR, May 1885. Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

I have used the whole track roll when trying to analyze the track foremen, including those who were not assigned to any particular section. Table 7 shows a distinct ethnic division of labor, where again the Anglo-American dominance in supervisory positions is visible. The Swedish immigrants were not completely without chances of achieving social mobility, as indicated by the two Swedes and the unidentified Scandinavians among the foremen. What is worth noting is that 4 of the American born foremen in Table 7 also were taken up as conductors during the same or the following month. This is a clear indication of the upward social mobility of the American-born group. The single Finnish foreman is promoted during the month of the payroll, and hence is listed and registered as a laborer, too. The results of the analysis of the section laborers are presented in Table 8.
Table 8. Track workers on the D&IR. Wages, work hours and country of birth. May 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section/ wages, hours, nationality</th>
<th>Wages per hour</th>
<th>Hours US</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Probable origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Scandinavian(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 Anglos (a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Other European or French Canadian(o)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9s, 7a, 1o</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-11</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13a, 6s, 6o</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower yard</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, all sections</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24s, 25a, 7o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on the Track Roll of the D&IR, May 1885. Minnesota state census taken for Lake County and Breitung Township, St. Louis County, 1885, and in one case, the Federal Census of 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

First, the problems with the shortfall of the material need commenting on. Only 53 out of 115 track laborers have been identified, a direct result of the source material problems discussed earlier. The shortfall in itself tells us a great deal about this group and its status in American society at the time, since many of them are made virtually invisible by not being in the census count on their current location. They might have been counted on another location, for example Duluth, the closest big city, but that does not show in my material. Railroad work of the kind carried out by the track workers was hardly regarded as a proper occupation at this time. Instead, it was one of many job opportunities for unskilled workers to make a living for part of a season in the United States during the second half of the 19th century.332

As regards the ethnic element, a conclusion that can be drawn from these patterns of employment is that the immigrant workers were a complement to the American-born. That is in line with my results for the work force that constructed the road in May 1884. The men whose identity I have been able to establish suggest an ethnic division of labor, where the Swedish and other Scandinavian workers, make up the mainstay of workers. 27 Swedes and 7 Norwegians made up more than half of the identified track workers. Seven workers were

332 The problem of finding these men belonging to this mobile work force has been discussed by: Montgomery, David. The Fall of the House of Labor. pp.58,59.
American-born and one was English-born, while four were Canadian or Welsh and one was Irish. The workers whose identity I have established guided by their names make the picture more complex, though. 24 Scandinavian names compared to 25 Anglos make the Scandinavian force less dominant.

The large number of Anglo names needs some commenting. The Scandinavians do make up a majority on the track roll this year, since they outnumber the Anglo group by 58 to 38, if one counts both the workers whose identity has been possible to establish (including the one identified Irish in the Anglo group). A larger number of workers of Scandinavian descent than of Anglo have been possible to find in the census. One reason for that might be that the Anglo-Americans were more mobile than the Swedish. Towards the end of the 19th century, a group of American-born workers who were known as Hoboes often worked on railroads. Abbot found that roughly one third of the workers employed in track work in Chicago in the 1910s were “English-speaking veterans of construction work”. These men seldom stayed on the job for more than ten to fifteen days.333 Of the identified workers, the Swedes are by far the largest group of track laborers on the D&IR, whereas Norwegians and other nationalities contribute less than ten workers each. This makes a large portion of the Swedish workers part of the work force who built and maintained the railroads, and who, according to W. Thomas White’s account of Maintenance of Way and construction work on the railroads, “received the least pay, and endured the worst conditions in the industry”.334 The only identified US-born laborer in sections 1-4 illustrates the career possibility for Anglo-Americans. He was promoted track foreman after having worked only 9 hours as a common laborer.335

The housing of the workers and the role of the company underline the character of a mobile work force. All track workers on the 2nd to 10th sections boarded at a company house, while none of the workers on the 1st section did. On the 11th section, one worker paid for board, while the others paid for their housing to someone other than the company. At Tower Yard, six of the eleven workers have board costs deducted from their wages.336 The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that most workers boarded with the company, especially the ones working far from the towns of Two Harbors and Tower. Closer to the towns the workers arranged their housing without the involvement of the company.

Based on the payrolls and the lack of information on these workers in the census, it is possible to draw some conclusions and put forth some theories. The fact that most men are missing from the census shows that these men seem to be migrant

335 D&IR Payroll record. June 1885.
336 Here, a range of variants existed among the workers. Some only seem to have paid for food, whereas others also used company housing.
workers that went to places where manual laborers were in demand, and then
moved on after a while. This is emphasized when analyzing their living condi-
tions and their reliance on boarding organized by the company. It is difficult to
assess their marital status, but the very conditions of living signals that the work-
ers generally did not have a family, at least not one that could follow them to
Two Harbors and the railroad project. Few of the workers seem to have owned
their own homes. The Swedish workers are no exception. They were part of
this group of single men, rather young, who built and ran Charlemagne Tower’s
railroad during the 1880s. Where the men came from is not possible to find out
through the material I have used here. A hypothesis is that the workers to a large
extent were recruited in Duluth. Further research on this group would therefore
be an important contribution to our knowledge of the Swedish migrant workers
in the US. Some clues as to the character of the laborers can be found in Frank
Tobias Higbie’s work on transient farm labor in the Midwest. Higbie shows how
large portions of the immigrant workers in the Midwest were Scandinavians, and
that a quite common pattern among transient workers was to spend the winters in
nearby, larger cities which provided inexpensive housing.

Many of these workers have been described as having one foot in industrial soci-
ety and one in rural. It was not uncommon for railroad maintenance workers to
have other jobs or to have been involved in farming. Since many of the work-
ers ambulated between different types of work, where unskilled railroad work
was one job opportunity, a distinct occupational identity never really emerged
among this group of laborers. However, Frank Tobias Higbie has analyzed the
role of these workers in the political economy of the Midwest and concluded that
they made up an important part of the work force, and that they often were con-
ected to specific job opportunities and to certain communities and kinship net-
works which allowed them to find employment at the same time that they were
highly mobile. That seems to be the case for many immigrant workers at the
D&IR as well. In fact, these workers were, as Higbie expressed it, part of a larger
regional labor market and their movement across the land was “mediated by the
changing seasons, their connections to communities, and the institutions and cul-
tural assumptions of the labor market itself”.

The low wage, the low skill level of the work, and the insecure working condi-
tions, where workers could be laid off from one day to the next and irregular
working hours made it difficult to recruit workers, and to keep them. The need
for company boarding houses to such a large extent is another indication of how
mobile this work force was.

The result from the most reliable part of the source material, for sections 1-4,
shows that the mobility of the workers was high, and that company policy was

337 D&IR Payroll record. May, June, 1885.
based on a flexible labor force. When comparing the payrolls of May and June 1885, we can see that the first section has gone from fourteen to ten workers, that five of the workers from the May payroll have disappeared in June and that two new names have been added. One of the workers was promoted foreman for the 8th section, while another one was taken up as a teamster on the June payroll. The other three have disappeared and two new ones have replaced these men. 341 In section 2, four out of nine workers left and were replaced by five new men. The third section contained eleven workers in May, 1885 but decreased to ten in June. Six workers have left the gang. Three of them moved to other gangs (two to section one, and one to section six), while three left. This means a turnover of six out of eleven, where three have stayed in the company and three have left. The rate of turnover does seem to support other research done on other American roads. 342 The fourth section gang was made up of seven laborers in May and six in June. During the same period none of the four foremen on the gangs analyzed left the company or changed their position in the company.

In conclusion we can identify three aspects of labor-management relations on the D&IR. First, the internal mobility in the company was large and the possibility of getting another employment was fairly good. Secondly, there was a rather high rate of turnover of workers, and thirdly, there was fluctuation in the number of men employed in different sections of the track on a monthly basis which indicates the demand for a rather unstable labor market situation with flexible workers. The third aspect indicates that the maintenance gangs were not held together. There seems however to emerge a pattern where the railroad gangs have an ethnic profile. Anglo workers dominate among some section gangs, especially in the 8th to 11th sections, while Scandinavians, and particularly Swedes, seem to cluster in sections 1-4.

This brief survey indicates that a large number of workers indeed were mobile, both spatially and socially, and that not all employed men stayed with the company. Many men were replaced by others and shuffled to other sections or left from one month to another. For these men the only alternative to railroad work in the region was mining or lumbering. Another alternative was to search for better paid, better-located jobs elsewhere.

One aspect that played a part in the large turnover and the large number of boarded workers on the track roll is that the ore industry in northern Minnesota was in many respects a seasonal work. The ore season started in the spring and continued until October/November. After that the ore deposits froze and navigation on Lake Superior became impossible. The work force increased in all departments during the summer season at this time, while the winter meant that all systems were held on life support and that some men were carrying out repara-

341 D&IR Payroll May, June 1885.
tions and improvement work on the line and on the company buildings. There was not enough business in the area in the 1880s to provide the railroad with winter work to the extent that could be acquired later on when businesses had opened and the transportation of goods and commodities was in higher demand the year round.

The men who left the company were generally the lowest paid and the ones most easily exchanged for others, i.e. the track force and the unskilled parts of the construction gangs. Since no job security was ever guaranteed and workers could be discharged at any time, the work force fluctuated very much, and men were on some occasions hired on a daily basis, since some of those on the payroll have less than ten hours of working time in one month.

Conclusions

The D&IR was a small railroad in comparison with many of its contemporaries. Its connection with the exploitation of ore in Minnesota also created some specific conditions with regard to the operation of the railroad as the D&IR owned ore docks and harbor facilities. The ownership of the railroad did however, not differ much from other railroads in the country as eastern Anglo-American capitalists established and owned it. The main owner, Charlemagne Tower, seldom visited Minnesota and controlled the company from Philadelphia. Below I will discuss the ethnic division of labor on the D&IR and see how an ethnically coded class structure, as a result of the establishment of a railroad, emerges in the 1880s.

One of the conclusions from my research on hiring practices is that the employer preferred American-born men in the company. Various immigrant groups complemented the work force when American-born workers could not be recruited in sufficient numbers. This complementary function did, however, not deny immigrant groups the possibility of social mobility during the 1880s.

The specialized crew on the ore docks is another example of the emergence of an ethnic hierarchy. It is typical with regard to the ethnic division of labor, which was, as on most all other roads, characterized by a dominance of Anglo-Americans in the skilled trades and in supervisory positions, while immigrants tended to be clustered in unskilled occupations. The Scandinavians can therefore be said to fall well in line with the general picture of non-English-speaking European immigrants in railroad work in the 19th century in that they tended to be employed as laborers that were paid the lowest wages and to have the worst working conditions of the men on the payroll.

343 The summer season was a busy time in the railroad industry as a whole, but the D&IR was slightly atypical since it was so intimately connected with the ore season.

344 D&IR Payroll, May 1885.
First, I would like to stress that the company material clearly shows an altogether male work force. Not one single woman shows up on the payrolls of the company as a railroad worker in 1885. I will not delve deeper into the gender dimension of labor here but it is not only a function of the work being hard labor in a physical sense and of the lack of women in the region. There are other dimensions related to the particular nature of railroad work and its connection with the Frontier society that makes this work and this particular environment an all-male sphere in the 1880s. The gender division of labor on the D&IR falls well in line with studies of the gender dimension of railroad work in general. W Thomas White has touched on the absence of women in railroading, seemingly implying that a process of exclusion from certain spheres of work has occurred. The women, in White’s account, are discussed together with a range of ethnic groups that were excluded by the “white” male American work force. In this respect, railroad work, during the 1880s and during the first decades of the 1900s can be argued to have been connected to masculinity and male identity. White also claims that the exclusion did not only affect women.

Secondly, I therefore would like to emphasize the distinct ethnic division of labor, which is evident when analyzing the payroll records. The high amount of unskilled immigrant labor in this force on the railroad is evident, and the largest singular part of it was Swedish. Swedes are most likely found under the general term of laborer carrying out a wide range of tasks, on the ore docks and along the track. They were also present on the train roll as maintenance workers or wipers. Their wages were the lowest and their working conditions many times the worst. The ethnic division of labor seems to be constructed around the premise of Anglo-American authority. Few Scandinavians were employed as foremen or given supervisory duties. There were a few exceptions though. At least two Swedes were employed as section foremen on the track roll. A few Swedes also managed to secure jobs in the running trades as Swedes are found that rise to firemen. One Swede even managed to become a locomotive engineer, one of the occupations with the highest status and the highest pay. On the miscellaneous roll all Swedes are found in lower-ranked positions, except for two that were employed as skilled workers on the sawmill.

Each one of the three rolls has a range of different occupational groups tied to its field of operation, and all jobs that yield a high wage, high job security and, in many instances, a supervisory role are held by American-born or Anglo immigrants, when referring to English-speaking immigrants from Great Britain or Canada. The conductors and the engineers in the running departments, the foremen of the construction gangs in Two Harbors, the foreman of the track force and most of the section foremen were from these groups and hence had some

345 White, W. Tomas. Race, Ethnicity and Gender in the Railroad Work Force: the Case of the Far Northwest. p.267
connection with the ethnic group of Anglo-Americans. They are also found in other high-paying jobs in the running trades and on the miscellaneous roll.

A large number of workers from the Anglo-American culture is, however, also employed as track laborers. There are therefore a few points to discuss regarding this group, since there seems to be a case for considering the Anglos as two separate groups. The first group holds high paying jobs with high job security, and is often found in a supervisory position. The second group was generally hired as casual labor in the track department, and even though being Anglo-Americans - Anglo immigrants by no means dominating the track force - there were a high percentage of them there. Some of these men experienced fast social mobility in the company, which is not the least obvious among workers who became foremen after a short period as laborers (2 in one month), firemen that became enginemen (two in one month) and at least one track foreman at an extra gang who was promoted conductor. Their knowledge of English was a great asset in this environment where large portions of the work force were not English-speakers.

A large number of the workers that left the company between May and June of 1885 were Anglo which underlines the probable existence of a mix of two elements in this highly mobile Anglo-American group. There was one group that sought to be promoted quickly and that, in the case of this happening, tended to stay with the company. If, on the other hand, the worker was not promoted, he was quite likely to leave the company and try his luck elsewhere. He knew that his language skill would probably give him another chance somewhere else. Therefore this group seems to have been part of a highly mobile force of workers that followed the line of railroad construction westward at the time, chasing career opportunities as they went. The diverging chances of career opportunities elsewhere might have been what made people leave the D&IR. As the indications are that social and geographical mobility were higher among the Anglo groups, part of this mobile work force might have belonged to the “hobo” group described by Abbot when analyzing the railroad work force in Chicago in 1914. She found that 1/3 of all the track workers consisted of English-speaking construction workers that seldom stayed for more than 15 days at the same work place.

On the other hand, the Anglo-Americans are practically absent from occupations such as carpenter, stonemason, and blacksmith, who were all held by foreign borns. My interpretation of this is that the craftsmen from the Anglo-American group could find work elsewhere, whereas the immigrants, whether German, French Canadian or Scandinavian, had to make do with the seasonal work they could find on the D&IR, since it could be difficult for them to acquire a skilled job anywhere else.

In my analysis of the D&IR, I have been able to conclude that a distinct ethnic division of labor existed in 1885, and that this ethnic division of labor was constructed around a number of factors: authority, the character of the work, employment form and job security, wages, the labor market situation and the sea-
sonality of the work. The conclusions further drawn about the work force on the D&IR during the 1880s are that it was very unstable, and that labor turnover was a problem for the company. The management knew about the living conditions and treatment of the workers but did not care or did not have any possibility to do anything about it. Either way, their supply of labor was sufficient. If labor was scarce in the region, more workers were recruited from the cities of Minnesota (and sometimes from places even further away). The work force was hired in part by the company itself, and in part by a contractor and that the number of workers during the construction of the road fluctuated wildly over time. The use of a contractor made the connections between workers and employers weak and the two parties had virtually no contact with each other whatsoever. The management of the company provided lodging and medical care for the workers but reduced the workers’ wages for that.

The largely unskilled Swedish workers of the company were many times made invisible by the census-takers’ disinterest in the categories not registered, because most of the unregistered men were casual laborers. The census is too sketchy to provide much information on the family situation, but we can find out that only a few workers had families registered in Two Harbors and that most of the population in the area consisted of young men, generally aged 20-30. In this respect the Swedes do not stand out.

The distinct ethnic division of labor is clearly connected with the company’s hiring practices and the role played by the demand of the Anglo-American employer. The hiring practices, however, do not by themselves explain the hierarchy of ethnicity at this time and in this context. It is therefore time to analyze the relationship between the company’s hiring practices and the larger ethnic, political and economic situation in Minnesota at the time. The ethnic division of labor is, hence, a function of company hiring practices, which in turn is structured by the ethnic environment that surrounded the railroad.

It is impossible to tell exactly what guided company hiring practices. Instead, they seem quite random in the situations where they are possible to study. An indication that there was an idea of whom to hire is the tendency from the President of the railroad to separate between eastern and western men, and who were expected to be most loyal. The hiring practices involved actively recruiting personnel, a recruitment job largely carried out in the cities of Minnesota. Here the tendency shows how the Anglo-American and Anglo immigrant group was hired first and that the Scandinavians had a function that was complementary to this group. One factor in the recruitment of personnel therefore obtained an ethnic dimension on the D&IR, due to the prevailing structural circumstances in Minnesota.

The fact that a large number of the construction workers and recently arrived immigrants in the state were Scandinavians ensured an ethnic division of labor on the road. In the Minnesota of the 1880s, the reservoir of labor was partly made up by Scandinavian immigrants, but there were also Germans, Irish, and a
fast moving Anglo-American work force that moved in from the east as a result of employment opportunities on the frontier. Why then, did Scandinavians so extensively dominate on unskilled positions on the railroad? One factor might be ethnic networks used by the contractor and the railroad company. Another plausible explanation is the proximity to Duluth, where there already existed a large number of Scandinavian immigrant workers.

On the D&IR, everything points towards the Scandinavians at this time being used as a complement to the desired and sought after Anglo-American work force. There is nothing in the material indicating that the Swedes were regarded as better railroad men than other ethnic groups or that this is an ethnic group preferred by the employers in any way either, nowhere is a campaign of hiring Scandinavians to be seen, or Swedes or other immigrant groups mentioned as especially suited for certain jobs ever discussed.

The limited supply of native labor instead ensured that Scandinavian immigrants were recruited. The management had a quite easy task of finding willing workers but it was more difficult to keep them, due to the working and living conditions in the railroad camps arranged by the company. So, the D&IR had to have a labor reserve, which they found in the cities of Minnesota. At this time these cities consisted of a large element of foreign-born people, and most of these immigrants made up the constantly fluctuating force of casual laborers that were demanded by construction employers statewide.

Secondly, the ethnic division of labor was a result of the ethnic groups actually present in Minnesota at this time, and in the particular region I am concentrating on. This "ethnic framework", i.e. the objective factor of ethnicity, had an impact on the hiring practices in the company and what was possible to accomplish with the ideas that guided the hiring of personnel. The ethnic context was in other words one important part of the structuring of the labor market in Minnesota. The hiring could not, however, only involve Anglo-American workers, as they were too few to satisfy the demands of the labor market at the frontier.

Another aspect of importance was the contemporary ideas of race, national groups and the function of these cultural and social categories in the United States and the manifestation of this in Minnesota. These factors seem to have played a part in the hiring practices of the company and helped shape the thinking around these issues that created notions of ethnic groups, and the position and status of different ethnic groups in relation to each other. These notions of ethnic groups that, according to David Roediger and Matthew Frye Jacobson, were established during the decades after the American Civil War formed the relations between ethnic groups and the division of labor from the conception of certain national groups as inferior to others. In this way the ethnic ranking and status of a specific group were dependent on the ethnic geography of a region. Many studies have shown the stigma attached to newly arrived immigrants in 19th century America. The labor market situation was but one outcome of the ideological climate constructed around 19th century Europeans who came to that
nation. A number of American researchers have described the hierarchy on the national level. There were important differences dictated by different ethnic, political and economic contexts and the absence or presence of a large African-American and/or Asian group in different areas of the country. The explanation offered by Gutman has been related to this discussion of whiteness, and has hence also been given an ethnic/racial dimension.

A similar feature in this research is that different groups, not only based on language and skin color, had different positions in relation to each other in the ethnic hierarchy during the 19th century. Not very much research on this has been done on Minnesota, but the importance of a group of Anglo-Americans from the eastern states in shaping the institutions and defining whiteness in this region has been recognized.

My study underlines the claim that a powerful group of Anglo-American bourgeoisie moved in and created an environment on the D&IR, where a ranking between immigrants and native-born is upheld in the workplace, and where sharp class differences separated people. How this process worked in the company becomes obvious when one scrutinizes hiring practices and the positioning of recently arrived immigrants compared to English speakers who were in general born, if not in the United States, at least in North America.

One interesting aspect of the D&IR is the Canadian and English elements and their relation to the Anglo-American group. The material has forced me to treat this group in some respects as one, but the similarities in status, wages and employment security are striking when comparing the groups to each other. The difference between them is, however, large enough to draw the conclusion that one can describe the ethnic division of labor in cultural terms with an Anglo-American core culture that is surrounded by other ethnic groups. The Swedes and Norwegians were the ones farthest from this core, while English and Canadian immigrants were fairly close to it.

The groups actually present in Minnesota in the 1880s were by no means a given, since they were affected by the group of Anglo-American capitalists. One problem for the state of Minnesota at this time was lack of settlers and labor, mostly farm labor, but also, to an increasing degree, industrial and construction labor.

The answer to this was to stimulate immigration. One aspect of this work was active recruitment in countries that had already sent immigrants. Railroad compa-

348 See the Background chapter in this text for an overview.
nies were particularly active in recruitment, and so were many politicians.\(^349\) As already shown in the chapter outlining Minnesota history, there is a long history of intermarriage between economy and politics in Minnesota and the interests of the Anglo-American capitalist group expressed itself in an initiative on the political arena to do active recruitment of farmers and workers to the state, in part by using ethnic channels. The result was that investors, like Charlemagne Tower, had a labor reserve on hand when demanded.

In short, there was an interest among investors and politicians to attract a reservoir of labor to the cities on the frontier to make projects like the one conducted by Charlemagne Tower possible to carry through without the need for any more thorough restructuring of the political economy or by social reform. The Swedish workers and their positions on the labor market at this time were therefore partly dictated by the demand for cheap immigrant labor from the Anglo-American bourgeoisie that established itself in Minnesota during the second half of the 19th century, and this was central. It was, however, also dictated by the willingness of Anglo-American workers to take certain jobs in certain locations. In this local Northeastern Minnesota context Swedish workers were clearly dependent on the Anglo-American work force and its behavior on the labor market. The function of the immigrant in the political economy of Minnesota during the 1880s can thus be linked to a larger framework of group relations and group interests, railroad leaders and the Republican Party in Minnesota at this time. The Swedish worker was not only an individual willing to toil for his own happiness in a system that was offering social mobility. He was also part of a strategy developed by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie in Minnesota that aimed at minimizing disturbances in a political economy shaped by cooperation between agrarian industrialists, railroad capitalists and the Republican Party in Minnesota at this time.

This alliance, which has been presented as an important power in Minnesota history, has thus had important consequences for the Swedish workers, who were used as a way of ensuring the maintenance of low wages and social relations based on Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony. This was a situation that for many immigrant workers meant insecurity and maltreatment in railroad camps set up by American companies.

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6. Organization of Work and Ethnic Division of Labor in 1920

As I have shown in Chapter 5, the framework for the employee-employer relationship was very weakly developed on the D&IR in the 1880s. It was built on the premise that the employer had an infinite source of cheap immigrant labor available, so the managers of the railroad did not have to develop any significant policy for how to handle the work force. My study is well in line with the work done on other railroads which have shown how one result of this policy of a non-policy was a large turnover of workers.\(^{350}\) The problem was not recruiting workers, but making them stay with the company. The workers in turn enjoyed the often questionable privilege of traveling somewhere else if work was scarce. The fluctuating labor situation was, however, not always unwanted by the workers. It was actually sometimes used as one of the tactics for enhancing a worker’s chances of social mobility. This tactic became obsolete when employers took control of the national labor market for railroad labor towards the end of the 19\(^{th}\) century.\(^{351}\)

The framework for labor-manager relations started to reach a different level of organization on the D&IR during the last decades of the 19\(^{th}\) century. The change of ownership that had occurred at the end of the 1880s when the Tower group sold the D&IR to a larger steel company ensured that the railroad became part of a nationwide empire of steel. The ownership change meant a shift from the Tower family’s sphere of influence, where the son had been the all-seeing eye of the old patriarch Charlemagne Tower, to managers with little connection with the New York-based owners. Tower Jr. had been stationed in the area of operations while the father was managing business from his Philadelphia office. This made for a somewhat unusual arrangement for an American railroad in the late 19\(^{th}\) century.

The change in ownership undoubtedly affected the mode of thinking about personnel relations within the company. From having been run by a businessman


with his roots in older traditions of labor-manager relations during the 1880s, whose management philosophy well fit the description made by Walter Licht as a mix of paternalistic and laissez faire ideology, new types of ideas seem to have controlled labor-manager relations on the D&IR, at least from the turn of the century. An indication of the new thinking is that much of the upper echelon of the company was replaced by new officers. Even though many officials from the Tower time had to resign, the company work force was not affected to any large extent by the changes. The new management was as dependent on the work force in the area as the Tower group had been and on the steady stream of new immigrants arriving during the following decades. New immigrants were still moving into the area, as long as job opportunities remained open during a time of expansion of the mining business in northern Minnesota. The focus of attention for this chapter is to analyze the ethnic and gender division of labor on the railroad in 1920. This will give a profile of different layers of the work force. Through a study of ethnicity and gender it is possible to establish whether there still existed an ethnic division of labor within the company, and whether the Anglo-American group was still as dominant as it had been among the skilled workers of the 1880s. It is also a good base for a comparison with my study on ethnicity and gender on the D&IR in 1885, since it offers some insight into how the work force differs, and, thereby, how opportunities for different ethnic groups, and men and women on the railroad, change over time. The question I will try to answer in this chapter is therefore: How was the work force on the D&IR composed, by ethnicity and gender, in 1920?

In 1920, the D&IR was a large company, with more than 1,000 employees during the ore season. The company had developed into a society in miniature, where a wide range of occupational groups were represented on the company payroll. The Swedish-born workers made up 92 out of 381 identified workers in three of the company’s branches, on the ore dock, among the engine men and among the station employees. The Swedish-born made up almost half of the common laborers on these payrolls. To this should be added the children of the Swedish immigrants making the Swedish part of the work force on the D&IR a significant one in 1920. The company had not only developed into a large-scale organization, but also into a more complex body, since various functions had been specialized, the administration had grown, the technical development had increased the possibility to communicate, and the work, as we shall see in chapter 7, had become regulated by detailed work rules.

The company payroll consisted of a train and yard roll, an engine roll, a station roll, a track roll, an ore dock roll, a bridge and building roll, a shop roll, a patrolman roll, and a coal dock roll. To this were added electricians and other specialists. This illustrates the variety of workers employed by the company. The mere size of it, together with the large area of railroad activity, makes it impossible for me to make the same study as I did on the 1885 work force. I have instead chosen three departments that represent three different kinds of work carried out on the railroad, where I knew I had a reasonable chance to find the workers. This investigation focuses on the workers found on the station roll, the ore dock roll
and the engine roll. This study has been complemented by an analysis of the census manuscript for Lake County in 1920 for three other groups of workers employed by the company, the track workers, the yardmen and the trainmen. I have used three sources to study the D&IR in 1920, the company payroll for the first part of June, an Internet search engine called Ancestry.com, which makes the United States’ federal census for 1920 searchable on the Web, and the complete census manuscript for Lake County. Through Ancestry.com, I had access to search the three counties that were most likely to harbor men and women employed by the D&IR: Lake County, St. Louis County, and Cook County. Through the search engine, I have been able to find workers on the D&IR payroll, which has allowed me, on many occasions, to establish the nationality of individual workers. I have used this method as a way of making an intensive study of three separate parts of the payroll: the ore dock in Two Harbors, where we find a large number of unskilled laborers, but also white-collar workers; the locomotive roll, where we find skilled and lesser skilled workers, locomotive engineers and firemen, and the station roll, which was dominated by white-collar workers but also held a share of unskilled warehouse workers. An analysis of these three departments, hence, offers an insight into different kinds of occupations regarding the skill, authority and character of work carried out on the D&IR in 1920.

I have used the third source, the complete census manuscript for Lake County taken in 1920, in two ways. The material has been used to analyze the turnover rates during a period of 4-6 months for the ore dockworkers and the enginemen, since the census for Lake County was taken in January and February, and the payroll I have used refers to June. This manuscript also supports the intensive study of the three parts of the payroll mentioned, because of the problem concerning flaws in the search engine in Ancestry.com.

I have also used the census manuscript for Lake County, without the corresponding payroll, since the method of cross indexing the payroll and the census would be too time-consuming. The reason for this has been to get a broader picture of the company by analyzing the census taken in January and February 1920 the men being employed by the D&IR in train service in the capacity of brakemen and conductors, in yard service as switchmen and yard laborers, and in track service as track workers or track foremen. By using this source I have been able to get a picture of the ethnic and gender profiles of these parts of the company, too. One important point to make, however, is that the results for these departments reflect the winter force of workers only, and not the larger summer force. Lastly, I have also used this source to analyze the high wage group of officers with a high authority within the D&IR, who resided in Lake County.

Due to the seasonal character of the work on the road, the work force tended to increase in number during the summer. Consequently, some of the workers have been difficult for me to find, as they sometimes held another job during the winter months and were hence counted somewhere else. This, however, also indi-
cates the fact of a low-wage ambulating work force still being used by the rail-
road, having to take different kinds of jobs depending on the season.
The discrepancy in time between the taking of the census (January and February) and the payroll records from the first part of June is a problem in that I have ac-
cess only to the winter force in the census. This force, being smaller in size than the June summer force, creates problems of finding the railroad workers em-
ployed in June, especially among the unskilled members of the force, who gen-
erally tended to take different kinds of work during the winter and summer sea-
sons. On the other hand, I will, through the use of a summer payroll, also get an idea of how large the turnover of workers was in 1920, between February and June.

Another problem has been the database that I have used in which it is only possi-
t to search for family heads, and not individual persons registered as, for ex-
ample, son or lodger. Lodgers and sons are therefore the persons most difficult to find, since the database indexing largely lacks these categories. The use of the census manuscript for Lake County has, to some extent, compensated for this.

The men in power

When scrutinizing the work rules of 1907, a picture of a more formalized and hi-
erarchical work place than in 1885, governed by strict rules emerges. When look-
ing at the supervisory positions, as they are defined by the work rules, we find that all positions of Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Engineer, Chief train dispatcher, Road Master, B&B foreman, Traveling engineer, Superin-
tendent of motive power, and the three yardmasters, are held by American-born employees of American, British, Canadian or Irish origin.

The superintendent in 1920, Thomas Owens, was an American-born man of Welch parents.352 The assistant superintendent was an American-born of Ameri-
can-born parents, and so was the chief train dispatcher. The road master was American-born and of Irish parentage. Of the four yardmasters, all were Ameri-
can-born, two of American-born parents, one of Irish parents, and one of British parents. The master mechanic was American-born of American-born parents, while the traveling engineer was American-born of Irish parentage. This gives an impression of an evident Anglo-American dominance on this level of the com-
pany, holding a high level of authority and was in charge of the hiring, firing, disciplining and promotion of other employees.353

The Station Roll

The station employees within the company were spread out over a vast area of land. All the way from the seacoast at Two Harbors and up to the Iron Range, a

352 Owens had been a locomotive engineer in the 1880s.
353 United States Federal Census for Lake County, 1920.
tightly knit web of station houses was coming into existence from the 1890s. These stations were to supply farmers and other settlers of the area with goods, supplies and transport possibilities down to Lake Superior. The employees working at these stations were therefore very public figures on the range locations and had to be an integrated part within their communities to be able to promote the company and the image of the company in these villages.  

The Station Payroll\textsuperscript{355} consists of a large number of different occupational groups in 1920: station agents, telephoners,\textsuperscript{356} telegraphers, warehousemen, foremen of different kinds, office clerks and a number of other occupations, among them janitors. The employees on the station roll and the ethnic and gender division of labor are presented in Table 9.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{354} In the Work Rules of 1907, referred to above, it is emphasized that the agents were to promote good relations with “the people among whom they [were] situated” and “use all means to secure traffic”. \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907}. p.101.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{355} I have chosen not to analyze Endion station and some of the smaller stations between Duluth and Two Harbors. Therefore my analysis only deals with stations between Two Harbors and the Iron Range, i.e. pp.3-10 of the station payroll.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{356} The spelling is taken from the Payroll.}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational title/ Nationality</th>
<th>American-born with American-born parents</th>
<th>American-born with foreign parents</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Total number of identified workers, (total number in parenthesis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 (Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Canada)</td>
<td>2 (Ireland, England)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent telegrapher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (England, Finland)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Clerk</td>
<td>2 (Sweden, Canada)</td>
<td>1 (Canada)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Agent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse foreman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (Sweden)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 (Canada, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Germany)</td>
<td>3 (Finland, Norway, Sweden)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16 (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegrapher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 (Ireland)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telefoner/switch tender</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (Russia, Finland)</td>
<td>1 (Sweden)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telefoner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (Sweden)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouseman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6 (3 Sweden, 1 England, Italy, 1 Slovenia)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 (17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baggageman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 (Sweden, Slovenia)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All positions</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 87 (97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we look at the wages of different categories, we find that the station work force was rather diverse. The best-paid workers, i.e. some of the agents, had a registered fixed wage of 100-120 dollars for the period. The chief clerk made 67 ¼ cents per hour, or 5.31 per day, and the warehouse foremen made 4.81 per day. The agent/ telegrapher made from 60 ¼ to 70 cents per hour, as did many of the station agents at smaller, less trafficked stations, often being immigrants and/ or women. The clerks made between 4.31 and 4.86 per day. The telegraphers made 56 ¾ cents per hour, while the telephoners made 53 ¾ per hour. The warehousemen made between 3.80 and 4.31 dollars per day, whereas the baggagemen made 51 cents per hour, or 4.08 per day. Finally, the janitors made 3.51 and 3.80, respectively. 357

There existed an ethnic division of labor among the station workers on the D&IR in 1920. The ethnic structure was, however, much more complicated than in the 1880s, since new ethnic groups had moved into the region and had secured employment with the railroad, and also since children of non- English-speaking immigrants was represented on the labor market. Looking at the various categories’ position in the pyramid of authority, we find that the categories with an authority over other employees were characterized by a high number of American-born men. 10 of the 27 workers in the occupations of agent, agent/ telegrapher, chief clerk, warehouse foreman and coal agent were American-born of American-born parents, while no less than twelve more workers were American-born of immigrant parents, or with only one American-born parent. There, hence, seems to have existed a connection between the Anglo group and the positions of authority on this payroll, too, but it is not as distinct as it was in 1885. Many of the American-born with at least one foreign-born parent had roots in non-English-speaking countries in the 1880s. Only six were from Great Britain, Ireland or Canada, whereas five came from other countries, mainly the Scandinavian ones. The children of American-born parents was, however, still holding the best-paid jobs with the highest level of authority on this roll, since the best paid station agents all belonged to this category.

The station agents were a rather heterogeneous group in 1920. Many of the smaller stations had only one part-time employee, while other stations, like the one at Two Harbors, were large with up to ten employees. There were 16 agents stationed along the route between Two Harbors and the mines. Of these sixteen, four were women. Women and male immigrants were all agents at stations far from Two Harbors and the mining region and in all cases, the female/ immigrant station agent was the only employee listed on the payroll for these stations, i.e., women and immigrants had no authority over other workers, and two of the three immigrants stated to be station agents were also females. Furthermore, those who worked at the smaller stations seldom worked full time. Three of the women made only nine dollars for the period, and the female station agents worked on

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357 D&IR Payroll, June 1920.
average 61 hours during the period and made on average 21.88 dollars for the time worked. This pattern indicates that immigrant women were employed half time at stations where business was slower. Furthermore, it meant that their level of authority was lower than most of the male American-born station agents, who in general had responsibility for a staff of other employees at his station. According to the work rules, this applies especially to telegraph operators and station baggage agents.358

The male agents had a fixed time of 104 hours of work for the period and had generally higher wages than their female counterparts. The agents at Two Harbors, Eveleth and Ely, the larger stations along the track of the railroad, had a fixed rate each month. In one case the wage was 100 dollars and in the two others (Two Harbors and Eveleth) 120 dollars. These agents were all American-born men from English-speaking families, while the agents at the smaller stations sometimes consisted of immigrants and women whose pay were up to 6 times lower than the best-paid agents.

I have defined the “middle level” of the station work force to include the office occupations of telegrapher, telephoners, and clerk, since these occupations belong to the white-collar sphere of the labor market. The definition is also based on the fact that the wages for these were generally slightly higher359 than for other occupations without any authority over other workers on the station force. The American-born dominated the office staff, as 29 out of 40 office workers (including the telephoners/switchmen), had been born in that country, 14 of these of two American-born parents. The rest of the American-born had at least one parent from Sweden (5), Norway (2), Canada and Ireland (4), and Finland (2). Eleven clerks were foreign-born. Three of these were born in English-speaking countries (Canada and Ireland), while four had emigrated from Sweden, three of them as children. Two Finns, one Norwegian and one Russian made up the rest of the immigrant clerks.

Warehousemen, janitors and baggagemen were part of the segment of the payroll where the largest proportions of immigrant workers were found; these were also the workers with the lowest wages. Nine out of twenty men were foreign-born, while eleven were born in America. Three of these had American parents, while eight were children of immigrants. Three of these had parents that were born in Sweden, while one had a Norwegian mother and a Swedish father. To these can be added two persons that had parents born in Slovenia, one person of Italian parentage and one with English parents. The nine immigrants came from the Ukraine (2), Italy (2), Finland (3), Norway and Canada. In this part of the payroll, immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe were well represented. However, other immigrant groups are also seen in these occupations.

358 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.108.
359 D&IR, payroll, June, 1920. The wages per hour for a warehouse man was $0.49, whereas a telegraph operator made almost $0.57 per hour.
It seems as if occupations with a high number of immigrants tended to be quite diverse regarding their ethnic composition on the station roll in 1920. Swedes employed in unskilled work now worked with persons born in Eastern and Southern Europe. Children of Swedish immigrants can be found in occupations such as baggageman and warehouse worker, but also in white-collar work as clerks, and even as foremen in warehouses and as chief clerks. Two Swedish-born clerks are found, but both of these immigrated as children. The tendency when looking at the station workers and the Swedish immigrants and their children on the force is therefore that of increased diversity with regard to position on the American labor market. The children of Swedish immigrants tended to be fairly evenly distributed between white- and blue-collar work, but they were fairly unusual, since five were employed as office workers and four as baggage and warehouse men. Generally, the children of Swedish immigrants seems to be the ones that have made inroads into segments of the labor market holding authority over other workers, and hence stand for the social mobility among the Swedish workers.

One important dividing line seems in general to run between the American-born and the foreign-born and the Swedes were but one example of this. There seems, however, to have run a line between the Swedes and other ethnic groups, too, since the former are better represented than the Eastern European workers that had practically no representation among the office workers. Only two Russians (one Russian-born and one with Russian parents) were taken up as telephoners, but these were also employed as switch tenders at one of the smaller stations. The Anglo-American employees still hold many of the high-wage, high-status positions with a high degree of authority. However, nuances of this are possible to trace. Immigrant groups and American-born with foreign-born parents in white-collar occupations tend to be no longer only from English-speaking countries, but also from Scandinavia. The absence of Anglo-American workers in the blue-collar occupations on the roll is striking. Only three of the American-born of American-born parents are employed as a warehouseman or baggageman.360

Eleven employees on this payroll were women. They worked as station agents, generally on part time, office clerks, and telephoners. The occupation of agent seems to have been quite autonomous, as the female agents were the only employees at their designated station. All female telephoners and clerks had male superiors. The gender division of labor is therefore evident when analyzing the station workers. Women on the D&IR were employed as office workers, with low levels of authority. The women working as telephoners were immigrants, one Norwegian woman, and one Swedish. The five female clerks were all American-born, two of American-born parents, two of one American-born parent, one with one Swedish, and one with one Norwegian parent, and finally one born of Swedish parents. Of the four female station agents, two were immigrants, from Swe-

360 D&IR Payroll, June, 1920, United States Federal Census, 1920
den and Finland respectively, while two were American-born of foreign-born parentage (Danish and Canadian). The women, however, were not found doing work in the worst paid occupations of janitor, baggageman or warehouseman.

If we look at the ethnic composition for the whole payroll, the group of American-born workers is large. 62 of the workers were American born, whereas 25 were immigrants. The latter group was concentrated to the worst paid occupations on the roll.

The Ore Dock

The ore dock in Two Harbors was the place where most of the ore that was mined on the Vermillion range (one of the three iron ranges in northern Minnesota) was shipped out. The iron ore was transferred from the trains and loaded onto waiting boats. The three concrete docks in Two Harbors were technical marvels of their time, the first one built in 1907-1908. By the 1920s, four trains could unload their ore at the same time, since each dock contained four tracks. They were equipped with an intricate system of trapdoors and ore pockets for storage, which made it easy to unload the trains that simply drove out onto the dock and loaded their cargo into the pockets. Each pocket could hold 300 gross tons of ore for an aggregate of 180,000 gross tons. The mere capacity of the docks indicates the large tonnage of ore shipped out from Two Harbors each year. In the top year 1916 almost 11 million tons of ore was shipped out or more than one sixth of what was shipped on the Great Lakes in that year. This gives an indication of how important the ore of the region was for the local economy, but also for the steel capitalists of the time. When the ore train arrived at Two Harbors it first passed over a scale, and then it was broken up into portions and assigned to a sorting-engine, which carried the ore out on the ore dock, where the contents were dumped into the ore pockets.361

The ore cars were built of steel and had a hopper bottom to which doors were hinged. Each car held about 50 tons of ore and were unloaded by wrenching open the doors, thereby discharging the ore into the ore dock pockets. This was the work of the wrenchmen.

The work of unloading the trains and loading the boats was until the 1910s considered a very dangerous job with many accidents occurring each season, some with a deadly outcome. However, between 1917 and 1927 the company had experienced but one death on the docks, a worker that, according to an official company publication, had been handling company equipment “without following the safety procedures”.362 The decrease in accidents was due to a massive safety program launched by the railroad company and the local YMCA in the mid 1910s. I will return to the safety program in chapter 8. This place of work had


362 *Transportation of Iron Ore*. p.16.
thus become much less dangerous by 1920. The work was, however, to be considered unskilled and the common laborer did not have a high status.

The job of loading the ore into boats was generally an operation that took less than half an hour. One problem with the otherwise very smoothly running system was that ore sometimes tended to stick to the ore cars. This was especially true during the fall season, when rain rendered the clayey ore very moist and sticky, or cold temperatures could freeze the ore to the cars. In the 1880s, the workers used levers to do this job, but new techniques made it possible to do it with hoses connected to locomotives that blew out hot steam or boiling water to release the ore. A steaming-plant for this task was constructed at Two Harbors. A group of specialized laborers on the dock were the trappers. Their job was to keep an eye on the ore level in the pockets and handle the trap-door system on the docks, opening and closing the doors as needed. A third group of workers were the boat loaders. This group was in charge of loading the ore into boats and see to it that this was done in a proper manner so as to avoid accidents during the transport.

A large number of different occupational groups worked on the ore docks and in the ore dock offices. Men toiled both night and day during the ore season. The common laborer was the most numerous of the different occupational groups. Besides the pure muscle power needed during the unloading of the ore cars there was a need for some special categories of workers on the dock.

The general and assistant foremen were to supervise the work of the men and to structure functioning teams and shifts when they were out on the dock. In the work on the dock communication between the men was important to limit the risks of misunderstanding and accidents. According to the payroll this was not the case however. There are some clusters of Finnish workers, according to the census, some of whom did not to speak any English, but ethnic teams, judging by the organization of the payroll, did not exist on the ore dock in 1920. Besides these groups of workers there was a need for some craftsmen that could handle repairs and make spare parts when required. This was a very small group of workers, and they have been excluded in this investigation.

A rather large administration was necessary to keep track of orders and shipments of ore when it went out to different buyers, containing a chief clerk, office clerks, a stenographer, a bookkeeper, and a timekeeper. These men and women were also required to keep track of the force of workers that was needed seasonally and that sometimes was replaced at short notice.

The force on the ore docks seem to have been somewhat unstable, judging by a sample of the personnel records of ore dock workers on the road, as can be illustrated by the example of Erick Skoglund. He was born in Sweden in 1893, moved to the US in 1916 and had not become a naturalized citizen when he first

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applied for a job on the ore docks in 1923. In his application he stated that he spoke both English and “Swede”. He started working on the docks on May 7, 1923 and resigned on May 23 the same year. After that the company employed him three more times, in 1928, 1929 and 1930. In 1928 he was employed for six months, in 1929 for five months and in 1930 only for three days before he was laid off due to force reduction. 365 Conrad Storman worked as a switch tender at the ore docks in Duluth for the DM&N, the sister company of the D&IR, from June to September 1922, when he was laid off due to “slack ore business”. He was then reemployed at the ore docks the following summer when he worked from May 4 to June 5, i.e. roughly one month, before being laid off again. 366

In a company pamphlet from 1927 the workers on the docks counted 40 men working the day shift and 40 the night shift during the summer and 26 on each shift during the winter. 367 The number of workers on the payroll of June 1920 exceeds this by far (139 persons are said to be laborers). The workers seem to have worked shifts during the ore season, as most workers have one sum for day shifts, and another for night shifts. The base wage for a worker was 62.5 cents per hour. 1.5 times this was paid for extra work. Most of the workers seem to put in approximately 100 hours of work for the first half of June, and then approximately 25 hours of extra time. Only 12 workers on the payroll worked less than 60 hours. Stability then seems to be the case in 1920, judging from this payroll. Another measure of stability in the work force is, however, to compare the payroll records of June with the men and women stating that they were working on the ore in the census of the previous winter. Out of 147 persons of all categories that have stated that they worked on the ore dock 28 have left. Of these, 25 were registered in the census as ore punchers, laborers or simply as working on the ore dock. Thus a number of workers have disappeared from the ore dock between seasons, which indicate that there was an “extra force” of workers still ambulating between jobs, but that the work force generally was of a rather stable character in 1920.

The wages differed strongly between groups. The highest paid person on the ore-dock roll was the dock agent. He had a fixed wage of 150 dollars. The assistant dock agent and the chief clerk made 126 and 130 dollars respectively. The time-keeper made 93 dollars, while the office clerks received between 46 and 94 dollars for the period. The women in the offices had most of the time the lowest wages on this roll. 368 The general foremen made $118, while the foremen made $96. These categories had a fixed wage, except the clerks, who were paid per day. The laborers, wrenchmen and trappers were paid 62 ½ cents per hour. The wages taken out for most of the dockworkers during the period were approximately 90 dollars. The boat loaders received slightly more. 369 A grouping of dif-

365 Personal records, Skoglund Erick. DM&IR RR Archive.
366 Personal records, Storman, Conrad. DM&IR RR. Archive.
367 Transportation of Iron Ore. p.16.
368 D&IR Payroll, June 1920. p1.
369 D&IR Payroll, June 1920. p.4-6
different occupational categories, together with the ethnic composition of those on the ore dock, is presented in table 10.

Table 10. Ethnic division of labor on the ore dock in Two Harbors, 1920.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/ Nationality</th>
<th>American-born</th>
<th>American-born of foreign descent</th>
<th>Norwegian-born</th>
<th>Swedish-born</th>
<th>Finnish born</th>
<th>Scottish born</th>
<th>German born</th>
<th>Total number of identified Workers, (total number in parenthesis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dock agent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant dock agent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief clerk</td>
<td>2(Sweden Norway)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timekeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office clerks</td>
<td>4 1 11(Sweden 8) (Norway 2)+ (Sweden/Norway 1)</td>
<td>1 3 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkers</td>
<td>1 11(Canada/US); (1 Canada/Scotland); 2 Canada; 4 Sweden</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General foreman</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant general foreman</td>
<td>2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messenger</td>
<td>2(Canada, Sweden)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>2 11(5 Swedish, 4Norwegian, 1Finnish)</td>
<td>13 46 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>103(152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trapper</td>
<td>2 4 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrenchman</td>
<td>1 5 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat loader</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith helper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All occupations</td>
<td>7 37</td>
<td>26 67 37 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>176(233)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payroll for the employees on the Ore dock roll of the D&IR, June, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN. p.1-13. Ancestry.Com searches for these same names in the Federal Census of 1920. The category of hoister have been excluded due to being a minor groups with little to add to the investigation.

Table 10 shows a number of interesting results compared to the situation 35 years earlier. First, it is important to point out that there is still an ethnic division
of labor in 1920. Out of 103 identified laborers on the ore dock, 46 were born in Sweden, and 30 in Finland. Another 5 of the workers were American-born of Swedish parents, a group showing a heavy presence on the ore dock. Only 2 of the workers were born in the US of American-born parents.

Several high paying jobs with high level of authority is still held by American-born of English-speaking parents in the US. Out of the 25 persons employed at the ore offices 18 were born in the United States while four had been born in Sweden, two in Norway and one in Scotland. All of the Swedish- and Norwegian-born had spent more than ten years in the new country and they had all immigrated as children. The assistant dock agent is an example of this, and so is the Swedish-born timekeeper. Both were under four years of age when they came to the United States. The work force in the ore dock offices was quite young, too, and many of the office clerks were taken up in the census as daughters and sons still living with their parents and still unmarried. A high number of the American-born with immigrant parents were Swedes.

This is also the only section of the payroll where it is possible to find females. Twelve of the office workers were women: the stenographer, the bookkeeper and 10 of the 19 clerks. Two of the women had been born in Sweden, two sisters by the name of Sutherland that had emigrated at a very early age. Another two of the women had been born in Minnesota, but of Swedish parents. Of these four, three were registered as daughters while one was registered as wife in the census. The average age of the women was low; in general the women employed were between 20 and 30 years of age. The male office employees were also quite young compared to the workers on the docks. Seven of the twelve women lived at home whereas five of the men were registered as sons. The rest were lodgers or renters with two exceptions, the two owning their own house. The pattern for this part of the ore dock payroll is that the employees were young, generally American-born with Scandinavian- or American-born parents. A large part of the work force in the offices was female and younger daughters of Swedish immigrants showed a heavy presence in the ore dock office. Still though, the best-paid and the highest ranked officer, the dock agent, was American-born of American-born parents. The structure shown in the 1880s thus holds true also for 1920, except that the company employees born in the United States had not been born by English-speaking immigrants. Instead, the American-born in the offices were more likely not to have English-speaking parents.

When scrutinizing the payroll for the dockworkers the patterns look very different compared to those of the offices. The immigrant element was very strong on the ore docks and it is striking how much older a large part of the work force was compared to their colleagues in the ore offices. The general foremen of the ore docks were immigrants, one born in Sweden and the other in Norway. Both were more than 55 years old, and both had immigrated at an early age.

370 D&IR Payroll records, June 1920. Federal Census records for St. Louis County, Cook County and Lake County. Census records have been cross indexed in order to acquire this information.
All workers on the ore dock in this year were Swedish, Norwegian or Finnish, except for twelve that were American-born. Of these, all save one were of Swedish (5), Norwegian (4) or Finnish (1) descent. This makes the immigrant presence on the ore dock very heavy. 90 workers out of 103 identified are immigrants and 46 of them were from Sweden.

The workers on the ore dock tended to be either old, i.e. more than 50 years of age, or under 25. Many of the immigrants had spent a good number of years in the United States. Of the identified Swedish workers on the dock 15 were lodgers or roomers, six were renting their own house, and 24 were living in houses that they owned (18) or that they had mortgages on (6). The corresponding numbers for the Finnish workers are 14 lodgers, 6 renters and 10 that owned their own houses.

The ethnic composition and the living conditions of the workers illustrates an interesting quality in this work force. In 1920, one part of it had settled down in the area, and had houses and families. However, one part of it still had an unstable living-situation, and probably ambulated between different kinds of unskilled work. It seems as if many of the workers on the ore dock were hired on a seasonal basis. Many of them used the dock work as a way of supporting themselves during the summer, while spending the winter with other work or in Duluth. Exact numbers for this group have to be taken with a grain of salt since the names of the workers were common ones, and many of them were not registered in Lake County at the time, but probably went to the city of Duluth, or to lumber camps in the region during the winter months. Still, the tendency is clear and the role of this ambulating group of immigrant workers on the labor market is also evident, as they were used as a complement when settled workers were not numerous enough. There are indications in the 1910 and the 1920 census that many of the workers found work in the lumber camps around Two Harbors during the winter, but that is not part of this study, concerned as it is with work on the D&IR. The most outspoken of these groups was the Finnish one, but the Swedes also had this component.

In all, the ore dock of Two Harbors was of a Nordic character, as many of the workers were immigrants from these countries, and many of the staff in the offices were also of Nordic descent. A number of the clerks were foreign-born, but in general this small group had immigrated at a very early age. Due to the many Scandinavians on the force it might have been a merit to be able to speak one of the Nordic languages in the office, as this could sometimes have been a way of being able to communicate with workers that did not speak English very well. In the census of 1920, one question to the informant is to state whether he spoke the English language. Most of the workers on the dock answered this in the affirma-
tive, but there are a few exceptions. All of these are, however, Finns. The quality of their language knowledge is not stated or graded in any way. 373 In this department, too, the positions where authority and pay were high we find mostly, but not always, American-born persons with American-born parents. The chief clerks in the ore offices were both born in the US and had spent their whole lives in that country, but their parents came from Europe, from Sweden and Norway respectively. The foremen on the ore dock were Scandinavian immigrants.

The Swedish employees, as indicated on the station roll, were to be found on different levels of authority and in different types of work. The children of Swedish immigrants stand for most of the social mobility, whereas their immigrant parents on this roll largely tend to be laborers. The tendency to branch out on the labor market offered by the D&IR is hence evident in this department, too. The fact that the foremen on the docks tend to be Scandinavians underlines two things. First, non-Anglos had the possibility to reach positions of authority and good pay. Secondly, there seems to be a tendency on the D&IR, and this falls well in line with my analysis on recruitment in the company, 374 and the ethnic networks revealed through the 1910 census and the analysis of the composition of Two Harbors in that year, to conserve the ethnic character of a department that had been established during previous seasons. In this way, ethnicity seems to play a part in the recruitment patterns, as Swedish and Norwegian foremen seem to employ Swedish and Norwegian workers, and even housed them on occasion.

**Locomotive Roll**

The two occupational categories on the locomotive roll are enginemen and firemen. These two positions had a high status, especially the occupation of locomotive engineer. The wages were high. The best paid locomotive engineer made 170 dollars, whereas 75 of the engineers made between 110 and 150 dollars. This still made the locomotive engineers one of the best paid groups on the D&IR, but it also reveals the large differences in pay and job security between locomotive engineers. The firemen also constituted an occupation with a relatively high status and good pay. A majority of the firemen made between 90 and 110 dollars for the period.375 Career opportunities for firemen were also generally better than for other “less skilled groups”, as they have been called by Shelton Stromquist, as the recruitment for locomotive engineers was largely done from the firemen within the company.

One point regarding this material is important to make. The search engine most of the time finds only the head of the family, and, as many firemen were young enough to still be living with their father and mother, they are stated in the census records as “son”, so I have been unable to find more than a small number of

373 United States federal census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
374 See chapter 7, for a discussion on the hiring practices.
375 D&IR Payroll, June 1920.
them through Ancestry.com. On the other hand, I have complemented this study with a study of Lake County in 1920 and have thus been able to get a more complete picture of the locomotive engineers and the firemen working on the road. First, I present the analysis made, when searching on Ancestry.com for the names stated on the payroll. Then, I will make an analysis of the portion of the work force who lived in Lake County and who stated to the enumerator that they were working for the company. Let us thus first turn to the method using database searches. The ethnic composition of the work force is presented in table 11.

Table 11. The ethnic division of labor among the enginemen on the D&IR, June, 1920.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/Nationality</th>
<th>American-born</th>
<th>American-born of American-born parent</th>
<th>American-born with one American-born parent</th>
<th>American-born with foreign-born parent</th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Yugoslavia</th>
<th>Total number of identified workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>engineers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>94(113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firemen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55(115)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The number of Swedish engineers on this roll was low compared to the American-born of American-born parents. Only 14 engineers were Swedish immigrants or their children. Instead the large ethnic groups in this occupation are the Anglo-Americans, and American-born with the emphasis on persons of Irish, English and German descent. The Swedes, however, dominate the group of foreign-born.

Out of the twelve Swedish-born engineers, seven owned their own house, two were lodgers and three were renting their houses, eight were married, one was a widower and three were single, among them, the two boarders. Seven of the men, furthermore, have children living at their home at this time. This is thus a picture of a rather steadily employed and settled down group of employees that seems to be an established part of a community.

29 of the 55 identified firemen in 1920 were American-born, whereas 26 were foreign-born. The character of the firemen seems to differ compared to that of the locomotive engineers, but it also differs regarding the quality of the American-born. In 1920 only a small fraction of the American-born had American-born

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376 For practical reasons, I have excluded seven locomotive engineers stated to be located at Endion station.
parents, whereas the single largest group among the firemen in 1920 was made up of the American-born of foreign-born parents. Regarding the firemen, who are generally younger than their engineer colleagues, the differences are obvious, with not as many Anglo-Americans as among the engineers and a larger number of foreign-born persons. This is the category of workers standing in line for a promotion to become an engineer, and the large proportion of foreign-born and the increasing number of Eastern Europeans and Finns create an impression of a marked change in recruitment patterns.

In all, 50 out of 149 firemen or engineers were born in the United States and had one or both parents that also were American-born. Another 39 were American-born of various descents, most commonly, though, among the engineers Scandinavian, British, German or Canadian.

This dominance of Scandinavians is also strong among the firemen, but new groups have been added to this occupation. First, there seems to be a rise in the number of Finns and Eastern Europeans in this department, seemingly replacing the Anglo-Americans, whose numbers are dropping sharply when comparing the engineers with the firemen. The firemen were in effect, to some extent, the next generation of locomotive engineers, as indicated by the internal recruitment policy on the D&IR. The make-up of the different groups will have an impact on the future ethnic component in this work force.

The next generation will thus see a marked decrease in American-born with American born parents, as they are replaced with a cadre of workers that are from non-English-speaking European countries, or more accurately, the children of these European immigrants. From this composition we can draw two conclusions. First, in this year the locomotive department still appears, as in the 1880s, heavily Anglo-American, when looking at the overall make-up and taking only the engineers into account. This occupation seems to have conserved its Anglo-American character, and one explanation can be found in the hiring practices described in company documents, with local recruitment and ethnic and family networks on the local level seemingly playing an important part. To that can also be added the increasing internal recruitment on the D&IR. Secondly, this Anglo-American dominance will not be sustained into the next generation of engineers, since so few American-born of American parentage are listed. This seems to have demographic explanations. Instead, immigrants and children of immigrants from non-English-speaking countries will to a large extent dominate the work force. This is, unless the workers could be made an integrated part of the American society, adopting not only language, but a culture based in the Anglo-American nationalist project. I will return to these demographic changes and the role that ethnicity and its connection to radicalism played for the company’s changing labor policy into an integrative project based on welfare capitalism and community orientation in chapters 7-9.
The Enginemen in Lake County

Let us then turn to the census count for Lake County in 1920. I have been able to find 88 men residing in Lake County who are claimed to be employed as locomotive engineers on the D&IR during the winter of 1920, and 44 firemen (table 12).

Table 12. Ethnic division of labor among the enginemen in Lake County, 1920.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>American-born of native-born parent</th>
<th>American-born with one native-born parent</th>
<th>American-born with foreign-born parent</th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Holland</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firemen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

An American dominance with Anglo-American emphasis within this profession seems to be the pattern in 1920, as 53 of the workers employed as locomotive engineer were American-born, and 35 were immigrants. Out of the 35, 10 were born in Canada and one in Scotland, while 13 and 5, respectively were born in Sweden and Norway. Added to these were one Finnish, one Swiss, one Austrian, and three German workers. Among the American-born with foreign-born parents the Irish (9 of the 21) and the Canadians (3 of 21) stood for more than half of the total number of immigrant workers. The Germans were also heavily represented among the children of immigrants (5 of the 21), while only one child of Swedish immigrants was employed as a locomotive engineer. Added to this was one American-born with Belgian parents. The American-born of American parentage in Lake County at the time made up approximately one seventh of the population but almost one third of the locomotive engineers. To these figures can be added seven workers with one American-born parent, which makes this group amount to 32 workers. These mixed marriages were between American-born and immigrants from Ireland, in four cases, Canada, in two cases, and Scotland, in one case. This confirms the results given through my searches in Ancestry.com, and the conclusion drawn from my study of 1885 namely that American-born and immigrants from Canada and the British Isles were preferred to Scandinavian immigrant workers in skilled positions.
As the Swedish immigrant group made up approximately one seventh of the total population in Lake County and the number of Swedish-born locomotive engineers is 13, they make up approximately their “share” of the engineers. The lone Finnish immigrant engineer represents an immigrant group of 761 residents, thus the Finnish group is underrepresented among the engineers. Not very surprisingly the engineers show a remarkable stability in their relation to the company, as reflected in the high percentage of married settled-down men more than 40 years of age. 42 of the engineers owned their houses and had no mortgages on them. Another 15 owned their houses, but still had mortgages. 22 were renters, and only seven lodged or were taken up as roomers in the census. Two of the locomotive engineers were still staying with their family, one son and one son-in-law. 77 of the engineers were married, three were widowers, and eight were single. 377

Five Swedish-born engineers had bought their own house, two that still paid mortgages, four were renters and two were lodgers. All but two of the Swedish workers were married. These figures are too small to say anything for certain about whether and how the Swedish engineers differ from other ethnic groups in this trade. The impression of stability among the engineers on the D&IR in general also holds true for the Swedes. 378

The Swedish locomotive engineers had generally spent quite a long time in the United States. The first one arrived in 1879. Seven more arrived in the United States during the 1880s, and the remaining five arrived between 1890 and 1894. The average age of the Swedish locomotive engineers in 1920 was 47. The Swedish locomotive engineers all came to the United States at a fairly early age. The youngest was two years old, while the oldest was 24. The average age at the time of immigration was 15. 379

When comparing the engineers living in Lake County in 1920 when the census was taken during the months of January and February with the company payrolls for the summer, the engineer force seems quite stable. Of the 88 workers claiming to be engineers for the D&IR in January 1920, 67 were still on the company payroll the same summer as engineers, while three worked as firemen. This tells us that 70 of 88 workers living in Lake County during the winter of 1920 were employed during the following season in the running trades on the D&IR, while 18 left the company, judging by the locomotive payroll for the first part of June 1920. Two of the workers that left were Swedes, both census-taken as lodgers. 380

In the census for Lake County in 1920, 44 men were stated to be firemen. Only 28 of these were still employed in the running trades of the company in June. This means that 16 out of 44 men left their service in the running department of

the D&IR. Furthermore, eight of the men written into the census in January as firemen were taken up on the payroll for June as locomotive engineers and have consequently been promoted during the winter as a way of compensating for the increased demand for engineers during the summer season. This means that less than half of the firemen worked as firemen during the following summer.

The ethnic composition for this group states that 26 were American-born and 18 were foreign-born. However, the composition of the group of firemen seems to have changed since the census taken in January, since only five men are given as American-born of American-born parents. The group of American-born with foreign-born parents was the single largest group of firemen in Lake County, as ten with Swedish parents, three with Norwegian, and three with German parents made up 16 of the 19 American-born workers with foreign-born parents. Of the rest, three consisted of mixed marriages between foreign-born parents. Among the foreign-born there was a strong Swedish dominance among firemen in Lake County, since eight of 18 were Swedish-born, four were Norwegian born, two had been born in Canada, one in Holland, one in Italy, and two in Finland.

Only 19 of the 44 firemen identified via the census for Lake County, were Heads of a family, owning (11) or renting (8) their own house. 23 men were lodgers, boarders, roomers or sons. The last category of sons living with their family was the largest in this group making up 14 men. The average age of the firemen from the census was 32 years. 22 of the firemen were married, two were widowed, and 20 were single.381

The Swedish-born firemen had an average age of 33 years, six were lodgers or sons, whereas two rented. Five were single, two were married, and one was a widower. Of the children of Swedish origin, six are taken up in the census as sons, three as renters, and one as a house owner. Five were single and five married. As a whole, the Swedish immigrants and their children made up 18 out of 44 firemen in Lake County in 1920. This was quite a large number compared to the other immigrant groups.382

The tale told by two investigations

When comparing the results from the two investigations I have carried out on the quantitative material regarding the work force on the D&IR they support each other in terms of an ethnic division of labor and changing patterns for employment opportunities and workers’ living conditions. Both the searches for employees on the payroll of the D&IR in ancestry.com and in the census study for Lake County show how the proportion of Anglo-Americans employed as locomotive engineers and firemen on the D&IR, decreased between the 1880s and 1920. This holds especially true for the firemen. The ethnic composition of the region seems to play a part, since the searches in Ancestry.com have given a lar-

382 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
ger number of Finnish and Eastern Europeans as firemen, but the impression is that the Scandinavian immigrants, and primarily their children have to some extent established themselves in these occupations, primarily as firemen, while the Anglo-American dominance still seems quite strong among the engineers in 1920 relative their numbers.

I have been able to identify 96 out of 113 locomotive engineers through the use of the search engine and the analysis of the census for Lake County in 1920. I have also been able to identify 66 out of 114 firemen on the payroll of the D&IR for June in 1920. These were of a more varied ethnic character, since Scandinavians, other European immigrants, and to some extent, eastern Europeans and Finns were more prominent on the payroll than in 1885, at the same time that the proportion of Anglo-American workers seems to have decreased. However, my results also show that the Anglo-American character of the locomotive engineers and the firemen was, to some degree, conserved.

Despite this “conservation”, the children of immigrants from non-Anglo countries were also employed as firemen. The low number of firemen found in Lake County might be ascribed to the fact that these were generally hired locally along the track, they made up a less stable body of workers compared to the locomotive engineers and they were younger and they had not been on the labor market particularly long. The largest group among the firemen living in Lake County was American-born children to immigrants. In this group a large number were of Swedish parentage.

The Winter Track Force in Lake County, 1920

Peter Johnson was one of the Swedish workers that stated their occupation to be a track laborer to the enumerator for Lake County in 1920. At the time, Johnson was 66 years of age. He came to the United States in 1888, and became a citizen in 1898. He knew English, but his wife did not. Peter had made his life in Minnesota and despite not being able to advance beyond track laborer he still owned his house and had a family. Peter is not unique in any way, since 48 out of 97 workers residing in Lake County, and identified as belonging to the track force on the D&IR during the winter of 1920 were Swedish-born.

The purpose of this part is to obtain a social and ethnic profile of the workers on the D&IR who had stated themselves as track foremen and track workers with the company and were residing in Lake County in January-February of 1920. First, a source critical point. The Census for Lake County in 1920 was taken in between ore seasons and hence, the workers stating these occupational titles reflect the smaller winter force on the road. This force was probably not even stable during the winter period, so it is very difficult to analyze it, but by using the census material, it is possible to get an idea of age distribution, ethnic composition, living conditions, and marital status of the workers and foremen in this line of work. This must be considered the most stable part of the track force on the D&IR and might have had a somewhat different profile than the summer force.
The number of young casual workers that lodged, roomed or boarded probably increased during the ore season. This increase of the track force is testified by the 1910 census that states a large number of the roomers and lodgers to be laborers on the railroad or section hands.\textsuperscript{383}

Immigrant workers dominated the track force on the D&IR in 1920. Two categories of workers are represented here, section foremen and common laborers. 20 men in Lake County gave the occupational title of section foreman, and 77 gave the occupational title of railroad laborer on a section gang. These men represented a number of different ethnic groups as shown in table 13.

Table 13 Ethnic composition of foremen, and track workers in Lake County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/Nationality</th>
<th>American-born, American parentage</th>
<th>American-born, Foreign parentage</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Finnish</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>Polish</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

Of the 20 foremen, four were American-born. Of these, one was son of Swedish parents, one of German, one of Irish and one of Canadian parents. The rest of the foremen were immigrants, one from Finland, one from Canada, two Poles, and no less than twelve came from Sweden. Nine of the Swedish foremen had resided in the United States since before 1893, while three had immigrated in 1900 or later. The age of the foremen was rather high, as only four of them were under 40 years of age. Three foremen were in their sixties, seven in their fifties, and six were in their forties. All the foremen were married save one single and one widower. Since twelve of the foremen lived in a house that they had bought, seven were renters and only one lodged, we face a pattern of an established group of older immigrant workers in these positions. The Swedish foremen display a high stability in this respect, too, since eight of the Swedish-born foremen had their own house, three rented, and one of them was a lodger.\textsuperscript{384}

The situation among the 77 laborers is somewhat different. They were also dominated by the Swedish-born, who made up 35 of the 77 workers, or 45\% of the workers. The second largest group were 15 Finns and a group of children of Swedish and Norwegian immigrants which are presented in table 13 under the heading of American-born of foreign parentage. The age distribution within the

\textsuperscript{383} United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1910.

\textsuperscript{384} United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
groups is uneven: 34 workers were older than 50, the oldest being an English immigrant of 74 years of age, while 15 workers were 20 years and younger. The workers thus tend to be either old or very young. The American-born group was the youngest, and in this group 13 out of 15 workers were 20 years and younger. It is notable that only three of the workers were native-born with American-born parents. Furthermore, a large number of the workers were not married, as according to the census 54 of the 78 workers were single.\(^\text{385}\) The force on the track thus seems to have been divided into two major groups according to age, one older immigrant work force and one young native-born force. The Swedish and Finnish immigrant groups illustrate this.

A total of 24 workers were registered as heads of a household while 17 were taken up as “sons”, and hence lived with their family. These sons were mostly children of Swedish and Norwegian immigrants that had been born in Minnesota. Seven were born of Swedish parents; six of Norwegian and one of mixed Norwegian/Swedish parentage. Two were Swedish-born, and one was native-born of native parentage.\(^\text{386}\)

The 36 workers who were not head of a household or residing with their parents had living conditions that indicate a less stable situation. These workers are called boarders, lodgers, and roomers or simply stated as “hired-man” in the census. 14 of these 36 workers were Finnish, while 16 were Swedish.\(^\text{387}\)

The Swedish group held 16 heads of household, 17 lodgers, boarders or hired men, and two “sons”. This can be compared to the Finnish immigrant group on the roll that contains one head of household and 14 lodgers, roomers, and “hired men”. Eleven of the Swedish-born workers were married, two were widowers and 22 were single. The corresponding numbers for the Finnish workers were four married, two widowed and nine singles. The Swedish-born group was almost ten years older than the average worker.\(^\text{388}\)

To sum it up, as the census only gives insights into the track force during the wintertime, the slow period for the D&IR when the track force was at a minimum on the road, the workers analyzed here are probably the most stable force of workers residing in Lake County on the track force. Yet, some conclusions can be drawn from this “sample”. Immigrants, especially Swedish and Finnish workers, together made up the mainstay of the track workers in 1920. These two groups, despite their connection with the same line of work, turn out to be different when a comparison is made regarding housing and time of immigration. The immigrant groups were approximately of the same average age. The Swedish workers had an average age of 52.5 years, the Finnish workers of 50, and the Canadian and English workers had the same age distribution. The Finnish workers had in general resided in the United States a shorter time than the Swedish

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\(^\text{385}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
\(^\text{386}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
\(^\text{387}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
\(^\text{388}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.
immigrants, as 12 Finns had arrived in the country after 1900 whereas only three had arrived during the 1890s. Furthermore, the housing of the Finnish and Swedish workers differed, as the Swedish seemed to have a more stable housing situation.

The age pattern in this line of work shows two main groups on the force, one consisting of young children of immigrants, and one of older immigrants that have spent quite a long time in the United States and still work the track. The latter group, of which the lion’s share was Swedish-born did thus not experience any social mobility other than being able to attain track work with the railroad company during the winter period. This is despite the fact that all of the Swedish workers were given as being able to speak English, and that all have resided at least ten years in the United States. This illustrates a marked difference in a worker’s chances to succeed on the labor market. The native-born generation, mostly under 20 years of age, whose first job was on the track, probably had a chance to advance in the company or to get employment in other kinds of work, whereas the immigrant track workers had largely reached its final destination on the American labor market. This is a concern for the Swedish immigrants in general, too, given the high age of a number of them.

The ethnic patterns among the workers on the track force are probably both an expression of an ethnic division of labor of a more structural nature and the hiring practices of the company. In 1920, the D&IR still seems to have been characterized by segmentation and by limited maneuvering space in the work place for certain immigrant groups, like the Finns and the Swedes. The absence of Norwegian and Canadian workers is striking, as these two groups made up a large part of the immigrants in Lake County.

The ethnic patterns on the force can therefore also be connected with the company hiring practices, where local foremen were given a higher degree of authority in choosing which workers were to be employed during the time between 1900 and 1910. The foreman hence was given a key position in constructing ethnic patterns in the work force. The Swedes dominated among the track foremen, and there was a corresponding dominance among the workers. These two factors seem to have played a part in cementing certain ethnic patterns in certain departments of the company. This also indicates that the practices of the company again seem to have aimed at achieving stability in a system characterized by a hierarchization along ethnic boundaries where authority and skill level played central roles.

It is also notable that only a small number of eastern Europeans are on the more stable part of the track force. The native-born of native parents make up a very small portion of the force in 1920 and have all but disappeared from the toil as track laborer. This indicates two processes in the track force on the D&IR. First, an increased division of labor between immigrant groups and native-born is visible, because the labor process on the D&IR was characterized by an ethnic division of labor both vertically and horizontally in 1920 in a way that was not pre-
sent in the track department in 1885. One explanation of the Swedish numerical dominance in track labor was connected to the role of the Swedish foremen in hiring Swedish workers. Secondly, as more immigrant groups arrived in Minnesota the ranking between groups seems evident in the material as new arrivals did not have access to railroad work to the same extent as had the Swedes had in the 1880s. The railroad was in 1920 quite distinctly reserved for certain immigrant groups.

### The winter trainmen in Lake County, 1920

Charles Waterhouse was one of 48 conductors living in Lake County in 1920. He was a 33-year-old man born in Wisconsin by parents from Maine. In 1920, he rented a house in Two Harbors, where he lived together with his wife. The conductors on the D&IR in 1920 are a fairly homogenous group of American-born as becomes evident in table 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational title</th>
<th>Nation where born</th>
<th>American-born of American parents</th>
<th>American-born w.1 American parent</th>
<th>American-born of foreign parents</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conductor</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brakeman</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

As illustrated by the table, there was a dominance of American-born workers among the train men. The category of conductor contained 14 American-born of American-born parents. To this can be added that eight of the 17 conductors with foreign-born parents had their roots in England, in Ireland and in Canada, four had German, one French German and two of them had Swedish parents, while one had Norwegian, and one Swiss parents. For all of the six American-born with one American parent, the other parent came from the British Isles, Ireland or Canada. The trainmen were still in the 1920s a very Anglo part of the D&IR work force.\(^{389}\) No Swedish immigrants were represented among the conductors, and only two children of Swedish immigrants were employed in this occupation in 1920.

All of the conductors were married, except for three single men, and one widower. 32 workers were home owners while 11 of the men were renting their

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\(^{389}\) United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
house; two were stated in the census as being “sons in law”, one as a son, while only one man lodged. The son and the lodger were unmarried. The age distribution was quite diverse, with the oldest man being 62 years old, and the youngest 28. The average age of the conductors was close to 43 years. The age of the immigrants among the conductors falls well in line with the American-born workers. The time of immigration indicates that all except one had been in the United States for more than 20 years. Five of the ten immigrants whose time of immigration was stated had emigrated before 1890.

The 52 brakemen on the D&IR show a somewhat different picture. They were younger with an average age of 32 years, and there was a less dominance of Anglo immigrants and sons of American-born parents. Nine of the brakemen were sons of American-born parents and four had one American parent. The largest group was the children of immigrants. No less than twelve of these had parents born in Sweden, while the ones with Canadian, Irish, Scottish and English parents made up seven. The Norwegians were three in number, while the Germans were four. The last one consisted of a person of mixed Irish-German parentage. 10 of the brakemen owned their houses, while 18 rented. The rest, 24, were taken up as sons, lodgers or simply hired men. Hence, almost half of the firemen had not yet established at this time and consequently only 25 of 52 brakemen were married.

The Swedish brakemen do not differ from other workers on the payroll to any large extent. Of the Swedish-born workers, one was renting, one was stated as a son and one was a “hired man”. Of the twelve children of Swedish immigrants, six were stated as sons, while the rest were renting. Six of the American-born with Swedish parents were married, while only one of the Swedish-born was married.

The ethnic composition of conductors and brakemen did not differ in any decisive way. The number of American-born with American parents has declined, while the number of American-born with foreign parents has increased. The number of immigrants employed as conductors and brakemen did not change to any significant degree. No Finnish workers can be found as conductor or brakeman, but a few Swedish-born worked as brakemen. Hence, there was a slightly larger number of Scandinavians employed as brakemen than as conductors, which indicates a slight Scandinavian increase among the conductors in the next “generation”.

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390 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
391 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
392 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
The Winter Yardmen in Lake County, 1920

As stated above, the census was taken in January-February, and the portion of the census used in this investigation of winter yardmen is for Lake County only.

Table 15. The Winter Yardmen in Lake County in 1920.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switchmen</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switchtender</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundhouse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard foreman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer Yards</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

The American-born dominated among the yardmen residing in Lake County, as 17 were American-born of American-born parents, and another nine had one American-born parent. 18 of the 44 American-born had foreign-born parents. Six of the switchmen with foreign-born parents were of Swedish origin and four of Norwegian origin. Six had parents from Ireland, England, Scotland and Canada, whereas one had German, and one English German ancestry. The average age of the yardmen was 36 years. 20 of the switchmen were single, one was a widower, and 34 were married. 18 switchmen owned their houses, while 16 were renters, 8 were stated as lodgers, one was a hired man, and the remaining thirteen were registered as sons, and, in one case, as a son in law.393

The switch tenders tended to be older men, and the American-born with foreign parentage stemmed from Sweden and Ireland, respectively. The Swedish part of the payroll does not differ in any notable way from the other workers. Of the two Swedish-born one rented and one lodged. The renter was married. One of the children of Swedish immigrant switchmen owned his house and one rented, while the rest were not family heads. Three were taken up as sons in the census, while one was a lodger. Only the two taken up as heads of family were married.

A notable feature is the Finnish yardmen, and the rather low number of Scandinavians employed in this line of work. Despite the large number of Swedes re-

393 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
siding in Two Harbors, only a fraction of them were employed as switchmen in
the yards there. Out of 62 men, only two were Swedish-born, and seven were
children of Swedish immigrant. This tells us that the number of Swedes em-
ployed stood for less than 15 percent, while the Swedish population in Lake
County amounted to just below 30 percent. The Swedes were thus underrepre-
sented in these occupations.394

Among the laborers in the yards and the engine maintenance crews at the round
house the Finnish immigrants were well represented. The Finnish workers made
up no less than five of eight workers in the railroad yards, and the American-
born of foreign-born parentage also had Finnish roots. One laborer was Swedish.
All of the Finnish laborers lodged, except for one who was taken up in the cen-
sus as a brother. The Swedish-born laborer owned a house, and was the only one
of the yard laborers who had a wife. The two American-born were registered as
sons. The roundhouse crew held three American-born with American-born par-
ents, three American-born with parents from Germany, Norway and Sweden,
while the rest of the force consisted of immigrants. These were fairly evenly dis-
tributed among the various immigrant groups represented in Table 14, even
though the Finnish presence was strong in the round house, too.395

Conclusions

The ethnic division of labor on the D&IR in 1920 is evident in most departments
on the roll. Anglo-American officials and workers held the positions of authority
in the company, despite the high number of non-English-speaking immigrants
and their children in the region. The Anglo-Americans and immigrants from
Canada, Ireland and Great Britain, were concentrated to office work, supervisory
positions in white-collar work, in the occupations of locomotive engineer and
conductor, and among the yardmen.

To the heavily Scandinavian, English, and Canadian population in the area dur-
ing the 1880s had been added several Eastern European, Finnish and Italian im-
migrants. These new immigrants and Swedish workers can first and foremost be
found in blue-collar positions on the station roll.

Thus, the ethnic base in the region had changed and had become more complex
than had been the case in the 1880s. Whereas the American-born were holding
most positions of authority and status, new ethnic groups had made inroads into
the departments of the company that had been dominated almost solely by
American-born during earlier decades. The ethnic division of labor was also
made more complex by the fact that the second generation became active on the
labor market. We find children of Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish workers em-

394 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
395 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920
ployed as clerks and telefoners, whereas few first-generation immigrants can be found in these lines of work. The situation in 1920 was somewhat different than in the 1880s, as ethnic groups other than Anglo-Americans were represented on the locomotive roll and in white-collar work.

Anglo-Americans still dominated among the firemen and the enginemen. These groups had, as we have seen in another part of this chapter, a very structured relationship to company management and belonged to what might be described as a primary segment of the American labor market. This shows that the theory of the segmented labor market as presented by Hirsch holds up rather well on the D&IR into the 1920s. This segment with its work rules, higher wages, and more secure conditions was still dominated by Anglo-American workers, while immigrants were still over represented among the casual laborers. The most important groups of laborers were Finns and Swedes, who showed a high presence both on the ore dock and on the track force. However, Swedish workers were also employed in the running trades on the road, and some Swedish workers were locomotive engineers and firemen.

The children of the non-English-speaking Europeans were found in office work as white-collar labor, often in a subordinate position with regard to authority. Some of these were female, and their work was often supervised by an Anglo-American man. The station roll obtains its special character from the tendency towards local recruitment in the iron ore region, which was, by this time, heavily influenced by the large presence of eastern and southern European immigrants. Also, American-born employees hold the highest paid jobs and jobs with the highest level of authority in relation to other groups of workers at the stations, whereas the Scandinavian immigrants and their children tended to hold a middle ground.

Things have happened when analyzing the Swedish workers in 1920 compared to 1885. First, they had branched out and was found in all departments of the company. The division into different generations of Swedish ancestry is, however, important in this respect. The American-born with Swedish parents was the most successful group among the Swedes, while the Swedish-born still tended to be found as unskilled workers on the ore dock, or on the track force. If Swedish-born persons did advance to office work, they were, in all cases I have found, brought up in America and immigrated to that country as children. When looking at the occupations held by the children of Swedish immigrants we notice that few things have happened since 1885. However, in 1920 there were some supervisory positions on the ore dock held by Swedish-born persons, and there were some people on the locomotive roll that were Swedish-born.

When adding the children, however, the Swedes were represented in a wide range of different occupations in the ore offices, and an image of a more complex class structure among the Swedes becomes visible. The class structure among the Swedish workers hence carries with it an important generational component. Social mobility among the Swedes can, on a general level, be de-
scribed as a question of generation. The American-born experienced social mobility, while many of the immigrant workers, both the newly arrived and those with a long history on the railroad, were likely to hold a position as a common laborer with the company.

Another change connected with the class aspect concerns the living conditions. The patterns of living had changed since 1885, and many Swedish workers owned their homes in 1920 or rented them. Still, there seems to be a portion of the Swedish workers that had a less than stable housing situation. There are indications that this group had to obtain temporary employment on the ore dock during part of the year. This holds especially true for the unmarried Swedish workers, who were more likely to be unskilled, while the skilled workers were more prone to be married and stable. The Swedes in the running trades shared their work place to a large degree with English-speaking groups and groups of older immigrants, while the dockworkers toiled together with many Finns that were newly arrived immigrants. A larger number of the dockworkers belonged to an ambulating work force than was the case with the workers in the running trades. The Swedish workers on the ore dock did however own their house to a rather high extent.

The generational aspect of the ethnic division of labor is relevant when regarding the Finnish group too. Only one Finnish-born (probably a Swede Finn) was employed as a locomotive engineer. On the other hand, the Finnish immigrant workers were well represented on the ore dock, while a small number of the identified firemen and employees in office work at the station roll were children of Finnish immigrants.

The Swedes’ position in this mix of ethnic groups and changes in the ethnic composition of the work force is complex. One can argue that a number of different groups now in turn functioned as a force that was on its way to replace the Swedes in lesser skilled position at the stations and on the ore dock. However, this image must be qualified, since the development did not lead to social mobility and access to more skilled work for all Swedes. Instead it had the effect that the Swedish group became more complex from a class perspective. The Swedish workers were no longer just the homogenous group of unskilled blue-collar laborers that they had been in the 1880s. Rather, the ethnic group had changed in important ways and had made inroads into the Anglo-American sphere, holding general foreman positions and white-collar occupations in the company offices. Another change was that Swedish women partook in wage labor, for the most part as office workers.
7. Changing labor relations on the D&IR, 1900-1920

The changing labor relations on American railroads that occurred on the national level during the last decades of the 19th century largely grew out of new organization forms on increasingly large railroads and the multitude of conflicts where class differences and division of interests were thoroughly displayed. Walter Licht has claimed that most managers and officials on railroads were not particularly interested in the development of the field of labor relations during much of the 19th century. This changed during the violent confrontation between workers and their employers during the 1880s and early 1890s in answer to increasingly tense relations on American railroads. This development on the railroad was part of a broader societal pattern of increasing conflict between labor and capital, expressed as growing social and political unrest where periods of recession and economic panic made the situation explosive.

The many nation-wide strikes during the 1870s, 1880s and early 1890s made it clear that the employer vision of the ideal workplace and the idea of a free labor market differed considerably from the general view held by many workers. The strikes often had a dimension where the right to organize, wage issues, work rules and labor market control were the questions raised.

The time of unrest in the railroad business in the US, which culminated in the so-called Pullman strike of 1894, led to a sharp redefinition of the relation between labor and capital. Shelton Stromquist has discussed different visions based on cooperation between employers and employees, or class-based union activity in the form of producerism and the manifestations of these ideas in the early 1890s. The sharp conflict of 1894 crushed the effort of organizing railroad workers in industrial unions, as pressure on these unions increased, and skilled laborers in the AFL and the railroad brotherhoods chose a strategy of cooperation with the employers. One outcome of the strike was therefore a perspective where class conflicts were downplayed by organized labor, and ideas of employers and liberal reformers came to dominate. These groups promoted the idea of social harmony during the decades after the Pullman strike. Thoughts of solidarity and co-
operation seldom included unskilled workers, which in time led to new labor conflicts, when unskilled immigrant workers tried to pursue the idea of “one big union” after the reforming of radical unionism during the first years of the 1900s, and the pursuit of political power via the Socialist Party.\(^{400}\)

The turbulent 1890s also made the American government create systems for meeting conflicts by negotiation and encouraging peaceful solutions between labor and capital. These systems were factors in creating a new climate between organized labor and the employers. One aspect of this development was a strengthening of the judiciary framework on the part of the political establishment, which was spurred on by the conflicts between labor and capital during the 1890s.\(^{401}\)

The changing needs of a fast growing business also changed the perception of many managers. Larger road nets and more intricate machinery demanded a more skilled work force in many departments of the railroad, and the problem of securing this skilled work force made it crucial to rethink management policies.\(^{402}\) The “new” standpoint on labor relations in the railroad business was thus partly shaped by the managers’ desire to have a more stable work force in occupations that required special skills. The technical level increased steadily from the end of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century,\(^{403}\) and the mere size of the companies made it imperative not only to have a work force of easily exchangeable workers, but also to have one that met the demands of a certain skill level in the new kinds of jobs that developed. One thing that was done by railroad capitalists was to take control of the previously very fluctuating labor market situation during this period.\(^{404}\)

These two, and interconnected developments, made employers change their labor relations strategies at the end of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century. These strategies for taking control of the development differed widely in different social environments and geographical settings. However, the strike waves and the changing conditions within the railroad business clearly changed the topography of employer-employee relations in important ways. New management strategies were implemented,\(^{405}\) most prominent of them, the scientific management school developed by for example F.W. Taylor, but company managers and an emerging group of civic reformers also came up with welfare systems and policies as an


\(^{401}\) Dubofsky, Melvin. The Federal Judiciary, Free Labor and Equal Rights. pp.160,161. Dubofsky makes a historiographical account on how interpretations of the relationship between the federal state, capital and labor have been perceived by different research traditions.

\(^{402}\) Licht, Walter. Working for the Railroad. p. 35

\(^{403}\) Cottrell, Fred. Railroader. p.119f


answer to labor turnover.\footnote{Montgomery, David. \textit{The Fall of the House of Labor}. Pp.237-252.} The development had an impact on how the work force and labor relations were handled. The pattern of conflict, technical development and organizational changes were thus factors in the shaping of labor relations on the railroads. This development had an impact on Minnesota in general and on the D&IR in particular.

Around 1900, the managers of the company started a more systematic effort to shape labor relations on the D&IR and to formalize relation between them and the workers. One part of this work was aimed at the work place and involved issuing detailed work rules and a strict code of conduct for the employees. Management also formalized negotiations with different groups of workers on the railroad. A third way was to involve workers in company matters. These efforts from management also involved a broad program aimed primarily at the workers leisure time. In chapter 8, I will make an analysis of how a welfare capitalist program, largely focusing the world outside the work place was developed on the D&IR.

This chapter will instead primarily focus on the D&IR as a work place and on changes in the situation of the workers in this sphere during the period between 1900 and the late 1910s. I will therefore make an analysis of the labor relations as expressed in company documents and trade union negotiations from 1900 to 1918 that pertained to the situation of the workers. More to the point, the chapter will deal with the way employer-employee relations were structured on the D&IR during this time period. Let us thus turn to the work place and the formalizing of the relationship between employer and employees in this sphere.

## Rules and Regulations for Employees

The \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations} of 1907 were made official in the form of a brochure that was distributed to all workers. The text regulated the conduct of employees, defined a chain of authority and presented work specifications for different groups of workers. The rules meant that one step was taken towards realizing the vision of a structured employer-employee relationship.

### The chain of command and the problem of Authority

By analyzing the different job categories in the regulations, it is possible to get an idea of how the work rules regulated the relationship between the company and its employees as well as the relation between different groups of employees. Through this analysis it is possible to get an image of different levels of authority within the company, at the time of the issuing of the rules.
The highest ranking man mentioned in the rules and regulations was the Superintendent. He was to supervise the operation of the railroad. Under him were the assistant superintendent, the Superintendent of Motive Powers, and the Chief Engineer in charge of the track department and the bridge & building department. The categories taken up here include the trainmen under the assistant superintendent, and the track force and bridge and building crews under the authority of the chief engineer, i.e. a division into one group concerned with running and another concerned with repairs. In Figures 1 and 2 I have tried to create an overarching image of which categories held a supervisory position with a high level of authority, and which categories did not. A third could be added, but there is hardly any information available on the shop part of the force in the work rules. The little information we get is that the Superintendent of Motive Power and the traveling engineer had the task of controlling and supervising the work of the locomotive engineers. Among the duties of the traveling engineer were to check the engineers and the firemen while on duty and to “instruct enginemen and firemen in their proper performance of their duties and the economical use of fuel and other supplies”. He also had to report any “incompetency or negligence on the part of the enginemen” to the Superintendent of Motive Power. The chain of authority among station, engine, train and yard employees is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Chain of authority among trainmen, yardmen, and station employees of the D&IR

Source: Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. (DM&IR Archive, MHS, St. Paul, MN.)

The Superintendent held the highest level of authority. He was in charge of running the railroad, and often took the formal decision on whom to hire and to what extent workers were to be hired. The assistant superintendent held direct

authority over trainmen, yardmen and conductors; whereas the chief train dispatcher reported to and received his instruction directly from the superintendent. The engineers held authority over their engines, and the fireman working with them. The conductors had authority over their train, and the brakemen and baggagemen on it. The conductor’s duties were divided into freight service and passenger service. The station agent was to report to and receive instructions from the superintendent or the assistant superintendent. The yardmen answered to the assistant superintendent, and held authority over all yardmen.

In the working instructions for different occupational groups it is stated which ones had a supervisory task in relation to people below them on the ladder of authority. In these supervisory duties was included to report all incidents that violated the company work rules. One example of this is the Yardmasters, who had to “report all violation of the rules coming under their notice”, and furthermore, they also had the responsibility not to “permit a train to start with any trainman or engineman who is under the influence of liquors, or unfit for duty, nor fail to report such occurrences at once to the assistant superintendent.”

The freight conductors also had this kind of supervisory role and had to “[be] familiar with the duties of enginemen, firemen and brakemen”, and enforce the rules applicable to them while on their trains, and report any insubordination, neglect of duty, or misconduct.

In addition to having the responsibility to report violations of rules, two personnel categories also had the authority to discipline employees who had committed violations. The assistant superintendent had to see to it that discipline among the trainmen was upheld and had the duty to “discipline them for violation of rules or neglect of duty, reporting his actions to the superintendent”. It is also stated that proper application forms had to be used in this process, which underlines the formalization of the disciplinary function in the company. Just as the assistant superintendent had the authority to discipline trainmen, the Chief Train Dispatcher also had the responsibility to maintain discipline among the workers under him, disciplining the employees “for neglect of duty” and reporting any violations of the work rules to the superintendent.

The levels of authority sometimes intersected with each other. For example, the yardmasters and the station agents/train dispatchers held authority over the train and enginemen while these were at the stations and railroad yards along the track. The chain of authority among employees in track work and construction and repair work is presented in Figure 2.

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408 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p.101
409 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p84 paragraph 357,358
410 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p 88 Freight Conductors paragraph 385
411 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p.70 Assistant Superintendent. Paragraph 300
412 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p.71 Chief Train Dispatcher paragraph 301
413 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p.44
Figure 2. Chain of authority among track workers, and bridge and building workers

Source: Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. DM&IR Archive, MHC.

The road masters and the bridge and building foreman reported to the chief engineer, who was in charge of this field of operation within the company. The road master was in charge of the track foremen that in turn were responsible for the work carried out on a section of the road.

The bridge and building foreman was in charge of the repairs of bridges and buildings, fixed signals and water supply as well as having the task of hiring workers to carry out repairs. The bridge foremen were in charge of the actual work carried out and also held authority over the workers and the bridge watchmen.

The personnel categories below track foreman and bridge foreman, i.e. repair workers and track workers, have been left out of the working instruction. Instead, their tasks are described as part of the duties of their immediately higher superior. The track foremen are expected to “have charge of repairs on their respective sections” and also to “engage in all work personally and see that those employed under them faithfully perform their duties.” In other words, the role of the foreman in these lines of work carries with it much responsibility and authority, since no other personnel category in that echelon of the company had the same amount of power in its relations to the subordinates. This also tells us that the relationship between company management and trackmen still was rather loose during this epoch in company history and that this group was still regarded as exchangeable. This makes it interesting to scrutinize the ethnic make-up of this department within the company.

414 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. p 127 section 578
It was the duty of the officer in charge to check the workers’ knowledge of the rules and his responsibility to handle everything according to them. This is stated in the work rules of 1907: “The head of each department must be conversant with the rules, supply copies of them to his subordinates, see that they are understood, enforce obedience to them, and to report to the proper officer all violations and the action taken thereon.” 415

**Hiring and promoting workers**

A marked change in hiring practices took place between the 1880s, and 1907 on the D&IR. The process of recruitment and promotion has been more formalized and the responsibility rests on various officers on various levels of the company. The change is in line with Walter Licht’s account of early railroads in the 1850s and 1860s. 416 He writes about hiring practices on pioneer roads during that time and argues that the hiring process changed in that decisions were delegated to lower echelon officers, causing a range of issues concerning employment to come into play. Thus, railroad companies tended to be less formal in their hiring practices. This is however not true for D&IR at the turn of the century. The D&IR in the 1880s was a very loosely structured company, whose hiring practices were rather random in its search for workers. After the turn of the century the formalization of hiring practices is evident. There is, however, also an element of a less formalized process, since the decisions about whom to hire and whom to dismiss is delegated to lower echelon officers than had been the case during the time of Charlemagne Tower. In this way, the hiring process moved closer to the communities on the local level, where the hiring was carried out for the most part.

One aspect of this is the mentioning of certain application forms that had to be filled in by the applicant and filed with the company. 417 It is also evident in the way that the company tried to form criteria for what it wanted their employees to be and to be able to do. The documents tell us that the hiring of employees was to be based on two things. First, a good knowledge of the English language was preferable. English language skills were generally sought after when looking for employees but were a prerequisite for employment in train, station or engine service. 418 This meant that hiring practices had changed considerably since the 1880s, when a large percent of the men probably had limited English language skills. 419 When scrutinizing the payrolls and the census records from 1920 it is

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415 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.1
417 The oldest preserved application forms are from the early 1890s, on the D&IR.
418 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. General Rules, p.5 point R
419 Charlemagne Tower papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr. to Charlemagne Tower. 20th of September, 1883. This becomes evident in the correspondence between Charlemagne Tower Jr. and Charlemagne Tower Sr. when Tower Jr discusses the setting up of a village, he states that the large number of foreigners tended to make it difficult Tower Jr.: “There were something over 50 legal voters in town, many of our workmen being foreigners and therefore not to be counted”.
evident that this practice was in general use. A large majority of the workers at that time were capable of speaking English. The only exception was a few of the recently immigrated Finns who worked on the ore dock that summer.\textsuperscript{420} The second criterion was character. The company does not define this more closely, but the meaning of the statement becomes obvious when comparing this statement with others in the same document. The concept of “good character” was to be supported by reliable references from reliable persons.\textsuperscript{421}

The work rules tend to connect the concept of character with the actions of the worker, both at work and in his leisure time. The work rules were explicit on this score. The work place was of course strictly regulated in this respect. For conductors and other categories that had a lot of contact with the public, orderly behavior was emphasized. Furthermore, practically all personnel categories in the running trades were expected to arrive thirty minutes before their regular time began to prepare their duties, start up engines and clean up uniforms. Alcohol and card playing were of course banned from the work place.\textsuperscript{422} Many of the rules pertaining to the work place were also applicable to the leisure time of the workers. In the instructions it is stated:

\textit{The use of intoxicants, visiting saloons or other places of low resort, whether on or off duty: gambling or playing cards in or around stations, or upon trains or cars, or in or upon the property of this company, by employees is strictly prohibited. The violation of this rule will be sufficient cause for a discharge from the service.}\textsuperscript{423}

This quote indicates that the worker was to be considered “morally” on duty all the time. Good character, the basis for hiring workers, was therefore also measurable with regard to the spare time of the workers. The company’s standpoint on morals and character expresses a tendency in company policy towards its employees to structure not only the time they paid workers, but also to structure, or having an influence over, the worker when off duty. This more than indicates the will of the D&IR to influence aspects of workers’ lives outside the work place. The decision of who was to be promoted and who discharged was taken on different levels of the company depending on the skill level of the occupational groups that were to be employed. In some instances rather high echelon officials had the task of hiring while in other instances, mostly regarding jobs with a lower skill level, the task of hiring workers was given to local foremen further down the company ladder. This can be exemplified in the passage pertaining to track foremen in the \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations} from 1907: “they [the track foremen] may, discharge or suspend employees under their charge, but

\textsuperscript{420} United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1920.  
\textsuperscript{421} \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907}. General Rules, p.5 point R  
\textsuperscript{422} \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907}. General Rules p.5 point T.  
\textsuperscript{423} \textit{Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907}. p.5 Point T.
only hire new people with the consent of the road master”. 424 It was also up to them to discharge personnel for disorderly behavior. The dismissed staff could not, however, be re-employed without consulting the Road Master, the next higher officer in authority. 425 The bridge and building foremen, in charge of repairs to buildings, bridges, fixed signals and water supplies, were in a similar way to employ “such workmen as may be necessary, and see that they perform their duties properly”. 426

Regarding the trainmen the assistant superintendent had on his lot to employ and dismiss trainmen. The instruction for him stated: “He will, subject to the approval of the superintendent, employ brakemen, appoint flagmen and must personally conduct the prescribed examinations of trainmen in every grade of train service and must recommend men to the superintendent for appointment as conductors and enginemen”. 427

The chief train dispatcher had the authority to employ telegraph operators, train dispatchers and line repairers. All actions were, however, subject to the approval of the Superintendent. 428

Promotion, according to the regulations, was due to merit only and faithful discharge and capacity for increased responsibility were the defining factors 429. Formally it was conducted in different ways depending on the occupation concerned. The assistant superintendent recommended the trainmen for promotion, and the superintendent was the person formally making the decision.

In the first preserved agreement between employer and employee on the D&IR one paragraph deals with a forum that was created in this document, the “hearing”. The purpose of the hearing was to guarantee the worker his right to complain if he was suspended or discharged. It was to take place in the presence of the superintendent, the closest higher-ranking officer and of representatives and witnesses that the worker wanted to “speak for him”. The company then had the policy of making a decision in the matter within five days, and if the worker’s suspension or discharge was judged unjust he was to be reinstated and paid full time for the time lost. 430 The hearing was created during the same period that the delegation of responsibility for hiring and firing within certain occupations was delegated down to lesser officers. This probably was thought of as a control mechanism, through which the company could correct bad decisions from local foremen and officers in the company hierarchy. Naturally, not all foremen and officers were unbiased. Walter Licht shows that foremen on many occasions be-

424 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.127
425 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. General Rules, p.6 point Z
426 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.133, paragraph 604
427 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.70, Paraphrath 300
428 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907, p.71, paragraph 301
429 Employee Rules and Regulations, 1907. General Rules, p.4, point G
430 Agreement between Officials of the D&IRRCo. And the trainmen and yardmen in their employ 1900, p.1
came involved in cases of bribery and nepotism as they had an enormous power in relation to the workers up for hiring and through their authority to fire workers. Licht has also pointed out this desire of railroad companies in general to create bonds of loyalty between workers and employers. Had hiring been solely a function of idealized labor-market conditions, this binding together of workers and managers would probably not have existed.

Even though the formal decision of hiring men on the D&IR rested on a higher-ranking officer, it is safe to say that the foreman had an impact on which men were to be hired. Bias towards a certain element in the local community was exactly what the company managers wanted; judging by the rules for hiring and firing, but the management did not want foremen acting in their own interest. Therefore this forum can be regarded both as a guarantee for workers that they were not fired on too loose grounds, but also as a mechanism for the D&IR management to correct faulty firing decisions made by local officers and foremen and was hence a control function regulating the actions of the foremen.

The system for hiring men becomes visible when looking at the local community of Two Harbors in the 1910 federal census. In many instances, the roomers and boarders that only stayed temporary in Tow Harbors, primarily during the ore season, rented from foremen or other persons eligible to hire men on the D&IR, these men would then generally work with or under them in the company with specific tasks. One of a number of examples is the Swedish-born Bridge and Building department foreman Charles L Erickson who housed both of his brothers and another Swedish roomer. Both of Erickson’s brothers and the roomer worked as laborers or as carpenter in the B&B.

Another example was Frank Swanson, a Swedish foreman on the ore docks who had four roomers staying with him. Three of these men worked on the ore docks as laborers and two of them were fairly recently arrived Swedish immigrants. This illustrates the role of kinship networks, but also the tendency among workers to be connected with specific ethnic networks. The most common solution to the housing situation was either to board at a boarding house or to rent from a countryman. This countryman was sometimes also the same man that could provide temporary dwellers in Two Harbors with a job on the D&IR. These and other examples illustrate convincingly how the labor policy of the company interacted with informal ethnic or kinship networks to structure the labor market. It explains to some extent the role of company policy, but also worker agency in upholding specific labor market patterns by connecting newly arrived transient workers to more settled countrymen, and hence, specific job opportunities. Given the role of the work rules, recommendations needed to secure a job and the role

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of Swedish foremen in the ethnic networks, these mechanisms seems highly important to uphold an ethnic division of labor on the D&IR.

Conclusions

The general rules of 1907 indicate that the company managers strove for an orderly relationship with the employees. This is expressed in the form of increasingly structured relations between different levels of authority in the company, an increasingly detailed view of what the managers expected from the employees with regard to moral and behavior, a refined system for hiring and firing workers, and a will to extend the authority of company influence outside of the workplace. The situation of workers of different skill levels differed widely. In 1907 the position of unskilled workers was still insecure with the D&IR, and this group was practically invisible in the document. An unskilled worker could be fired by a foreman without consulting higher echelon officials, whereas more highly skilled personnel could only be dismissed after consulting the assistant superintendent (the highest ranked officer described in the document), and had the right to a hearing with company officials. Hiring was likewise connected with the skill levels of the workers up for hiring. The foremen for unskilled workers had to consult with the next higher-ranking officer, whereas the assistant superintendent hired brakemen and firemen. The positions of locomotive engineer and conductor, the best paid and most highly skilled occupations among the trainmen, were in many instances filled by promoting lesser trainmen. The assistant superintendent was to recommend men for promotion, while the actual decision to promote lay with the superintendent.

The hiring of workers was based on knowledge of the work force at hand and of the local environment. Internal recruitment (promotion of trainmen, document from reliable persons, good character) played a large part in company policy, and this close relationship between the men hiring and the men getting hired ensured the “moral character” of an applicant.

The disciplinary system was an intricate web involving the responsibility of workers to report their colleagues on different issues. Some personnel groups had the task to discipline workers in case of negligence, incompetence or otherwise. This close relationship between different levels of authority and the will to extend company influence to spheres outside the work place indicate a far-reaching agenda, which makes social control of the work force possible. This social control is indicated by the hiring procedures of unskilled men, since everything in the informal networks constructed by the hiring practices seems aimed towards creating bonds between foremen and workers up for hiring, and between foremen and the company. These company policies also seem to have interacted with local kinship and ethnic networks as is indicated by the censuses and living patterns where Swedish settled workers tended to house, but also on occasion to employ their transient countrymen.
The Trainmen, Yardmen and Enginemen and the D&IR, 1900-1918

First, nothing in the preserved documents from the D&IR supports any belief that the officials were ever openly hostile towards collective bargaining with employees. The early presence of trade unions in the town of Two Harbors, rather signals that the managers of the company was, if not positive, at least not particularly negative to unions. By negotiation with representatives from the railroad brotherhoods regarding wages and work rules, the company constructed a solid base for an orderly relationship with labor, or rather, the generally best paid, best-organized workers on the force, i.e. the men in the train, engine and yard service. The difference in wages and skill was however large when comparing locomotive engineers and switchmen, but these groups of workers seem to have had an important position on the D&IR. This group also generally had an important role in railroad towns like Two Harbors.

Shelton Stromquist uses the term railroad town to describe a town which has come into being because of the railroad, which becomes a hub of activity around a railroad company, with shops and offices, and which has a hard time expanding “beyond the direct services they provided their patron railroad”. His investigation of class action and community solidarity shows an intricate web of socially and economic based interest groups that sometimes correspond to and sometimes cut across class lines. The local establishment in railroad towns was, in Stromquist’s study, divided into locally based real estate owners, higher-ranking officials that initially made up the establishment and a group of workers from the running trades and the railroad shops that, a few years after the community was established, got involved in local politics. Stromquist’s case study of Creston, Iowa, has shown how this group grew more and more politically important in railroad towns. This, paired with the generally high importance of the railroad workers for the local economy, made this group strategically important, both for the local bourgeoisie, and for the company. The generally high skill level of these workers made it imperative for the company to gain their loyalty.

The documents analyzed below are from three different time periods and display the relationship between the D&IR and those employed in the train, engine and yard forces. The documents are from 1900-1903, 1905-1906 and 1918, and they give the picture of an increasingly structured relationship between these groups of workers and their employer. The first document from 1900 is 8 pages long, the second from 1903 24 pages, the ones from 1905 and 1906 are 24 and 20 respectively, and the documents from 1918 are 34 and 38 pages in length. The mere size of the documents illustrates the increasingly regulated relationship between labor and capital on the D&IR during this period.

Agreements, 1900-1903

The first preserved agreement between the company and the employees is from 1900, when the “officials of the D&IR RR Co. and the trainmen and yardmen in their employ” agreed on some basic framework for employer/employee relations concerning the personnel in train service, brakemen and conductors, and yardmen, switch tenders and helpers. The document is signed by the superintendent, Thomas Owens, the president of the company, J.L. Greatsinger and the representatives of the workers in “the committee of trainmen and yardmen, representing, brakemen, conductors, switchmen and switchmen helpers, in the employ of the company”. A committee of seven represented the workers.

The agreement contained information on the responsibility of trainmen and yardmen in case of accidents, including a statement that they were not to be fined for “loss or damage to property or rolling stock, or for killing of live stock”. However, if the company investigation found that the worker in question “had carelessly caused such damage or loss, he shall be suspended or discharged as may be deemed necessary”.

One paragraph describes the “rights to regular runs and yards” which were to be governed by seniority and capacity, “unless otherwise agreed upon between the superintendent and trainmen or yardmen interested.” Any question as to capacity was to be referred to the superintendent. It was also up to the superintendent to offer work to train- and yardmen. If one of them declined the run, it should be offered to the next man on the list, a list under the control of the superintendent.

Different areas of responsibility are also stated for different categories of brakemen. For example, only ore brakemen held rights to ore freights and passenger brakemen to passenger freights. Trainmen held no rights in yard service, while yardmen held no rights in train service. This paragraph ends with the words: “Nothing in this article shall be construed as preventing the company from hiring experienced men when the good of the service requires it”.

Paragraph four touches upon the question of turnover in the work force: “From the commencement of the ore season in the spring and until the closing in the fall, any trainman on the extra list called to relieve a trainman on a regular run, will remain thereon ten days unless regular man reports for duty. Prior to and after the period mentioned above, the trainman oldest in the service will be given the preference of work”. Another paragraph states that “any trainman or yardman having rendered meritorious services as such for one or more seasons, shall, at the close of the season’s business, be entitled to a leave of absence, if he requests it”. Such leave of absence guaranteed the worker the maintained rights of seniority of service, even if he had left the company during the slow winter.

436 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ”, 1900
437 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ”, 1900, p.8
438 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ” 1900. p.2
439 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ” 1900. p.7
440 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ”, 1900. p.3
441 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ”, 1900. p.7
season, provided that, before his leave of absence expired, he gave 30 days’ notice that he was again to report for duty. Both these paragraphs signal a will on the part of the company management to attach to itself a regular work force despite the seasonal character of much of the work. This system was an attempt to secure a skilled work force that was loyal to the company and knew the work to be carried out from previous seasons.

There is no actual regulation in the document concerning how much time a worker can put in each month, but paragraph number five states that “no fault will be found with any trainman or yardman who may refuse to go out, provided less than seven hours shall have intervened between the time they were relieved from duty and the time they are called for duty. When trainmen and yardmen leave work they will give notice in writing if rest is needed”. Some security and rights were, however, safeguarded by the statement that trainmen and yardmen when called out and not used for work, due to an abandoned train, or for other reasons, are to receive wages during the time spent waiting. What they then get is a half day’s pay up to 5 hours and up to one day’s pay if more.

Stated in the document are also the wages of different occupational categories, how overtime was supposed to be paid, and differences in pay between night and day shifts. Passenger conductors were paid on a monthly basis, whereas engineers, firemen and freight conductors were paid per mile and yardmen per hour. These different wage scales indicate the different work situation for different categories of workers, and perhaps also to some extent the steadiness of employment for different groups.

Much of what is written regarding the trainmen and yardmen in 1900 is repeated in a document regarding the relationship between the enginemen (firemen and locomotive engineers) and the railroad in 1903. The same right to a hearing for enginemen that are discharged or suspended is granted. Seniority and capacity form the basis for rights to regular runs and services, and capacity is to be decided by the Master Mechanic and the Superintendent. An extra list of workers needed on a temporary basis is mentioned in the document. Otherwise, seniority rights are strongly emphasized in the document. One example reads that “prior to the opening and after the closing of the ore season the oldest enginemen in service will be given the preference to work”, and that “any runs that appear to be permanent shall be assigned to the oldest enginemen”. The will to employ the same workers in this line of work is evident in this document, too, be-

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442 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ”, 1900. p.4
443 Agreement between D&IR RR Co. and the Trainmen and Yardmen in their employ” 1900. p.4
444 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, p.12,13
445 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, p.13,14
446 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, p15, the writing is identical to the one found in the 1905 document.
447 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, 15, 16
cause the leave of absence paragraph, as it was written in the 1900 document regarding train- and yardmen, is repeated in this document, and the paragraph is also more detailed in this respect. The document states that leave of absence will be granted for a maximum of six months, and in order to retain rights on the enginemen’s list they must be employed by the D&IR for at least four months each year, unless “protected by leave of absence”.448

An article is also included to regulate the relationship between union-active workers and the company: “Enginemen… employed by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers or Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, with the company’s approval, will retain their rights on the Engineers and Firemen’s list”.449 The changes in labor relations reflected in these documents underlines Shelton Stromquist’s claim that railroad managers all over the country and as a response to structural changes in the industry and a will to control the labor market, created systems to decrease labor turnover among skilled trainmen seems to have made an imprint on the D&IR during the first years of the 1900s. The special circumstances and the seasonality surrounding the labor process on the D&IR also comes through in the documents together with the fact that management wanted workers to return for additional work during ore seasons.

Agreements, 1905-1906

The document “schedule for enginemen” from 1905 regulated the relation between the engineers, the firemen and the company.450 There is a strong emphasis on the difference between firemen and engineers in this document, as different sections deal with specifics in relation to the respective occupations. In this document a more thorough work description is included as is a detailed wage scale for locomotive engineers, where different kinds of work carried out are paid differently, and a distinction is made between freight service, passenger service and pusher service. There is also a difference in what kind of locomotive is handled. The locomotives have been divided into four different types and sizes according to technical specifications.451 There is also a detailed wage increase schedule for enginemen, both firemen and engineers, for the time spent weighing ore trains, turning engines or filling up coal.452 There are also passages that regulate the enginemen’s working time. No engineer in train service was to work more than 10 hours or drive more than 100 miles per day, and a regular working day for yard enginemen was 12 hours. After that they would receive pay for 1.5 hours for every hour worked. There are also paragraphs for special cases, and for what pay was to be provided for engine failure, switching times, watching engines, and clauses stating that enginemen that are ordered out and not used shall receive pay for half (five hours or less) or

448 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, 20,21
449 Schedule for Enginemen, 1903, p.19
450 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905.
451 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp.1,2
452 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp.6-8
whole day. One article deals with the pay for steaming ore, something that the enginemen did before unloading the ore into the boats.\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.10} The right to runs was to be governed by seniority and capacity “unless otherwise agreed upon between the superintendent of motive power and enginemen interested”. Any question regarding capacity was to be decided by the superintendent.\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.15}

There is also one section governing procedures for the promotion of firemen to become engineers, and for allowing the firemen to retain their right as firemen. In this way, junior engineers with a past as firemen could be “demoted” down to fireman status if a reduction in the number of engineers was needed. According to another clause, engineers employed as engineers had no rights as firemen. The agreement also stated that enginemen had the rights to seniority for enginemen, and that they had to work in the senior capacity “except as may be agreed upon between the superintendent of motive power and committee of enginemen”. Road work is classified as senior to switch work, and running an engine as senior to firing an engine in any class of service.\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.16}

One section repeats the rules regarding “leave of absence” as expressed in the 1903 document referred above, i.e. that at the close of the season’s business workers were entitled to a leave of absence if having rendered “meritorious service”,\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.15} which gave them all rights of seniority. Two sections further regulate the rights to leave of absence. According to this document it was not possible to take more than six months’ leave of absence, with the regular addition “unless otherwise agreed upon by the superintendent of motive power and respective committee of enginemen”.\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.16} Enginemen were not to retain rights on enginemen’s list, unless the company employed them for at least four months each year, or unless they were protected by leave of absence. A written notice was also required from the worker to the company 30 days before the expiration of the leave of absence.\footnote{Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp.16,17}

The institution of securing a more or less regular work force through this system is obvious in this document, which further regulated the relationship between company management and worker by defining periods of employment needed per year to be able to claim the right to “leave of absence”. There thus seems to have been a desire to define the relationship between a more regular work force of enginemen and a more temporary cadre. This is further underlined by Article 11, section one, in the same document. It is clear that there was something called the “extra list” of enginemen that could be called in at short notice to “catch temporary vacancy on freight” during the ore season. Such a temporary engine-
man was to hold the vacant position for 15 days, provided that the regular engineman did not return. It is added that at the expiration of the fifteen days “the run will be open to any older engineman”.  

In case of a discharge or leaving service, the engineman was to be furnished by a letter stating the cause of discharge. To receive such a letter the worker had to have been employed by the company for at least 60 days. This is yet another indication that the company promoted a regular skilled work force.

The seniority rights were important in the document, which defines the relation between enginemen’s right during the ore season. If a run where the engineman was employed was temporarily suspended for one day or more, “such engineman will be entitled […] to take any other run to which his seniority rights may entitle him”.

Furthermore: “Prior to the opening, and after the closing of the ore season the oldest engineman in service will be given the preference to work. During that period any runs that appear to be permanent, shall be assigned to the oldest enginemen desiring the same, men so assigned shall not be given irregular or extra runs, unless there are no other men available”. The document does not state a fixed number of hours’ rest needed for workers between runs; instead the formulation “enginemen will be given time for such rest as in their judgment they require”, leaves this to the worker to decide.

As in previous documents, the enginemen had the right to a hearing when discharged from company duty. At the hearing he had the right to be present, to hear all witnesses, and to have another engineman present to speak for him during the hearing. He was also entitled to appeal from the decision of the local to the general officers on the road.

It is also stated that the enginemen were in no way obliged to pay fines for loss or damage to property or rolling stock, but that they could be suspended or discharged for carelessness. It was furthermore up to company management to judge how many men were demanded in the service of the company, according to the wording “no more men will be employed in the service than are, in the judgment of the company officials, necessary to move the traffic with promptness and dispatch; the number constituting the surplus to be determined by the superintendent of motive power and committee of enginemen”. Business was not however to be delayed by negotiations, and it was up to the worker side to file complaints about decisions made.

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459 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.17
460 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.20
461 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.17
462 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.18
463 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp.18, 19
464 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp.19, 20
465 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.21
A detailed rule for promotion to become a fireman “according to seniority and capacity”, is stated, and that an exam was to be taken by the man applying. The exam included how to handle the locomotive air brake, and the machinery. If the worker failed twice to pass the exam, his “service as Fireman, will be no longer required”, but if he passed, he was given a certificate from the superintendent of motive power. A working instruction for firemen is included as to what maintenance work this man was to carry out on the locomotive and the relation to the work done by the round house crew.

Regarding the relationship between workers and management, it was possible for the workers to obtain a meeting with the general officers of the company and a committee of enginemen, but this required a written notice in advance that stated the nature of the matter considered, which was to be handed by the workers to the Superintendent of motive power who was to fix a date and a time for the meeting. Enginemen who occupied official company positions, or were employed by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers or the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen with the company’s approval were to retain their rights on the engineer and firemen’s list.

The document is signed by the “committee of enginemen”, who all seem to be American-born. I have been able to locate three of the men, all born in the United States, one of whom died in Lake County in 1907 and two in St. Louis County in the 1920s and 1930s, respectively. The men involved in the procedure of collective bargaining were hence drawn from the Anglo-Americans on the railroad and the occupations dominated by these men.

The same general framework for trainmen is mentioned in an agreement between the company and the train- and yardmen in its service. The same rules and regulations seem to try to secure for the company a regular work force of men in train and yard service, despite the seasonal character of the work on the railroad. There are a number of clauses that are identical to the enginemen schedule for 1905, namely the right to get a hearing when discharged and being able to change one’s employment with the company without losing seniority rights. The right to a letter of recommendation when leaving service after more than 60 days and the right to leave of absence between ore seasons are also included. The same tendency towards promoting men to make them stay in the company by internal recruitment is also obvious as regards the trainmen. In one paragraph it is stated that “the company, in need of Conductors, may hire one experienced Conductor and promote two trainmen”. At least two thirds of those recruited to

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466 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. p.22
467 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp22,23
468 Schedule for enginemen, September, 1905. pp22,23
470 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1906.
471 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.18.
the position as conductor had to be taken from among brakemen employed by
the company.

There is not much mentioned of the trade unions organizing the train- and yard-
men, but in one article it says that transportation to a reasonable extent was to be
furnished over the line (the D&IR) to all members of the Order of Railway Con-
ductors and Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen in search of employment, if
vouched for by a member of these orders employed on the D&IR.472 It is also
stated that “inexperienced men” as trainmen or yardmen will not be provided if
experienced men “can be secured without delay or inconvenience to the ser-
vice”.473 The day and night shifts in the yards are also fixed in this document,
consisting of eleven hours, in the daytime between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.474 There
was some regulation concerning yardmen who were not to “be worked” more
than 12 hours unless agreed to by crew and yardmaster”.475 For trainmen, a
working day was to consist of 10 hours or 100 miles, or less.476

Rights to regular runs were, in line with the document regarding the enginemen
of 1905, to be governed by seniority, capacity and fitness. The capacity of the
men was to be decided by the superintendent. Promotions were to be governed
by merit, ability and seniority; if equal, the conductor, brakeman or yardman
longest in service of the company was to have preference.477 It is also stated that
brakemen who failed to pass the examination for becoming a conductor were to
be given another chance within six months; if they failed the exam again, their
services as brakemen were “no longer required”.478

Agreements, 1918

The 1918 document on labor relations between the D&IR management and the
men in train, yard or engine service, states the wages paid to different categories
of workers and their rights. The schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen codified this “as agreed to, understood and arranged between the Duluth and Iron Range
Rail Road Company, by its officers and Committee of Trainmen and Yardmen…

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473 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. pp.11, 17, 18
474 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.11
475 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.12
476 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.17
477 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.15
478  Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. P.15
479 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.11
480 Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen. 1906. p.18
and who represent all the Trainmen and Yardmen employed by the said Com-

pany”. \[481\]

The document presents a more detailed wage policy than had been the case in 1905-1906. Tables of wage levels and terms of pay are presented. Conductors and brakemen in passenger service were paid per month, whereas in freight service they were paid per mile, and compensated for time spent on stations, loading coal, weighing and testing at ore scales etc. \[482\] This is the same system as was used in 1906, but it is more elaborate in 1918 in its description of how to count mileage run, times worked etc. \[483\] Otherwise, the documents are fairly similar to each other in character, with one big difference being example situations stated in the document. This is probably a result of situations that had come up when older, less detailed rules were in effect. \[484\] The same is true for the engineman schedule for the same year. It is a more thorough overview of different kinds of engine service than in 1905. There are five classes of engines, and four classes of service. These were ore freight service, regular passenger service, local mixed freight and switching service and ore steaming. Apart from this there were two special cases of service, special passenger service, and the breaking-in of new engines. These had all existed in the 1905 document, but they had not been defined in detail to the same extent. \[485\]

In the document of 1918, a maximum mileage for train crews and a maximum number of hours for yardmen is stated. Yardmen are thus not to be worked more than 12-hour shifts. There were shorter shifts, too, from eight hours and upward. \[486\] These regulations are similar to the ones from the 1906 document on train- and yardmen. The enginemen were to be paid per hour or per mile depending on the type of work carried out. It is stated that yard enginemen were to be given a minimum of nine hours’ work per day unless “prohibited by … agreement with [the] men”. The document does not give a ceiling for the number of hours or miles that could be carried out by an engineman, but it is stated that after eight hours or 100 miles overtime was to be paid. It is also stated that no switch engineman was to be allowed more than one shift of eight or nine hours in a twenty-four-hour period if there were other men available. \[487\]

There are a number of other differences that signal a more formalized and regulated relationship between company and worker. One is the lunch break. According to the document from 1906 the worker was “expected to do… work during such hours as will best accommodate the company’s business; but if they work between Twelve and One O’clock, they shall have such time as is necessary to eat their meals while still on duty”. \[488\]

\[481\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918. p.1
\[482\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918. pp.5,11
\[483\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918. pp.4-7
\[484\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918. pp.18, 19 section 32.
\[485\] Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. pp. 4,5
\[486\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918.p.19, section 33
\[487\] Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. p.23
\[488\] Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1906. p.12
In the 1918 document it is stated that “yard crews in Switching Service in eight hour yard assignments will be allowed twenty (20) minutes, and in nine (9) hour or more assignments, thirty (30) minutes for lunch with no deduction in pay or time therefore”. Yard crews were also given three meal periods in which to eat, then “all road crews except passenger and ore crews will be permitted to stop for meals as near meal time as possible without serious delay to trains”. In case the train was running late by more than 30 minutes, a deduction “for all time consumed” was to take place.\(^\text{489}\) The same text was provided for the enginemen.\(^\text{490}\)

Regarding the enginemen, seniority and capacity governed the right to regular engines and runs. The superintendent or superintendent of motive powers was to resolve “any question as to capacity”.\(^\text{491}\) According to the rules for trainmen and yardmen from the same year, merit, ability and seniority were to regulate promotions. Everything being equal gave preference to the trainman or yardman longest in service of the company.\(^\text{492}\)

Promotion rather than new recruitment of conductors was even more emphasized in the 1918 documents. In 1905-1906 the hiring of one experienced conductor was to be followed by at least two promotions of brakemen employed by the company. This ratio had increased to three promotions of brakemen for every experienced conductor hired.\(^\text{493}\)

On the whole, seniority and capacity were key words in the hiring and promoting of men. The harsh conditions involving the testing of men up for promotion to become a conductor or engineer are still present in the 1918 documents.\(^\text{494}\) Men were discharged from their service as brakemen or firemen if failing, and tests seem to have been one way that the company used to do away with unwanted persons from these occupations.

The parts dealing with leave of absence, and the regulations as to holding rights to seniority on lists after four months of employment per year were identical to the corresponding parts in the 1905-1906 documents. The same held true for the period of time needed to be able to claim rights on the enginemen’s and trainmen and yardmen’s list.\(^\text{495}\) More stability and security are however added for the regular work force. The line was divided into three districts, the Two Harbor District, the Mesaba District and the Vermillion District. The same division was made for train- and yardmen as to seniority and right to work.\(^\text{496}\) This was one

\(^{489}\) Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918 pp.19, 20, Section 33.  
\(^{490}\) Schedule for Enginemen, 1918 pp.20,21, section 32,33.  
\(^{491}\) Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. p.22  
\(^{492}\) Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918 p.22.  
\(^{493}\) Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918. p.24  
\(^{494}\) Schedule for Enginemen, 1918, pp.23,24; Schedule for Trainmen and Yardmen, 1918, p. 22  
\(^{495}\) Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. p.24  
\(^{496}\) Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. p.24, Train and Yardmen Schedule 1918, p.27.
way of securing a steady work force on distinct parts of the track, and to allow workers more stability.

The extra lists mentioned in the 1905-1906 documents have become a recurring theme in the hiring policies of the company. “An extra list will be maintained for engineers during the ore season, and for firemen the year around. [These men will] run first in first out”. In the case of vacancies on regular runs, the oldest engineman interested was given preference after 15 days. But the company reserved to itself the right to use men at outside points to fill vacancies, so that the rights of the men on the extra list were not guaranteed in any way.

Conclusions

The documents containing the relation between the workers in train, engine and yard service displayed an increasingly detailed work instruction, more detailed wage scales and, generally, a more regulated relationship between employer and employees. However, much of what is present in the 1900 and in the 1903 documents in particular was still relevant in 1918, and many of the additions made were clarifications of previous agreements. The examples found in the 1918 documents were probably a direct result of different interpretations of the work rules, and the more detailed instructions for different occupational categories give the impression that the D&IR through these documents ensured an orderly relationship to the key groups working for the railroad. My interpretation of the changes and continuities in the material is therefore that the relation between the Company and the work groups described here had a rather long history and that the first documents probably dated to the 1890s. The railroad brotherhoods had started to organize in the late 1890s and through the decade increasing number of railroad workers were organized. This is indicated by the words replaced on the document preserved from 1900. When comparing the documents over time, the biggest difference is found between the document of 1900, which is only 8 pages in length, and the others. My interpretation is therefore that there was a certain amount of regulation between the railroad and its employees prior to 1900, but that the relationship became increasingly formalized between 1900 and 1905. The documents have a number of overarching themes that can be connected with a number of purposes regarding personnel policies on the D&IR.

First, the increasingly detailed documents, not the least regarding wage scales, issued between 1900 and 1918, mirrors the increased size of the company, the increased technical refinement in machinery, and the increased number of branches for freight and other services carried out by the company during the period 1900-1918. This increased focus on mileage and descriptions of situations that had occurred or could occur and that warranted special exceptions or addi-

497 Schedule for Enginemen, 1918. pp,25-27
tions of wages due to engine failure, track problems, weighing ore at scales or whatever the reason, had become a much more important part of the document.

Secondly, the documents discuss the regulation of working hours and shifts. This part of the document changed during the time period, and got more detailed over time. One aspect that did not change was the tendency to let the worker decide whether rest was needed. Otherwise, more clear signals as to working hours are produced. The regulation of the work hours of railroad workers under the

The third difference concerns the hiring and promoting of workers in train, engine and yard service. The company policy was, to a large extent, to recruit internally, and to promote workers. Engineers were to be recruited from among the firemen, and conductors were to be recruited from the brakemen. Promotion among the yardmen is not as clearly lined out in the documents. The brakemen and firemen up for promotion were to take a test to be able to be employed. After 1905, the firemen and brakemen that failed the test were no longer required as firemen or brakemen. Hence, this was clearly regarded as a recruiting-ground for the company in order to secure a stable work force. It was also a way for the trade union to uphold the status of the skilled occupations, as it limited competition from unskilled workers and workers from other roads. The documents were also beneficial in that they provided rules that excluded unskilled labor and gave the organized workers the right to a steady employment during a large portion of the year. The regulated relationship between management and a selected group of worker with a distinct Anglo-American character was one way for the company to ensure a regular work force and a step towards minimizing the turnover of workers. Due to the seasonal character of the work on the railroads, the risk of high turnover rates was obvious, since a large number of workers were discharged at the end of each ore season. One way of solving the problem was to stress the importance of skill and seniority for regulating the right to regular runs, during and between ore seasons.

The fourth dimension visible in the schedules is the company’s will to secure a stable work force of skilled and loyal workers. The idea is best displayed in the rules regulating “leave of absence”, but also in the parts stating that a worker had to work four months per year to be able to retain his rights, and those focusing on seniority of service, competency and the wording that unskilled and untrained workers were not to be used if there were skilled and trained workers to find. This, together with the hiring and promoting of workers, as described above, also promoted stability, since the men would not want to forfeit their right, because the promise of promotion was constantly present. In this way the work place of the D&IR and its employer-employee relations aimed at creating a climate of stability in regard to these work groups. Despite the character of seasonal labor on the railroad, the ambition was to secure a regular force of workers, and decrease the turnover rates.

This is also displayed in relation to the trade unions as expressed in the documents. Fairly good relations seem to have characterized the relationship between
the union men and the company. This is illustrated by the right of workers to get to meet the general management if they were dissatisfied with current contracts, and the generosity on the part of the company to furnish union men with passes when they were looking for work on the railroad. The union too had interests that lay in line with what was presented in the documents. A more stable work situation, where the union was tolerated, and the competition from unskilled workers was limited by documents, was a good aim. The leave of absence was a way for the union to secure steady seasonal employment for its members during one half of the year, whereas it was a way for company management to secure a work force used to the special circumstances relating to the handling of ore on the railroad.

The documents can then be linked to two overarching issues regarding labor relations on the D&IR. The first is the recruitment of a regular work force, which returned each ore season. The agreements became an important instrument for the company in this work. The second is the maintaining of good relations with the highest skilled and most important workers and keeping this relationship in an orderly manner as regards the wages paid and the right to employment and getting the ear of the general management in case of maltreatment from company officials. The fact that the company tended to promote union activity, of the kind practiced by the railroad brotherhoods, is also one aspect of the company’s ongoing work to ensure the skill level and the special quality of the workers employed on the railroad. This is also in line with Shelton Stromquist’s claim that the process of collective bargaining in the railroad industry was reserved for the running trades.

The ethnic dimension in the composition of the running trades is however a factor here, since all the trades allowed this were dominated by Anglo-Americans. It is stated that union men could be recommended for duty by people already employed by the company and belonging to the union (in good standing). This is also a way of reinforcing an ethnic division of labor given the composition of the workers holding the positions affected by the process of collective bargaining. This was also in line with the text in the overarching work rules of 1907 functioning as a mechanism to keep troublemakers out of the company.

No schedule of the kind regulating the relationship with the groups in train, engine and yard service is preserved as regards the more unskilled workers of the company work force, like the track or ore dock workers. The workers in these two departments were, as I have shown in chapters 5 and 6, generally held by immigrant workers.

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498 In reality, the work of the switchman was generally regarded unskilled, but a distinction between this group and the track and ore dock workers seem necessary. Stromquist, Shelton. A Generation of Boomers. p.243
During the latter part of the 1800s the “labor problem”, as it was labeled in its day, became an acute threat to the development of industrial capitalism and bourgeois society in America. The period from before the civil war and into the gilded age created increasing levels of social unrest. David Brody has explained the increasing strife between labor and capital during this period by increased mechanization, the increasingly large companies, the gradual systematization of administration, and finally the launching of scientific management. All these factors changed the conditions of the American work force and, to use David Brody’s words, “each in its way diminished the worker and cut him down to fit the productive system”. 499 One response to the increasingly visible conflict between labor and capital is constituted by welfare programs of many American companies.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the specific character of the welfare programs that were deployed on the D&IR between the late 1890s and the mid 1920s and what role the programs played in the political economy of Minnesota under Anglo-American leadership.

Welfare Capitalism

The practices of American companies to use a system generally referred to as welfare capitalism grew in importance at the turn of the 20th century. The system of various welfare arrangements has been extensively researched regarding different branches of American industry. In the literature the heterogeneous character of this phenomenon makes itself evident, in that welfare programs both over
time, to their programmatic extent and through their adaptation to and integration with specific company structures are so varied in character.\textsuperscript{500}

Studies of the national level has regarded welfare work either as a phenomenon spawned by the conditions in one stage of the development of industrial capitalism, as in the work of Stuart Brandes, while others, like David Brody, have regarded welfare capitalism as an entity strategically deployed by employers in response to increasing class conflicts. Brody argues that the system was generally undermined by the economic crisis of the early 1930s, when the bottom went out of the American economy. Some later studies have argued for a perspective that does not regard welfare capitalism as specific to the period between 1900 and 1930, but instead emphasize continuity in the development of welfare work, with its roots in the period between 1790 and the 1820s.\textsuperscript{501}

Gitelman has argued that a great deal of the work carried out by companies grew out of necessity rather than of well laid plans and were “strategic and economic employment responses to problems of labor recruitment and/or retention”, which meant that they were only directed at part of the work force, generally the skilled workers.\textsuperscript{502} Both Gitelman and Brody show how welfare work was not only unevenly developed within different companies, but also that a minority of firms did not deploy any more elaborate welfare schemes.\textsuperscript{503} Brody and others have claimed that welfare capitalism did not replace less “mutual” forms of labor relations, but that it made up only one aspect of labor relations during the progressive era and into the 1920s.\textsuperscript{504}

The \textit{National Civic Federation} was one of the primary champions of the idea that labor policies needed to be changed. Around 1900 the organization became a hub of activity for industrialists, conservative trade unionists and philanthropic “middle class” reformers intent on reforming American industry by changing the framework for relations between labor and capital. The primary enemies of the

\textsuperscript{500} A small selection of the literature; Brody, David. \textit{The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism}. ; Brandes, Stuart. \textit{American Welfare Capitalism, 1880-1940}.; Zahavi, Gerald. \textit{Workers, Managers and Welfare Capitalism}.; Korman, Gerd. \textit{Industrialization, Immigrants and Americanizers}.\textsuperscript{501} Licht, Walter. \textit{Fringe Benefits: A review Essay on the American Workplace}. pp.164,165. Other later works on welfare capitalism have emphasized the gendered dimension of welfare programs and the connection to progressive era politics that helped shape welfare capitalism. Yet others have discussed the Americanization element that was to some degree inherent in welfare capitalism, and the more outspoken expressions of this work as language and Americanization classes were arranged by some employers. Betten, Neil. \textit{Polish-American Steel Workers; Americanization through Industry and Labor}. pp.31-42.\textsuperscript{502} Gitelman, H.M. \textit{Welfare Capitalism Reconsidered}. pp.5-8.\textsuperscript{503} Brody, David. \textit{The American Worker in the Progressive Age}. p.59\textsuperscript{504} Rees, Jonathan. \textit{Giving with one Hand and Taking Away with the Other}. In the article Rees concludes that workers at United States Steel experienced much more stick than carrot during the period of welfare work in that firm. See also Cohen, Lizabeth. \textit{Making a New Deal}. p.32,33. Cohen discusses the contrasting labor policies of International Harvester, a well known supporter of welfare programs at its McCormick work relative their Wisconsin Steel works, in Chicago. The former had no welfare program whatsoever, and relied on cheap labor as it was located close to sources of immigrant workers, while the steel mill had a comprehensive program during the 1910s.
federation were, according to its program, socialists and anti-union employers.\textsuperscript{505} It embodied new ideas of industrial organization and championed a system characterized by a movement for consolidation in industry. The idea emphasized cooperation, harmony and “fair” competition and had its perhaps most visible expression in the steel industry, as proponents such as J.P. Morgan and E.H. Gary worked to restore order to “demoralized” industries by combining warring firms to a dominant concern and then imposing “fair competition” on the industry.

This course of action also demanded a more “enlightened treatment of labor”, and the new mode of thinking gradually put its mark on labor policies.\textsuperscript{506}

The reasons that industrialists gave for involving themselves should consequently be seen in a specific ideological context characterized by important changes in the structure of industry. In justifying welfare work, most managers seem to have had a vague idea that they were getting a profitable return on their investments. In the late 1910s, however, the scientific language of the “school of industrial relations” became increasingly frequent in motivating welfare work. This school of thought was derived from the emerging science of industrial psychology, which emphasized the performance of workers not as a fixed item, but as a “prime point for improving industrial operations”.\textsuperscript{507} Thus, the welfare programs of the 1920s were more closely connected with management teachings of the day. In line with this process, where labor relations became science, the companies themselves gradually internalized the welfare work guided by this school. Organizations such as the YMCA became increasingly regarded as too unscientific and too unreliable to carry out the welfare work.\textsuperscript{508}

One way of encouraging labor’s loyalty was via increasingly systematic programs that would free workers from anxiety over accidents, illness, unemployment and old age. Many companies had group insurance and pension plans for their employees. Many employers also sought to motivate their workers via stock ownership programs that would imbue a sense of proprietorship in the worker. This was also accomplished via savings plans and home ownership plans that provided employees with technical and financial aid. Apart from these different schemes, companies also engaged in safety work, provided medical services, underwrote sports and classes and distributed land for gardening. The cost of this work ran high, but expenses continued throughout the 1920s. The idea of employee representation was a prominent trait in many welfare schemes after 1914.\textsuperscript{509}

That the welfare programs were so unevenly spread and developed bears more testimony to the flexibility of the idea and its practices than the idea that it

\textsuperscript{505} Brody, David. The American Worker in the Progressive Age. p.24
\textsuperscript{506} Brody, David. The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism. p.49,50
\textsuperscript{507} Brody, David. The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism. pp.52,53
\textsuperscript{508} Brody, David. The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism. pp.53-55
\textsuperscript{509} Brody, David. The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism. p.55
should not be considered a common response from the business community to the same set of structural factors. Neither is there a contradiction between Gitelman’s interpretations of companies’ efforts to secure certain basic requisites for production and the thought presented by Brody and others that welfare capitalism was a program to counter the increased class strife. This becomes especially apparent considering the higher tendency among skilled workers to organize. This is furthermore underlined by empirical studies of specific social settings and specific companies that implemented welfare programs. These tend to underline how more formalized economic schemes were wedded to informal networks established between the workers and management. Many of them also seem to fall well in line with how Gerald Zahavi has characterized the welfare work of a shoe manufacturer between 1890 and the Depression, in that it became part system, part personality, part ideology and part informal practice. The specific mix of implemented welfare systems, dreams of increasing levels of mutuality, recognition of the role of workers and the notion of a bond between the company and the workers gave the concept its content. Welfare capitalism can therefore not easily be boiled down to merely a catalogue of inadequate efforts on the part of capital largely generated by outside structural changes. The interesting question is instead how the results of these changes generated by outside forces were arranged into a coherent system in specific social settings and how they were used by industrialists in those settings to claim control over workers’ lives. The ideological component is therefore crucial. Brody and others have argued that welfare schemes also created unreasonable expectations among workers, which undermined the faith in the system. The last factor that leads up to my questions will therefore deal with the response of the workers on the D&IR. Key questions for this chapter are:

- How were welfare programs developed in the particular social, political and cultural contexts on the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad?
- How did different groups of workers based on skill and ethnicity respond to the welfare work of the company?
- How did welfare capitalism interact with other societal structures?

These questions are parts of the larger purpose of analyzing the changing relations between the employer and the immigrant workers and their children with a special focus on workers of Swedish descent on the D&IR.

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512 see e.g. William Littman that discusses cultural spaces and how the middle class forms of leisure tended to attract managers and white collar workers, whereas most blue collar workers were only drawn to the sports facilities and continued to spend their social life in their working class neighborhoods. Littmann, William. *Designing Obedience: The Architecture and Landscape of Welfare Capitalism, 1880-1930.* pp.89ff.
Early Welfare Arrangements on the D&IR, 1885 to 1900

Walter Licht has called the period of expanding industrial capitalism and ongoing migration in the late 1800s a blending of Laissez-Faire and paternalism in the policy of many railroad companies. The paternalistic tendencies on the D&IR had an outcome in the building of a boarding house, a system for rudimentary health care and later the construction of a hospital. In time, however, the management also got rid of all company facilities except for the railroad and the mining, leaving hospitals, stores and boarding houses into other hands in Two Harbors.513 As I have shown in chapter 5, the idea of Laissez-Faire of the management on the D&IR was expressed as a disinterest in the workers as the existing reserve labor force of cheap immigrant workers during the 1880s did not create an incentive for more elaborate systems for labor relations. Another of my results underlines how the management of the railroad lacked the control functions and economic means to enforce any more comprehensive labor policy, even if it had wanted to do so during the early years of the railroad.514

This disinterest in workers and their leisure time created opportunities and incentives for worker’s organizations, and I will turn to workers organizing in chapter 9. But there were other organizations too, and they were intimately connected to what would become a working class public space in Two Harbors, the saloon. During the period from the late 1880s to the late 1890s, the churches in Two Harbors seem to have been the most important vehicles for welfare work in the city. The ethnic churches, not least, took on a supporting and fostering role for many workers, who became, even if not members of a parish exposed to the social control of their clerical countrymen. Of particular importance to the Swedish workers in the 1880s and 1890s was the Lutheran congregation.

The earliest recollections of the role of the churches in Two Harbors is from a Swedish minister that helped establish a Swedish American denomination of the Augustana Synod, a Lutheran church with strong resemblance to the state church of Sweden. The reverend wrote in an Anniversary volume of the establishment of the Immanuel Lutheran Congregation of Two Harbors, about the founding of the congregation and the difficulty he had experienced with the recruitment of members among the early Swedish railroad workers in the area. The reverend, C.N. Collin, recollects in quite poetic Swedish how the Swedish workers were “scattered and without guidance” and that they followed “the ways of sin and carnal lust”. He stated that he commonly encountered Swedish workers under the influence or in “bad company”, but that they behaved such as boys when he surprised them during his regular visits to seek them out in the local saloons. He also tells the reader that he, on his first visit encountered Swedes employed in the

513 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter written by Charlemagne Tower to George C. Stone April 5th, 1884.
514 See chapter 5.
sawmill in 1885, and Swedes engaged in ground clearing work, and lumbering. Mr. C.N. Nelson, a Danish immigrant and active Republican at the beginning of the 1890s, allowed the Swedish priest to hold service in the dining room of his boarding house, and helped with the advertising. Collin says that 25 workers showed up to his service.  

Collin describes his missionary work in Two Harbors and Lake County as typical for his fields of mission among the Swedish immigrants in America. Some of the workers had carried with them the heritage from the Swedish state church, but most of them regarded him with suspicion, as the word of God seemed “sown in a stone desert or a thorn shrubbery”. He regarded his work as first and foremost concentrated on disciplining the Swedish immigrants, “to clear the ground in order to be able to sow”. Consequently he worked against the bar, drinking and crime as well as dancing, card playing and generally bad behavior but also opposed secular organizations like the orders. According to Collin, most Swedish workers in Two Harbors, particularly the religious group, treated him well, even though they did not formally participate in church activities. As the town grew, and the local economy diversified, some of the Scandinavians, much to the dismal of the priest, opened bars. Even worse, according to Collin, a good many Swedish immigrant workers also visited them. but there was also Temperant Swedes.

Reverend Collin mentions that the Swedish and Finnish work force were often employed at the ore docks as “trimmers”. He describes the trimmers’ work as the most dangerous and the workers as drunkards that often drank in groups. However, he also states that there was a temperance movement among the Swedish dock workers that wanted to ensure that the earnings of the trimmers did not end up in the pockets of the barkeepers. The solution became an “antitreat-organization” that stipulated that no workers would treat another to liquor.

The Swedish trimmers were not much for religious sermons, but some of them, apparently frequented Collins services, as he describes one situation where part of his audience ran out when the steam whistle at the ore dock declared that there were boats coming in for loading in the middle of a service. The behaviour of the audience can be explained by the fact that the trimmers were hired for time only, and that there was competition for the jobs as a boat came in.

This apparently changed somewhat, as the growing ground for church activity got better as time passed. Collin, together with the Norwegian ministers and the
Dane C.N. Nelson decided to build a church that was to be used by both the Swedish and the Norwegian Danish congregation. Collin and Nelson presented the idea of building a Scandinavian church in Two Harbors, and the company sold them a lot at a low price (they bought one lot, and got one for free). The parish was formally started in November 1889, and the church was finished in September the following year. The Scandinavian “woman organization” collected 1000 dollars, while, after a split in a Swedish and a Norwegian part, the Swedish women collected 600 dollars more. The building of the church cost 3000 dollars at the time, so the women auxiliaries contributed greatly to the project.

The company support for church activity was not particularly outspoken during the 1880s and the 1890s, and it did not seem to have gone beyond helping churches to establish themselves and through personal initiative from a handful of employees.

The protocols of the Immanuel Lutheran parish tells us that the procedures of entering the church was decided by a board of representatives. The pastor was usually the chairman at these meetings, and it was his work to interview the applicants. This was the case with Anna Christina Pearson, Emma Maria Charlotta Jakobson, Hilda Mathilda Liberg and Edith Carlson who applied to be taken up in the parish at the July 7th meeting in 1895. At the meeting reverend Ohslund ”Interviewed them in private”. The taking up of Swedish speaking men and women seems to have been a formality most of the time, but some kind of “moral reference” seems to have been appreciated by the parish leadership, as was the case with Wilhelm Peterson and his family who, ”had good references”. The personal morals of the Swedish population were hence sometimes checked by the church council. In May 1894 when Jonas Arthur Granström wanted to be taken up in the Swedish congregation, the protocol writer (Mr. John Olund) stated that, the pastor visited each member of the church council to hear about ”the moral fibre” of Granström. The council unanimously approved the application.

There were also cases where parishioners were expelled from the community of the Swedish church. One such instance was when decision was made to “drop” Charles Rolén and John Engström from the parish, and they were erased from the church records. This happened in December of 1893, but the grounds of this action is not stated. The following year it is stated that, no parishioner was dropped due to low moral standing. In 1897, however, two women were ex-

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518 Minnen från anläggning av Svensk evangeliska Lutherska Immanuelsförsamlingen I Two Harbors, Minn., tiodårsfest. pp.14,15.
519 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, 7/7 1895, p.34
520 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, 25/12 1894, p.30
521 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church. 20/5, 1894, p.25
522 p.21,22
523 The annual report of the church council for 1894, p.32.
pelled from the parish, due to not having attended church, and for their “disorderly behaviour”. What this consisted of is not further discussed. 524

The role of the congregation during the period up to 1900 is further illustrated by an 1897 entry. Evidently, many parishioners had been sick during a period, and the church board members had made 11 house calls, and supported the families that were affected. 525 At the previous council meeting, as the pastor had resigned his position, it had been decided that the church board was to take on the plights that the reverend usually carried out in the parish, such as helping the poor and making sick calls. The protocol stated that, “the members of the church council will do their best to help those who suffer in the parish” 526

The main evidence presented here indicates that the company was not very active in promoting church activity during the early days of Two Harbors. Instead, the role of the ethnic church in the town was quite important for at least some of the Swedish workers. The role of the church seem to have been regarded one of guarding traditional moral values, as Collin defines his work as one of breaking down something bad in order to be able to sow something new among the parishioners. The situation that faced the early priests was probably difficult since means were lacking and many times, the thought audience of the churches were not particularly interested in attending the sermons.

As in many other parts of the United States, the Swedish- American church, hence seem to have had an important role for the Swedish workers residing in Two Harbors, even though many of the Swedes did not attend the sermons themselves. Through minutes left from the church council of the Lutheran Church and from the reminiscences of the first pastor of the congregation, it is possible to claim that the Swedish ethnic church filled an important role in the early period of settlement and development of the railroad town. The pastor of the congregation made sick calls to workers, created networks for poor relief and tried to discipline and foster the Swedish workers into religious men, in part by visiting and talking to them at the saloons in the city.

The growth of the congregation illustrates the fact that many of the disciplining and supporting aspects of the work were carried out after the 1890s, but there are tendencies underlining a growing interest from the company to increase its influence over the workers and to assume some of these functions. These tendencies become obvious towards the end of the 1890s during a period of intense settlement in the community and in a context where opposition to company control over the political arena becomes increasingly loud. In 1897, the railroad company started to hold annual picnics for its employees. They clearly attracted a large following, and a range of activities was held under the auspices of the

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524 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church. ½, 1897, p.43.
525 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church. ½, 1897 p.43
526 Protocol from meeting of the church council of the Immanuel Lutheran Church. 18/1, 1897, p.42.
company at these events. This is the first real indication that the company wanted to imbue the workers with a “company spirit” and to integrate them into a company sphere of influence. Which of the workers participated in these events is not possible to assess. The following year a more permanent expression of a new orientation of company welfare work was created to address the previous lack of interest in the lives of the workers. In that year a railroad YMCA-building was constructed in Two Harbors.

The Railroad YMCA, Nationwide Ideas and Development

During the second half of the 19th century the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) was expanding its field of operation to comprise industry. One of their industrial branches was directed towards railroad workers, who were renowned throughout the country for their disorderly lifestyle. The “boomer” became the mythical image of the railroad construction worker in the eyes of the public. 527

The YMCA was founded in 1844. In the United States the organization was firmly based in the “Great Awakening Theology”, which proffered evangelical piety “as the basis for a new institutional matrix of reform, substituting personal individualized piety for earlier communal restraints on public and private conduct”. In this way Thomas Winter has regarded the YMCA as having played an important role in the cultural transition from a social fabric maintained by communal restraints to new social patterns that emphasized the autonomous individual as a self-regulating moral agent. It had during its first decades a steady focus on “middle-class” men. During the second half of the 19th century the focus of the YMCA changed, as a desire arose to apply Protestant Christian theology to the social problems of the day. 528

This new orientation of the YMCA came at a time when industrial unrest and social upheaval characterized a rapidly industrializing American society. As some American industrialists did during the period after the Civil War, the YMCA identified labor unrest and increasing class strife as being the very foundation of the problems. This made the YMCA cultivate a close relationship with a segment of the industrial urban leadership on levels of funding and governance. At a conference held in 1866 the YMCA committed itself to “improving the social conditions of young men”, especially within the working masses of the emerging industrial centers of the gilded age. Urbanization and industrialization became the focus of interest for the association and helped define its goal of affecting the large scores of young men that increasingly found employment in industry. 529

528 Winter, Thomas. Making Men, Making Class. pp.16-20
In the early 1870s the YMCA started cooperating with railroad officials in organizing reading rooms and libraries for railroad employees. In the early 1880s the scheme included over fifty railroads, contributing more than 30,000 dollars annually to the work. The managers and some employees organized the means and facilities, while the YMCA furnished the company with a local secretary who was to organize and superintend the work. In a brochure published by the YMCA in 1882, the basic features of the work of the secretary were outlined. His role was to organize men into committees to “combine and develop the moral force of the best men in railroad service” and enlist these in the efforts to influence their fellow workers. Workers interested in science and literature were engaged in organizing libraries, reading rooms and lectures, while committees of “sympathetic and self-sacrificing men” would care for their sick and injured comrades. Men of “strong social taste and powers” would help to make the rooms more attractive than saloons, and to organize social, musical and literary entertainments. The work of the YMCA was to have but a guiding purpose, the idea being that the railroad workers themselves were to improve their “physical, mental and spiritual condition”. Under supervision and “guidance” from a trained secretary, the program actually followed the basic idea of self-improvement.

In the 1870s and 1880s railroads showed relatively little interest in the YMCA work, but in 1897 the secretary of the railroad department of the YMCA, Cecil L. Gates, stated that more than 100 branches of the railroad YMCA were in operation and that the diverse programs could “be utilized in diverting railroad men from the associations, habits and resorts which have so frequently ruined them as men, and incapacitated them as employees”. Thomas Winter has argued that railroad companies became increasingly interested in the welfare work in the wake of the strike waves of the 1880s and also that times of crisis after this period tended to spark an interest among employers in the work of the YMCA. In light of this the explosive development of the YMCA railroad branch in the 1890s seems to support this claim.

The railroad YMCA was in essence most of all to be an alternative to the saloon. It provided a place for leisure and for time spent between the shifts or runs of the railroad men, offering overnight accommodations and meals. These services were combined with non-denominational religious work. This work intensified during the 1890s, and by the end of the decade the YMCA had become an important part in the efforts of railroad companies to secure the loyalty of its employees.

530 Railroad Department of the Young Men’s Christian Associations. New York, 1882. p.3,4
531 Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. 1897. p.6 quote from William S Sloan, Vice President of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad.
532 Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. 1897. p.5
533 Winter, Thomas. Making Men, Making Class. pp.40,41
534 Winter, Thomas. Making Men, Making Class. p.28-30
Another aspect of the welfare work of the YMCA involved evening classes and lectures, some of which were directed towards the betterment of men in their field of work, while others were Bible classes or Americanization classes. The lecture or talk was drawn from a list of possible subjects, containing everything from the choice of intimate friends and how to read a newspaper to decisive moments of the Civil War and the privileges and duties of citizenship. This work was carried out under the label of “educational work”, detailed in a booklet published in 1891. The reading room was thought of as one of the most important arenas where the men would be imbued with a spirit of Christianity for their betterment. The room was a useful means of informing and educating young men, “and with right direction, [by] improving their tastes… [and] to counteract… the influence of… trashy reading matter by offering that which is better, it is readily appreciated and will almost invariably commend the association to a community; it forms up an excellent basis upon and around which to build up a healthful and religious resort”.

The purpose was also to make a systematic effort to get into close contact with the young men who were attracted to the reading room. The library and the reading room were considered a cornerstone of a local YMCA with books and magazines of a wide variety to conserve or foster its interest. Every library contained a certain line of standard works on history, fiction, poetry and general literature. Books were to be chosen on the basis that they instructed, counseled, and encouraged in the spheres of business, social life, morals and religion. In every library there was to be one copy of the following books: Smiles’ Self Help, Character, Duty, Thrift; Matthews’ Getting on in the World; Trumbull’s Character Shaping and Character Showing. There were also recommendations for books on outdoor and indoor sports. The idea was to connect the library with the character of the local community in which the YMCA worked. The library was also to contain much in the way of “standard and popular religious writing”, and the reference department to be rich in biblical literature. A special department was also to be furnished to younger readers. Thus the character of the reading room was that of a source where workers would read a selection of literature especially adapted to the idea of self-improvement and individual betterment. A third aspect of the work was directed towards leisure, as gymnasiums, swimming pools and pool rooms became part and parcel of the work of the YMCA. This work aimed at physically fostering the workers, thereby making them better men.

535 Winter, Thomas. Making Men, Making Class. p.34
536 The Educational Work of a Young Men’s Christian Association. p.29-30
537 The Educational Work of a Young Men’s Christian Association.p.7
538 The educational work of a Young Men’s Christian Association, p.13.
541 Elfenbein, Jessica. I Want my Funeral Held in the Lunch Rooms, The Industrial Work of the YMCA, 1879-1933. p.197.
In a printed brochure directed at potential clients in the form of railroad managers there is a description of the meaning of the work carried out by the railroad YMCA. There is a list of rooms that are to be provided, among others a reading room, “where men can spend leisure time pleasantly and profitably”, a conversation and amusement room, “where men who are too tired, or who do not care to read, can talk and play innocent games without being tempted to drink”, a library “that can also be used for evening classes”, and bath rooms. The last ten pages consist of testimonies from railroad managers. One example is Hon. Ashbel Welch, former president of the United Railroads of New Jersey who writes:

"Many of the railroad men have no home, or are compelled to spend much of their time... away from home. In their working trim they do not feel free to go into the usual places of worship. Many go to drinking saloons, because they have nowhere else to go. The Young Men’s Christian Association is exactly the right part to look after them. This work is important, from the great interest the public have in the railroads, the better the men who run the roads, the safer and better they will be run. This work is important, because of its influence on the men who themselves exert a great influence on other men. The talent, the piety, and energy of railroad men themselves are organized and utilized in this work, the object being to aid them in their work, not to do it for them. The managers of railroads should give facilities and show interest in the moral well-being of their employees. To say nothing of any higher motive, it would tend to make their employees more faithful and useful."

Mr. R.F. Smith, Assistant General Manager of The Cleveland and Pittsburg Railroad, also considered the work carried out by the YMCA very useful and necessary in that the railroad companies were not as well suited to perform the welfare work as the YMCA:

"But morals cannot therefore... be ignored in the conduct of its business. Dishonest, drunken and dissolute employees are not tolerated; the interest of the corporation forbid. It becomes then, incidentally, essential to the welfare of the corporation to promote good morals among all grades of employees..... It can be done effectively only by organizations and associations specially adapted to the same. Such an organization exists in the Young Men's Christian Association... I believe it to be wise to secure its cooperation in, and to commit to its oversight and care, any effort to promote good morals among railroad employees."

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542 Railroad Department of the Young Men’s Christian Associations. pp.10,11.
543 Railroad Department of the Young Men’s Christian Associations. pp.11,12. My underlining.
Despite the generosity shown the YMCA by employers, the standard practice seems to have been to split the cost between labor and capital. This had two functions. First, it decreased the cost for the company in financing physical buildings and staff and second, and more importantly, it displayed the image that was so important for the YMCA of an impartial champion working for class peace. This image of mutuality was not always easy to uphold, especially since Thomas Winter has shown how many railroad officials also became deeply involved in the local railroad YMCA work, a fact which underlines the connection between the YMCA and “industrial management”. This connection seems to have created a difficult situation for some of the local secretaries and a clear dependence on the company both for being able to keep their own job, and for continued company cooperation with the YMCA. Despite episodes that underlined these limits, the YMCA claimed that they were neither partisan nor neutral, but mutual in character.  

The YMCA was clearly closer to the employers than to workers through its dependence on management support. It was also ideologically closer to the employers as it tended to assume a common interest between labor and capital, an idea that far from all workers would adhere to. There hence seem to have existed class-based and ideological boundaries for the mutuality of the YMCA. The president of the railroad department, Mr. Gates, stated on one occasion that the relationship between the railroad companies and the YMCA was a practical and profitable one since “money may be employed by railroad corporation for such purposes, in a way that shall positively enhance the value and profit of the business for which they were instituted”. More than $130,000 was invested by railroads at the end of the 1890s. Gates also stated that it was in no sense a charitable fund, “but is a wise investment made jointly and for mutual benefit by railroad corporations and their employes”. About 1/3 came from the railroad employees, whereas the companies paid 2/3 of the cost of this “co-partnership”.  

Gates’ discussion of labor relations emphasized that they should contain something else besides work; it cannot, in the words of Gates, be “that of an automatic machine”. Instead men with well informed minds, clear heads and intelligence are “necessities in every branch of railroad service”. In contrast, Gates depreciated the usefulness of men in railroad service whose character was defined by intemperance, gambling, licentiousness and bad associations…The drinker, the gambler and the frequenter of brothels, is not a safe custodian of life or property, and interests of any kind committed to the care of men addicted to these habits are constantly jeopard-
ized... In justice to railroad employes it must be admitted that many of them become the victims of bad habits, not from natural inclination, but through the absence of any readily and accessible resorts in which to spend their leisure time.\textsuperscript{548}

A superintendent on a railroad was made an example saying that “no person will be retained in the service of this company who is known to frequent saloons, or places of low resort, or who is known to make habitual use of intoxication liquors, for such are certain... to cause injury to life and property”. A General Manager stated that the RR YMCA was “the only way to fight the saloon”.\textsuperscript{549}

Gates also discussed the relationship between labor and capital stating that “there exists a wide gulf of misunderstanding, which in too many cases prevents all harmony of views and community of interest.”\textsuperscript{550} Many times, according to Gates, the worker regards himself only as a tool or machine in the hands of the employer, and that “corporation business affords little or no opportunity for personal relations between the employee and those for whom he labors”. However, in Gates’ words, the Railroad department of the YMCA “has furnished the needed connection, presenting very practical evidence of a desire of the part of the corporation to aid its employes toward improved mental, social, moral and physical conditions, and thus toward greater comfort, contentment and usefulness”.\textsuperscript{551} Gates also emphasized:

\begin{quote}
[T]he ignorant and narrow minded worker is the most unreasonable and unmanageable factor. The man of intelligence may indeed, engage in strikes and boycotts, but he is likely to be less swayed by ignorant and vicious men towards a solution of any difficulty through violence and intimidation, and is more ready to submit to the arbitrament of men of experience and judgment. Thus again it is a matter of self interest for any company to permanently and carefully maintain this agency through which its employes may increase their general intelligence, and gain a better conception of their duties and obligations.\textsuperscript{552}
\end{quote}

The quote convincingly illustrates how Gates regards the process whereby workers become better men as a task for the YMCA and for the railroad managers. Shelton Stromquist has in his work on the reinvention of the concept of the people shown how progressive“middle class” reformers were important in the spreading of the idea of “the people” which was defined as a group of politically mature citizens with no class distinctions, but rather were tied together by a political vision of equality. This vision demanded certain qualities from the citizenship, and Gates’ clearly ties to this tradition of thought as he claims that only ig-

\textsuperscript{548} Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. p.11
\textsuperscript{549} Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. p.12
\textsuperscript{550} Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. p.15
\textsuperscript{551} Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. p.16
\textsuperscript{552} Gates, Cecil L. A Railroad Specialty. p.16,17
norance among workers is the cause of class divisions and proneness of workers to strike. Indeed, Gates claims that the process of educating the citizenship to enable workers to get included in the “people” should be led and guided by the very institutions that progressives many times criticized, the large companies of industrial capitalism.

Gates and others convincingly show how a number of themes are repeated in the central YMCA material. Source Criticism is of course essential here, as the booklets were aimed at selling the idea of mutualism to the railroad managers and the program needed to appeal to capital. The very fact that the railroad managers are the ones targeted and also the ones defined as the key figures in this work again underlines the crucial connection between the YMCA and the managers. This is further underlined by the emphasis on how profitable the YMCA work is as the final product of the program, a disciplined worker who can carry out the demands of an industrial order in essence saves the railroads money and problems such as strikes and militancy.

In 1914, the railroad YMCAs operated at 251 points along American railroads. The total membership amounted to 90 000 individual members. In all, 500 000 visits were recorded at railroad YMCAs across the United States and Canada in one year. The war years meant that the YMCA movement increasingly contributed to the American war effort and worked for Americanization of the immigrant work force. Furthermore, the YMCA cooperated with other organizations working for Americanization. The work carried out during and after the war places the YMCA firmly in a context of Anglo-American bourgeois values, as it becomes a vehicle for Americanization and support of the move towards a culture based on unity under Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony.

The YMCA, a bourgeois institution working for class peace

The most important features of the YMCA ideology were drawn from the religious heritage of the organization and its firm base in “middle class” values, which in turn were gender-coded and based on the idea of manhood. The most interesting trait in this ideology is the fact that both the organization and the railroad managers invoked the low moral standing of the work force as the reason for involving the YMCA in their labor policies. So, despite the role of the YMCA as structuring only the leisure time of workers in their program of religious activities, sports, and intellectual fostering, the main point is a better functioning worker in the work place, with higher dedication, higher virtues, and a higher physical ability to perform the work.

553 Hudelson, Richard/ Ross, Carl. By the Ore Dock. pp.97-100. Hudelson discusses the work of the Americanization committee in Duluth and the active part that the YMCA and the YWCA took in the Americanization work in that city.
The program also emphasized the necessity of keeping workers out of organizations and institutions that deteriorated them as men. This is clearly not only directed towards the saloon. Taking this statement together with one from 1897 made by Gates claiming that the work will give the workers more insight into their obligations and will make them more inclined to submit to the judgment of men of experience makes it possible to deduct that the YMCA regarded itself as having a disciplining task where workers should learn their place in an industrial hierarchy and follow the superiors on the railroad. The YMCA program also regarded strikes as a threat to the harmony between labor and capital. Labor organizations were, interestingly enough, never mentioned. One aspect of this might be the marginalization of proponents of “class partisanship” within the progressive movement. Shelton Stromquist has shown how the language of class was considered a problem among meliorist “middle class” reformers who consequently sought to eliminate the class dimension from the public discourse.

The programs based on physical and mental education, religious work and the crafting of a relationship between the employer and the employee were all based on the idea of mutuality, as the YMCA wanted to profile itself as an impartial organization working for consolidation and class peace. This standpoint has been shown to create problems for the organization of both a practical and an ideological character, both in documents as of above when discussing strikes, and in the work on the field. First their connection to and need for manager approval, in order to establish the work in the first place, created certain bonds between the organization and the employers. Secondly, this connection was further underlined by the very idea of “mutualism”. In choosing that standpoint the YMCA also subscribed to the notion of a mutuality of interests at the bottom of the relationship between the working class and the bourgeoisie. As I have argued in the introduction on welfare work, it seems important to connect the work of the YMCA with a local context. Let us, hence, turn to the work of the YMCA on the D&IR in Two Harbors.

The YMCA on the D&IR

The first step towards a Railroad YMCA presence in Two Harbors was a meeting held at the Presbyterian Church in March, 1897 and on April 4 a temporary organization was perfected.

Plans were immediately made to construct a building where various activities for the “benefit” of the railroad workers could be carried out, and a building committee consisting of a railroad employee who would rise to become president of the DM&N, W.A. McGonagle, and one local lawyer, John Dwan, active in the Presbyterian Church was appointed. The building was finished on January 1, 1898, less than a year after the first meeting. The basement contained bathing facilities, a small gymnasium and the beginnings of a bowling alley. The house
also held kitchen facilities, a library, a small parlor and an assembly hall, which was soon turned into a gymnasium.\textsuperscript{554} The building was in accordance with the YMCA statutes and financed by the workers of the D&IR, who collected $2,000, while the railroad company contributed $4,000 of company funding for the construction of the house.\textsuperscript{555} In the first year of operation, the company furnished the YMCA with an additional $900.\textsuperscript{556}

In 1913 Mr. McGonagle, gave a speech to 380 employees of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company, at Gary, Indiana. There McGonagle presented the results of the work of the railroad YMCA of the D&IR in Two Harbors and on the DM&N in Proctor. Mr. McGonagle emphasized the idea of the railroad man as a self-regulating moral agent and claimed that the specific identity of railroad workers made the YMCA idea a perfect match as, according to McGonagle, “[one can] gently lead a railroad man into the better life but you had better not try to drive him into it, as the result will always be a dismal failure”.\textsuperscript{557} He also promoted the character of the railroad association in Two Harbors as a place where “the atmosphere would never be as pious that the average railroad man would feel uncomfortable when he entered the association”.

McGonagle continued:

\textit{The Railroad Men of Two Harbors used this building at its completion, and they use it now in much greater numbers; it has accomplished everything that was intended and has furnished a safe shelter for the men from the saloon and the brothel and has been the means of leading many men of my own personal acquaintance into the better life. Homes that were neglected are now beautiful and adorned, wives whose faces bore traces of sorrow are now happy and their faces are wreathed in smiles, and children who were ill fed and poorly clothed, now show every appearance of happiness and prosperity. It has paid the Duluth & Iron Range Company in hard dollars to make the investment in building it did in the building of the Young Men’s Christian Association; its employees are of better character and of much higher efficiency and take a greater interest in the Company’s welfare than they did when no one seemed to care about the conditions that surrounded them, or were too busy to realize that the company was in a large

\textsuperscript{554} The Transportation of Iron Ore. p.51.
\textsuperscript{556} Annual Report of the Minnesota YMCA, 1899. p.40, 54.
\textsuperscript{557} The Necessity of The Young Men’s Christian Association to the Railroad Men of the United States. Speech held by WA McGonagle before the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company, Gary Indiana, Nov. 25, 1913. Chicago, 1913. p.2
The speech raises some source-critical issues, as McGonagle’s primary purpose was to encourage worker support for the organization and to “explain” its “worker-friendly” program. On the other hand, the speech summarizes how the D&IR officials perceived of the role of the work in Two Harbors in that it aimed at changing the face of the community. In short, despite the tendency to idealize the work of the YMCA, the speech is important in framing one railroad official’s opinions on the work and how he wanted workers to perceive of it. It is also an indication of the extent of the direct involvement by management to promote the YMCA on the D&IR and on the DM&N. McGonagle emphasized that before 1898 the saloon was the only meeting-ground for the railroad workers on the D&IR and the DM&N outside of their small living quarters. The YMCA changed that, as it attracted almost all the men in Proctor, and many from “outlying points” became permanent members.

The same seems to have held true for the development in Two Harbors, where YMCA opened an establishment in 1898, and at the end of the first year over 300 men were enrolled, of whom more than 250 were railroad men. Some of these men were probably immigrants.

McGonagle, hence, echoes the basic thoughts presented in the central documents issued by the Railroad YMCAs when he describes the changing patterns of how workers spent their leisure time, and how it was the responsibility of the company to help men better themselves. He also claims that the organization indeed changed the behavior of many (immigrant) workers during the first decade of the 1900s. The good result of the program is, according to McGonagle, in evidence at the level of the individual worker, who through the YMCA lived a more disciplined life brought about by a better character and higher work efficiency. The general discussion on the role of morals is connected to the community, which, as one result of the YMCA work, prospers with better lives for both children and wives of the workers under the guidance of the railroad YMCA. Again, despite the source-critical problem attached to his speech, McGonagle emphasizes the program as a good investment, again emphasizing the basic idea of mutual interests.

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558 The Necessity of The Young Men’s Christian Association to the Railroad Men of the United States. Speech held by WA McGonagle. pp. 2, 5
The same development was the result when the RR YMCA established cooperation with the DM&N in 1902 at the proposal of McGonagle, the current president of the DM&N. Olcott, later head of the Oliver Mining Company up on the Iron range of the Messaba, endorsed a plan to establish a YMCA house in Proctor, the center of that railroad. It was quickly implemented through the assistance of James Gayley, then vice president of the United States Steel Corporation.

559 The Necessity of The Young Men’s Christian Association to the Railroad Men of the United States. Speech held by WA McGonagle pp. 5, 6

The rise of membership figures and the activities of the Two Harbors railroad YMCA are presented in table 16.
Table 16. The development of activities, attendance and membership numbers of the Two Harbors YMCA, 1899-1926.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total membership</th>
<th>Junior members</th>
<th>Men on committees</th>
<th>Daily attendance at rooms</th>
<th>Vols. in Library</th>
<th>No. taking physical culture</th>
<th>No. in educational classes</th>
<th>At Bible classes</th>
<th>Helped to boarding/work</th>
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<tr>
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<td>303</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
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Source: Annual Report of the Minnesota YMCA, 1899-1911 and State notes of the YMCA of Minnesota, 1918-1926. Kautz Family YMCA Archive, University of MN, Minneapolis; MHS, St. Paul, MN.

The reports indicate that the YMCA of Two Harbors had good attendance by the workers in the city, as membership figures rose sharply between 1899 and 1910, when they peak at over 1,000. This is quite remarkable in a city with a popula-

$^*$ This indicates total annual attendance at something called Sunday meetings, or Winter Sundays from this point on.

$^{561}$ This figure is said to be 892 in a company folder from 1927. I think that that figure both makes more sense, and is more reliable, since the YMCA volumes are generally riddled with printing errors.
tion of about 5,000 settled inhabitants and indicates strong support from large
groups even though some of the membership with some probability was drawn
from other parts of Lake County too. From the incomplete figures for the 1910s
it seems possible to draw the conclusion that the YMCA remained important
throughout the decade.

The reports also give a glimpse into the work carried out. Initially, most of the
work was focused on the railroad men themselves, but in time the community
orientation became increasingly obvious with a real effort of engaging the whole
community seemingly characterizing the period from the late 1910s into the
eyear 1920s. The growth of the junior members is one indicator of that. From the
first notation in 1903 of 22 members it increased in the 1910s to harbor over 100
boys in 1918, and more than 200 in 1921. The educational work seems to have
varied in intensity, and so did the religious work. There seems to have been an
intensified effort during the late 1910s and early 1920s to hold Bible classes for
the citizens and railroad workers. The peak year was apparently 1926, when 158
people attended the meetings. Otherwise the figures for attendants seldom
reached above 70.

The attendance in rooms, the number of people in Bible classes and the number
of workers in educational classes obviously took a leap after 1907, as the number
of those enrolled for the educational classes rose significantly from having been
between 15 and 42 for all but one year to 72 in 1908. An official overview of the
D&IR from 1927 describes the work of the Two Harbors railroad YMCA as di-
vided into three phases.

The first was characterized by a focus on purely religious matters, as the YMCA
worked in conjunction with the churches “throughout the village on helping to
foster a more wholesome spirit among the railroad men”. The second and third
phases consisted of an increasing focus on physical education and a refined edu-
cational organization directed towards the whole community rather than towards
the railroad men only.562 This image does, however, not seem completely accu-
rate. The organized committees give us some insight into what work was done
by the YMCA at the beginning of the 1900s and, as there was one religious, one
social, one physical, and one educational committee as well as a women’s auxil-
liary, the work of the YMCA at that time was evidently more diversified than is
implied by the company overview.563 The main branches of the work of the
YMCA were established quite early, but the emphasis during the earlier period
had more of a religious character, as is indicated by the high number of sermons
held in shops in 1898, and the attention in the local newspaper to the men’s
meetings and various sermons under the auspices of the churches of Two Har-
bors and the YMCA.

562 Transportation of Iron Ore. pp.51-56.
The most important forums for the religious work seem to have been Bible study classes and “Men’s meetings”. The former were not very well attended during the first years (less than 10 per year), but increased and reached 80 in 1908 to remain over 50 in 1909. The men’s meetings, held once per week, were fairly well attended between 1899 and 1910, as the average number of visitors fluctuated between 25 and 75. The meetings involved pastors or railroad officials giving weekly talks on diverse subjects. In 1901 the meetings were, among other things, devoted to the use of liquor or to how to increase the moral standards among railroad men. Some of the speakers represented the Anti Saloon League.564 In March 1901 the superintendent, Thomas Owens, led the men’s meeting discussing vices and their remedies. Other railroad officials also participated, and many of the meetings also contained music performances.565 The superintendent of the railroad seems to have taken quite an interest in the men’s meetings and the organization more generally, since he was on the board of the YMCA in 1903 and frequently spoke at the meetings in the years after the establishment of a YMCA building.566

On some occasions the men’s meetings were cancelled and transformed into Sunday meetings, which were apparently more community-oriented. At one meeting in 1905 a locomotive engineer and the head of the national railroad YMCA visited Two Harbors, where they bore witness to how the engineer had been helped to a better life. The event was open to everybody, and three of the English-speaking churches in Two Harbors were closed and the parishes were encouraged to attend the sermon at the YMCA.567 Another example of “open activities” is the “vesper service” in June 1905 outside of the general office of the D&IR.568 In 1915 weekly meetings connected with religious subjects were still held at the YMCA, but the term “men’s meeting” was gone.569 Judging from Table 16, the work attracted quite an audience every week, the subject initially focusing on religion, morals and temperance. The pastors of the different congregations in the city were clearly involved not only in the organizing of the YMCA but were also active in the regular program.

Despite the strong focus on religion during the early period it is safe to say that a number of other activities drew audiences to the YMCA. The idea of “fostering” the workers was made visible in the establishment of a reading room and a library in the YMCA building. The interest of the YMCA and the company in reaching the transient railroad men was expressed in the building of a dormitory

564 The Iron Trade Journal, 10/1, 1901. p.1.
565 The Iron Trade Journal 21/3, 1901. P.1. and 1/1 1903. p.5. 8/1, 1903. p.5. One of the regular speakers was G.E. Pickard of the local Methodist Episcopal church. In 25/1, 1907, the title of one lecture at the men’s meetings was “The pursuit of happiness”. To this meeting was invited all the men of the village.
567 The Iron Trade Journal, 26/1, 1905. pp.1, 5
568 The Iron Trade Journal, 29/6, 1905. p.5.
and a cafeteria. These came equipped with reading tables with good literature free to use at the workers’ convenience.

From the very beginning of the operation, some of the work carried out by the churches in Two Harbors was taken over by the YMCA secretary and the sick committee. During the 1890s there is evidence of the churches of Two Harbors making sick calls to workers. This work of visiting workers who had called in sick or were absent from the job was to some extent taken over by the secretary and the committee involved. In 1898 the secretary and the committee had made 50 visits to sick men. 570 These activities were carried out until 1918, when only 3 visits were carried out. 571 By this time, the function of sick calls had been largely taken over by traveling nurses in the employ of the railroad company and the mining companies. A company overview from 1927 does not mention the sick and relief work of the YMCA at all, an indication that the D&IR had internalized this work. 572

The development of the YMCA during its first ten years between 1897 and 1907 underlines the importance of the religious work but it also points to the fact that a broad program was taking shape. Judging by the development of services directed not only to the men, but to the whole community, it seems safe to say that a stronger degree of community orientation is visible from the beginning of the 1900s. The establishment of a women’s department in 1900 further underlines this. At this time, the most prominent activity of the association was the “Men’s meetings” with an average attendance of 54. Bible classes were less popular at the time, as indicated by Table 16. Despite the increased community orientation, the work, judging by the focus on the men’s meetings in the local newspaper’s accounts, shows us that before 1910 it was still quite focused on the railroad men themselves. This might have connection to the degree of settlement among the railroad workers. Around 1900, indications are that the railroad workers of Two Harbors had acquired some stability and by 1910, judging by the census, a large number of railroad workers were settled. This might, to some extent, explain the shift towards increasing community orientation of the local YMCA.

In 1900 the YMCA at Two Harbors sent a delegation to the YMCA state conference. An engineer/fireman accompanied Thomas Owens, the Superintendent of the D&IR. Owens testified that many of the train men of the D&IR “for the past three years… have given their lives to [God’s] service, and carry their Bible with them on the train. We believe in this work because it makes better employes, better manhood, better homes”. 573 Other railroad men from the DM&N gave the same type of religiously colored testimonies of the change that had occurred in their lives thanks to the work of the local YMCA. 574 The religious work was also

570 Annual Report of the Minnesota YMCA. 1899. p.40, 54
571 State Notes of the YMCA of MN, 1919.
572 The Transportation of Iron Ore, pp.32,33.
573 Annual report of the Minnesota YMCA, 1900, p.52
574 Annual report of the Minnesota YMCA, 1900, p.52, 53
carried out in the company shops. In 1898 the secretary had made 142 visits to the shops of the railroad. This work continued into the 1920s, as there were weekly meetings through the ore season at the coal docks, the car shops, and the machine shops. In 1921 the company magazine stated: “Good speakers and musicians are provided for these meetings”. The average weekly attendance at the beginning of the 1920s was 240. In 1918 20 meetings were held. The meetings were generally dedicated to sermons, music and speechmaking.

The secretary’s many visits to shops in 1898 were a way to present himself to the railroad workers and were probably part of a campaign to recruit members to the new organization. The shop visits in the late 1910s and early 1920s seem to be characterized more by regular sermons and speeches and less by recruiting. This underlines the activity of tying workers closer to the company by using the work place as a way of encouraging company-sponsored leisure activities.

In 1915 the religious work was not to the same extent focused on the men’s meetings. When the state secretary Mr. Peck in that year was invited to speak in the YMCA association rooms there is no reference to it being a men’s meeting. The connection between the local church community and the YMCA seems however to have been carried over into the late 1910s, since Peck also spoke at the local Methodist Church.

This form of more community-oriented religious work was especially manifest after the American entry into the war. In July 1917 an open outdoor meeting was held, which consisted of a religious sermon focused on the stress brought about by the war. A captain of a military force stationed in Two Harbors talked on “The necessity of a clean life in the Army”, while an evangelistic preacher held a sermon with a clear focus on the war. The religious work of the YMCA, hence, did not disappear during the 1910s and give way to a sole focus on athletics, but found new more community-oriented forms, where the whole population of Two Harbors could participate. This became especially important in the late 1910s as the YMCA war work involved both fund raising and sermons which were aimed at raising popular support for the American war effort and strengthening patriotism in the community.

The religious work also, to some extent, involved worker participation in the 1910s. In March 1915 Mr. A.A. Scott, a carpenter in the railroad shops, held a religious meeting open to everyone. In the early 1900s only higher officials performed at religious meetings, but the carpenter’s speech signals that this function had been opened up for regular employees. The effort of the company to en-

575 Annual Report of the Minnesota YMCA. 1899. p.40, 54
576 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine. March 1921, p.21,22.
577 State notes of the YMCA of MN, 1918. See also Two Harbors in 1910, p.36.
gage workers in the YMCA seems to have yielded at least some return. The engagement of the carpenter, an American-born worker, together with the cooperation between the English language churches of Two Harbors, however, underlines the connections between the YMCA and the Anglo-American community in Two Harbors in the increasingly community-oriented religious work. The connection with the YMCA and the Anglo-American Community is further underlined when looking at the men represented on the YMCA committees from 1900 to the end of the 1910s. 581

The reading room and the library seem to have been the heart of the educational work, attracting increasingly large number of workers between 1900 and 1910, the last year for which I have found statistics. According to Table 16, the average attendances at the reading rooms in 1899 were 73 per day. 582 Roughly a decade later, in 1910, attendance was 350 workers per day. In 1901 the United States Steel President Schwab presented the local YMCA with a check of 500 dollars to be used as a starting-point for a new library, and the succeeding years illustrate how the money had been used, as the book collection more than doubled to hold almost 700 titles in 1903. 583 Unfortunately, I have been unable to find lists of which books were available to the workers, but according to central YMCA directives, the collection is supposed to have held a number of works on self-improvement, religious writing and books relating to the field of industry dominating the community, i.e. railroad literature.

The YMCA of Two Harbors also ran evening classes on diverse subjects. Much of the work seems to have been in the form of night school, where education was carried out in English for foreign workers. In 1899 classes in arithmetic, social studies, spelling and penmanship were organized, while one class provided language training for the foreign-born men. The classes were held annually and from their inception attracted workers. The English language classes were important, since these are the most advertised in the local newspaper up to 1910. 584 The importance of the classes for the foreign non-English-speaking population is further emphasized in the book Two Harbors in 1910, which only mentions these classes when describing the educational work of the YMCA. 585 The YMCA classes, hence, became both a meeting ground where American-born English-speaking teachers and YMCA officials met immigrant workers. For the immigrant workers the meeting thus became both language training, an opportunity to get an American education and to get general information about the American society in the social studies class. 586 From 1915, much of this work was carried out in local high school classes instead of under YMCA and company aus-

582 Annual Report of the Minnesota YMCA, 1899. p.40, 54
583 Lake County Chronicle, 21/7, 1921. p.5. Under the headline of ‘Two Harbors 20 years ago’ this piece of information is presented.
584 See e.g. The Iron Trade Journal, 1/1, 1903. p.5.
585 Two Harbors in 1910. p.36.
pices. Between 1900 and 1910 the number of workers in these classes vacillates between 20 and 80. Hence, a fair number of immigrant railroad workers got their English language training from the YMCA and, given the ethnic composition of the non-English speaking immigrants at the time, it seems safe to assume that a large number of these were Swedes.

The YMCA also offered dormitories to workers and became to some extent an employment and boarding agency helping to fill vacancies on the D&IR. It also, on occasion, helped workers to boarding. These functions are testified by a piece on the YMCA work in the *Two Harbors Iron News*, which printed a column named ‘YMCA notes’ weekly from the beginning of the 1900s onward. In January 1907 the YMCA secretary asked people of the village to let their rooms to workers who could not be boarded by the YMCA. This way the YMCA became part of the company effort to secure a work force in more direct ways, too. The top notation for the work of the YMCA in helping to fill vacancies on the D&IR is from 1908, the first year of published reports after the implementation of the 1907 work rules on the D&IR, where the moral aspect of the worker is emphasized for the first time in company documents. In that year the YMCA helped to fill 35 positions on the company payroll (see table 16). The lack of statistics on this matter and this one newspaper article makes the role of the YMCA in the capacity of employment agency difficult to assess, but it certainly tells us that the relationship between the company and the YMCA was close, and that the personal hiring system, based on personal knowledge and morals, was to some extent aided by the involvement of the local YMCA. They also tell us of the importance of the YMCA to the D&IR, and the confidence in the organization shown by railroad officials.

In all, physical education appears to have been the most popular of all the events arranged by the YMCA. The increase from 50 enrolled in athletics classes in 1900 to 200 in 1905 was followed by a period of less activity, but the work apparently picked up speed again in the 1910s, as 90 were enrolled in 1911 and more than 200 in 1920. Figures then remain high during the early 1920s to reach their peak in 1925 with almost 500 attendants. Apart from the formal classes, the physical education that company officials and the YMCA in unison organized took many other expressions.

In 1900 a YMCA basketball team is for the first time mentioned in the local newspaper; the team was playing a game at the Two Harbors YMCA building. In 1910 there is mention of both a baseball tournament arranged by the YMCA during the preceding year and the organizing of a basketball tournament with six teams in the running. The same year a YMCA hockey team was organized,

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588 *Two Harbors Iron News*, 25/1, 1907. p.1
and an ice rink was prepared for the winter. The sports program was also promoted through the building of an indoor swimming pool in May 1911. In that year there is also mention of a tennis court, and a baseball league is starting for the season with two teams facing off at the company shop grounds. In the summer of 1913 the YMCA took upon itself to again organize a baseball league with a number of officials and employees of the company as helpers. The league consisted of four teams drawn from different company departments. In 1910 a baseball match was organized between the YMCA teams of Two Harbors and the Railroad YMCA of Proctor on one hand, and the employees of the sister railway, the DM&N in that city, on the other. During the 1910s the sports program of the YMCA grew, judging by the incomplete statistics, as the period between 1911 and 1917 has not been preserved. However, the local newspapers reported on YMCA activities. In 1915, the “YMCA notes”, published in the Two Harbors Socialist included basketball games, both between community high school teams and YMCA teams. The games were so popular that it was possible for the YMCA to introduce admission fees. In 1917, the baseball league held teams that were drawn from different departments of the D&IR, including switchmen, clerks and teams from the machine shops and the general office.

The YMCA and the community of Two Harbors

As we have seen, many of the activities that were originally directed solely towards the railroad workers in time became community matters. It can be argued that the YMCA became, through its increasingly developed sports program, the religious sermons for the public and its educational work, increasingly community-oriented. The character of a community organization seems to grow stronger during the 1910s and in 1916; a local newspaper announced that the YMCA would be giving a “moving picture show” every week. This work was still carried out in 1921, as witnessed by the company magazine. On these occasions the hall was “always packed to its capacity”. There was also a more general social program sponsored by the local YMCA, as outside performers were taken to the city to provide entertainment for the workers and their families. The organization building was also used to harbor local

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592 Iron Port Advocate, 13/5, 1911. p.5.
593 The Journal News, 1/5, 1913. p.1..The men involved are the YMCA secretary, WA Doerr, FE Evans, WB Woodward, Pat Conliff and CF Warner.
595 Two Harbors Socialist, 20/2, 1915. p.4.
596 The Journal News, 7/6, 14/6, 1917, p.12.
597 The Journal News, 20/7, 1916. p.1. These moving picture safety events were the embryo of the Movie Nights.
598 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, March 1921, p.21
concerts and entertainments. As we shall see later on the YMCA was also involved in safety meetings accompanied by entertainment.

In 1915 the YMCA was used as a platform for the “anti-saloon dry forces” of the community. On city election day of that year, the local YMCA provided entertainment attended by 1,510 people, and on the occasion the YMCA furnished the voters with a picture show and a music program. A representative of the organization spoke to an audience of 600 on temperance and encouraged the voters to vote dry. The YMCA obviously took on an active role and directly affected the political arena of Two Harbors as a vehicle for the dry forces. As a result, the pro-temperance Socialist movement and the dry forces around the YMCA managed to get the city dry in that election.

The increase in community orientation in the 1910s and early 1920s resulted in a program directed towards the youth and children in Two Harbors, which was indeed part of the purpose of the YMCA and the betterment of the employees. In 1910 one of the local newspapers discussed the Survey Club, which was a weekly debating forum organized by the YMCA and “a number of young men” in the city. This is but one of many expressions of company community orientation. In 1927 the official company policy stated that

it is the plan of the local YMCA, besides taking care of the transient railroad men, to help mold the lives of the youth of this city so that they may become better fitted physically, as well as spiritually, to meet life’s various problems.

The survey club indicated that the thought of community orientation expressed in the 1927 document, was practiced as early as 1910, the same year that the sports program takes off.

The work of the local railroad YMCA was hence directed both towards the employees and the community with the wives and children of the workers in the city. In order to secure a reliable work force in the next generation, the company thus used the YMCA as a platform to organize the leisure time of the workers, and, as Horace Johnson put it, to “go beyond the railroad and into the workers’ homes” by carrying out its task of fostering the workers and their children both physically and spiritually.

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601 *Two Harbors Socialist*, 20/4, 1915, p.4.
603 *The transportation of Iron Ore*, p.52.
604 *The Safety Spirit*. Printed Speech held by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, Wednesday September 28, 1927, p.4
Judging from table 16, the scattered figures on the “Junior work” directed at the male youth in Two Harbors picked up speed during the 1910s, as the increase between 1911 and 1918 was from 60 to 111 members. In the early 1920s this figure goes up to more than 200 for a couple of years, and then declines after the railroad shop men’s strike of 1922. The boys of the community became an increasingly important group to attract, as the number of children of the immigrants turned into an increasingly large group of employees on the D&IR.  

A way of reaching “the youth” in the community was the organizing of an “Employed Boys’ Brotherhood”, which organized young men on the D&IR. This was dominated by apprentices to the local shops. The organization had seven objectives, which were vocation, recreation, physical fitness, brotherhood, education, religion, and family and community interest. The program, in short, mirrored the role that the YMCA and the company wanted to play for the workers. The assistant secretary of the local YMCA and the supervisor of the apprentices employed by the D&IR organized the club, which met once per week during the winter months.

The youth work also included a wide range of outdoor activities, among them a summer camp at Lake George. The camp “Francis E. House”, named after the president of the D&IR, was founded in June 1923. The first year two abandoned logging camps were used to house the boys enrolled, comprising 35 in all. In 1925 the camp was improved and that summer, besides groups of adults and community organizations, 120 boys and girls attended. The camp was to be open “for all classes of the community”. In 1926, 350 individuals “enjoyed the privilege of camp life”. The program included flag-raising, policing, Bible study and work hour, but also free hours and other varying activities, mostly sports. From the program for “Camp Miller”, another boy’s camp organized by the YMCA in Duluth, we learn that the boys, apart from camp life, could also attend minstrel shows with blackface performances. The blackface character was hence one part of the fostering of the future workers on the D&IR of which many had (Swedish) immigrant parents. I will return to minstrelsy and racial identity formation in chapter 9 when discussing the transformation of the community of Two Harbors in the late 1910s and early 1920s.

Another expression of YMCA work in the community was the High Y club, which was an organization promoted by young men of the High School in Two Harbors. In 1921 it held weekly meetings at the association building and its program included Bible study and discussions of student problems, “while occa-

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605 A survey of the census of 1910 and that of 1920 illustrates this point as most children of immigrants and settlers reach maturity during the 1910s and are too young in 1910 to participate on the labor market to any great extent.


607 Transportation of Iron Ore. p.53-55

608 Scrap books from the YMCA Duluth located at the St. Louis Historical Society. The advert is for July and August 1923.
sionally a businessman [was] invited to address the group.” Again, this seems to be a platform for the molding of the younger generation in Two Harbors into accepting industrial capitalism and to become workers or supportive of this system. In general, the YMCA program seems strongly focused on the boys of the community, as most of the programs and the work were directed solely to them. In light of the recruitment patterns of the railroad the boys were probably regarded as potential future workers and officials, which is why this work was crucial for the D&IR management.

The community work was, however, not limited to the boys of the city. The female membership was in the 1920s organized into a women’s department and a women’s committee under the direction of the general secretary of the YMCA. A Ladies’ auxiliary was organized in 1900, and held monthly meetings. The work was initially focused on aiding the organization with practical matters. During the late 1910s and early 1920s the increased focus on community work outside the railroad spawned a new perception of the role of women in the organization. Instead of being an auxiliary providing the YMCA with unpaid work, women became an important focus group. These tendencies were manifested in a girls’ High Y club and a “camp fire group” for girls. The YMCA was still, however, an organization run by men, as there were no women present on the staff of the local YMCA, but the company stated in 1927 that it was planning more activities among the women and girls, daughters and wives of railroad men. As there was no Young Women’s Christian Association in Two Harbors, the women and girls were given permission to use the gymnasium and swimming pool during one day and one evening of the week. In 1921, the gymnasium and pool were reserved for women and girls of the city every Wednesday, and classes for married women, junior girls, high school girls and young ladies were given. There were 130 women of all ages enrolled in these classes at the beginning of the 1920s. The classes were led by “two competent women instructors.” The development of the work for women points to a new, more active role for women in the YMCA, at least from the early 1920s onwards.

The tendency towards a new role for women in this community orientation seems evident. The supporting role of the women’s auxiliary from the early 1900s had in 1920 been exchanged for a new role for them in the policy of the company. The women and girls of the community took part in athletics classes, outdoor exercises and other company arrangements. Their role, hence, seems to have changed significantly after the company had begun to define the community work as increasingly important. During the 1910s, when this program was gradually developed, women due to their raising children, became a key group

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609 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March 1921, p.21
610 Transportation of Iron Ore, p.52.
611 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March 1921, p.21
and played a large role in the family structures, which was one of the cornerstones in the community.

One of the more community-oriented activities was an open forum arranged in the early 1920s. The “forums” were held in connection with “the community sing”, an open service that seems to have replaced the Men’s Meetings during the 1910s. The local community was quite heavily involved in these “Winter Sunday meetings”, which drew large crowds. Total attendance was more than a thousand annually in both 1922 and 1923. The meetings were chaired by a committee deciding which subjects were to be treated. In 1921 the committee consisted of the editor of the local newspaper, Clarence Hillman, and two pastors of the city. All three men gave speeches and led discussions on local matters such as county taxes, or more general themes such as Abraham Lincoln and the question of citizenship.

From 1919 the D&IR and the railroad YMCA in unison held annual “Father and Son Banquets”. According to the Journal News the 1919 banquet was a success, with an attendance of 200 for dinner followed by speeches on the subject of “fatherhood”. In 1921 the banquet was pronounced to be a wholesome event attended by 175 people. The editor of the local newspaper called the initiative a “grand thing”. The following year the banquet was, according to the company magazine, “well attended” and “accomplished good results”.

The close relationship between the YMCA and the management of the company is evident in that a number of key officials were active in the organization and that officials like Mr. McGonagle, later president of the DM&N, was active in establishing the organization in Two Harbors. Superintendent Thomas Owens was one of the most active in traveling to YMCA conferences and speaking at the men’s meetings at the beginning of the 1900s. Another company official who was active in the YMCA movement was Francis E House, president of the D&IR from 1902 into the 1920s, who was on the “standing committee of the state committee of the YMCA” from 1918 to 1922. The board of the local YMCA is also an indicator of the partisanship in the organizing and running of the YMCA. A number of old-time employees and officers were chairmen, two examples being George W Watts and George A Rock, both company dock agents, who together with the superintendent took a keen interest in the organization. The activity of these men clearly shows that the YMCA movement was firmly connected with a stratum of the company consisting primarily of Anglo-Americans.

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612 Lake County Chronicle, 20/1, 1921. p.1.
613 Lake County Chronicle, 10/2, 1921. p.1.
615 Lake County Chronicle, 1/12, 1921. pp.1,2
616 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine March 1922, p.10
To get yet another perspective on the role of the YMCA in Two Harbors I will put this institution into a broader welfare context of United States Steel’s community orientation. The relation between the local churches and the D&IR seems to have changed during the early 1910s, as there is documentation for rather large donations made to various community institutions. In 1911, the D&IR spent $8,000 on donations to “hospitals, churches and charitable institutions”. In 1913, roughly $2,400 was spent. To get an explanation for this newfound generosity we need to go to the official policy of the United States Steel subsidiaries in the area during the period after the first big labor uprising in 1907. The Oliver Iron Mining Company, a mining company housed in the same general office as the D&IR and the DM&N in Duluth, has in their archives some letter correspondence that details the work of the companies active on the range, including the railroad companies.

In August of 1916, a plea for a donation was made to one of the companies on the range, probably Oliver Iron Mining Company, by the Methodist Episcopal Church of Coleraine for a small boiler and $50. The answer from the general superintendent (signature unreadable) was that “I believe the interests of the company would be advanced by making the donation”. In another letter, written by the Swedish pastor Andrew Anderson of the Northern Swedish Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1918 he states that

the inclosed(sic!) receipts show how the money you so kindly gave me last year has been expended. I can assure you, Mr McLean, that much good has been accomplished thru the same. By your assistance one man has been able to devote his entire time to missionary work on the “Range” and another man a part of his time. Because of present conditions I dare not presume to ask for any increase for the coming year, but I sincerely hope that you will find it possible to grant us a like amount, namely $300…Thanking for past favors.

In a later letter from president Olcott of the Oliver Iron Mining Company on the 7th of July, 1919, Anderson got his $300, the expense was labelled “subscription-Swedish Methodist Missionary Work, Lake Superior District”. In yet another letter sent from General Superintendent Mitchell to W.J. Olcott, of the Oliver Iron Mining Company and to former president of the DM&N, Mitchell writes that he recommends Olcott to donate $1,500 for improvements of the Swedish Lutheran Church of Eveleth. Mitchell’s letter was a reaction on a plea from the Swedish church for assistance in erecting a new church building.

618 D&IR Consolidated auditor's statements, 1890 - Sept. 1916.
619 Letter from Superintendent to J.H. Mclean, General Manager, of the Oliver Iron Mining Company, Duluth 16/8, 1916.
620 Letter from Reverend Andrew Anderson to John H Mclean, General Manager of the Oliver Iron Mining Company, Duluth, MN. 2/7, 1918. Letter sent from Marinette Wisconsin.
621 Letter from Olcott, president of the Oliver Iron Mining Company to the Auditor. 7/7, 1919.
Evidently a large number of parishioners were employed by the Oliver Iron Mining Company, and the Swedish pastor writes in his letter: “We…assure you that all [of the donation] will be used towards furthering the Christian cause in the building of a church edifice”. 622

Mitchell writes in his letter to Olcott that

36 of the 62 producing members of the church, are employees of the company, and they have twenty Service Stars in their little church. I believe anything we can do at this opportune time to help crush the germ of I-W-W-ism and other kindred socialistic conspiracies, will now and subsequently prove to be of great benefit. I would respectfully recommend a donation of $1,500 for the construction of the church. 623

Another letter that deals with the church as a bastion for anti socialism is a letter from a Mr. Gade to Mr. C.L. Close, an officer of the United States Steel Corporation in New York. The letter is a plea for help with constructing a new Presbyterian church in Virginia Minnesota, as the old one evidently burned down. Mr. Gade writes that the parish had 700 members, “and not a single person of wealth among them”. Gade continues to state that, “our work among the adult foreign population in this city is quite extensive”, and that the church also had care of 1,500 to 1,800 children, most of them from mining families. The plea from Mr. Gade,

I am writing… to ask if you [can] bring this matter before the United States Steel Corporation. We appeal to them for a liberal contribution. There is no force in Virginia and on the Mesaba Range that is so effective against the socialistic spirit and I.W.W.ism as the aggressive missionary work and Americanization program that the First Presbyterian Church of this city is working out. 624

All these quotations indicate the importance of the work of the mining companies in keeping Socialism out of the range communities. The community orientation of the YMCA and the company donations to local churches seem to have been initiated for the same reason.

Analysis

The Railroad YMCA of Two Harbors was based on a broad program of activities directed towards workers on the D&IR. The program instigated in 1897 by the

622 Letter from the Swedish parish of Eveleth to the Oliver Iron Mining Company in Eveleth. 15/8, 1918.
623 Letter from General Superintendent Mitchell to WJ Olcott President of the Oliver Iron Mining Company. 14/9, 1918.
624 Letter written by L.H. Gade to Mr. C.L. Close, letter is undated.
church community, railroad officials and local progressives can well be fitted into a context of local and regional political divisions, given the timing of the launching of the welfare programs.

Two important surges of activity in the Railroad YMCA in Two Harbors are of special importance, judging from the statistical material presented in Table 16 and discussed in relation to the different fields of operation of the local YMCA. First, the time when the YMCA was organized in 1897 falls well into a national pattern of establishing railroad YMCAs as a response to the strike waves of the 1880s and 1890s. However, there do not seem to have been any direct threats of a strike or a history of particular strike intensity on the D&IR railroad, which is why alternative or additional explanations are needed. Judging by the quite sharp political tensions that had periodically characterized the political scene in Two Harbors and the attraction of the progressive/populist movement on the workers in the village during the 1890s, as witnessed by voting patterns in the gubernatorial elections in 1896 and 1898, the establishment of the YMCA in the city seems to be a result of the success of an alternative to company dominance in local politics. The mid-1890 elections are also the first indications of a Socialist presence in the community, which might have added to the decision of establishing the YMCA. The arguments used by the railroad officials involved in the establishments were primarily connected with the good of the workers and of the community but also emphasized the benefits to be won for the D&IR.

After the establishment of an organization and the construction of a building the membership rose steadily to attain more than 500 in just a few years. No particular adjustment seems to have been made during the period, however, and apart from some sports classes, some educational classes and a quite extensive religious and moral work among the railroad men, not much appears to have been done. In 1908, however, another surge of activity is visible in the local railroad YMCA, as both bible and educational classes grew larger and the beginnings of both a sports and an amusement program are visible. This may again be interpreted as a result of an increasingly visible political alternative to the dominance of Republican politics and company dominance on the economic and political scene. The increased activity and the construction of additional sports facilities can in this respect be regarded as a response to the success of the local socialist movement in electing a mayor in Two Harbors in the first city elections in 1907.

The bible class, the educational classes and the Men’s meetings were very well attended in that year, despite the fact that the membership declined by almost 200 in the period between 1906 and 1908. This seems to underline a political and cultural polarization that occurred during the years when the Socialists grew in importance on the local arena, as some workers chose to oppose company dominance while others embraced the distinctly progressive YMCA program for self-improvement and careful reform and became more heavily integrated into the sphere of Anglo-American bourgeois influence.
This polarization, in part, seems to have been an expression of the increasing class strife in the region, as a miner’s strike broke out on the range in 1907, involving thousands of workers, and the emergence and initial success of a radical, ethnically coded and class-based political alternative in Two Harbors. I will return to this emerging opposition in the next chapter.

The interest in sports and the improvements made on the YMCA building in those years constituted one aspect of an increasingly community-oriented organization between the early 1900s and the early 1920s. The YMCA building was used as a community center at the end of the 1910s, where activities such as sports classes, swimming, speeches and local forums were held. The YMCA building was also used for different types of community activities such as concerts, evening socials, and banquets. My conclusion is that the YMCA gradually became a hub of leisure activity in the community. The company, through the YMCA, which I think I have been able to establish as a primarily bourgeois institution, gradually reshaped the leisure time of the workers. Many workers’ leisure time during the 1910s came to be spent in an environment acceptable to and in line with the interests of the railroad company. The increased focus on the community during the 1910s also illustrates the company’s interest in reshaping social relations in the community, which were characterized by strong ethnic networks among the various Scandinavian groups, the Anglos, the French Canadians and the Finnish populations. The community program of the YMCA was, in my interpretation an effort to integrate these networks into a company sphere of influence.

Through the educational work, the company reached non-English speaking workers in their night classes and workers more generally by its reading room and its library. All these became important platforms, where immigrants and American-born employees could meet. The reading room was popular among the workers and hundreds of distinct visitors, including Swedes, came there every day around 1910. The reading material provided by the YMCA had a distinct connection with the underlying ideology of self-improvement and with bourgeois individualism. Without access to a complete listing of the reading material, I still dare to say that the contents of the library had a distinct ideological character, being apparently deeply connected with the hegemonic aspirations of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. In this respect the Railroad YMCA was one possible and highly efficient carrier of the ideological stuff to shape class relations in the new western towns that emerged during the period when eastern Anglo-American investors were at least partially successful in shaping and reshaping the political economy of Minnesota according to its demands. My interpretation of the YMCA library builds on the basic ideology and the organization’s connection with the bourgeoisie.

Judging by the character of the work, it seems as if the YMCA tried to enroll all workers on the road and, given the high membership numbers from the early 1900s and onward with an all time high in 1910 of over a thousand members, the organization in Two Harbors enjoyed the support of broad layers of workers. As
no membership listings are preserved, it is difficult to assess the character of the membership, but the role of the Railroad YMCA was primarily directed at “transient railroad men”, to quote documents published by the national railroad branch. This leads us to the conclusion that the YMCA is likely to have made an effort towards the largely Scandinavian and Finnish group of transient track workers engaged on the road around 1920. What we know is that immigrant workers were to some extent attracted to the YMCA through its classes in English and social sciences, its sports program and its role as a hub for the leisure time in the city. Given the large number of workers who were members, it seems safe to say that part of them were Swedish immigrants.

Previous research on welfare capitalism has established the idea that welfare programs were primarily directed towards skilled workers to attract them and to build and maintain bonds of loyalty between the workers and the company. Through my analysis of the 1910 and 1920 censuses, it is safe to say that the group of railroad officials, skilled workers and office workers with a higher degree of authority was almost solely made up of American-born, English-speaking Canadians and immigrants from the British Isles and Ireland. The American-born and Anglo immigrant workers and railroad officials were overrepresented in the work of the YMCA. This overrepresentation is obvious when considering the men engaged in committee work, since almost all the names are Anglo. The speakers at the Men’s meetings further underline this connection, as local Anglo preachers and company officials seem to dominate this activity almost completely. Through this connection with railroad officials and the Anglo-American workers, the YMCA in Two Harbors became to some extent ethnically coded and, judging by the ethnic division of labor, was also characterized by the involvement of skilled groups on the D&IR. Jessica Elfenbein has, however, emphasized the fact that the YMCA generally was inclusive against European immigrant groups.625

Another indication of this ethnic and skill coding of the YMCA are the teams that participated in the baseball leagues arranged in 1917. The switchmen, the clerks, a team from the machine shops and one from the general office participated. Some of these departments, primarily the clerks and the staff at the general office, represented occupational groups with an overrepresentation of American-born, judging from my quantitative study based on the census manuscript for 1920. On the other hand, no team represents the ore dock or the track workers, even though we know that by 1917 parts of the track force and the ore dock force lived permanently in Two Harbors, and that many of them were of Swedish, Norwegian or Finnish heritage. All the departments participating were to some extent more mixed in terms of native-born and immigrants. This might have been especially true for the shops which included a large number of different trades. One such trade was the machinists, who were a mix of American-born, Canadians and, to some extent, Scandinavian immigrants already in 1910.

625 Elfenbein, Jessica. I Want my Funeral Held in the Lunch Rooms.
It is, however, striking that the ethnically Scandinavian and, to some extent, Finnish departments were not represented. The transient railroad men appear to have played a rather marginal role for the Two Harbors YMCA and, in view of the Socialist affiliation of the Scandinavians and the Finns in the community; it seems as if the ethnic Socialists were, most probably, not integrated into the company project. This further underlines the political polarization that followed from the election of a Socialist mayor in Two Harbors in 1907.

The non-representation of purely immigrant departments was probably partly a function of the mobile character of this work force at the ore dock and on the track force but cannot readily be explained only by this. Instead, the ethnic coding of the YMCA probably played a large part in this development together with the fact, which previous research has pointed out, that unskilled workers tended to feel alienated by bourgeois cultural forms of leisure and often preferred the local saloon to the welfare schemes of American companies. This seems to have held true on the D&IR, too, and the consequences were not only social but also cultural, as most of the unskilled workers were Scandinavian and Finnish immigrants in the unskilled departments of the D&IR. As we shall see, parts of the Swedish ethnic group were in local politics still affiliated with the Republican Party, and some Swedish immigrants ran on the county tickets of this party well into the 1910s. This indicates that the Swedish population was not homogenous and that parts of the Swedish community embraced the company welfare schemes and, in all probability, opposed the Socialists at the polls.

The community orientation and the large number of people involved in cultural activities, discussion forums and athletics did hold at least some appeal to the Swedish immigrants. The forums held at the beginning of the 1920s were in fact co-arranged by a Swedish immigrant, the editor of the quite labor-friendly “Lake County Chronicle”, Clarence Hillman.

The community work in Two Harbors became an important ideological and cultural factor in the community during the 1910s, as the leisure activities of the (immigrant) workers in Two Harbors were to some extent organized by the local YMCA. The organization can, in this respect represent an effort of the D&IR to go beyond the railroad and into the workers’ homes, or at least to be a platform to influence the community of Two Harbors with its strong ethnic character, the Scandinavian population being its most important expression. Despite the failure of reaching all workers, the organization had by the mid-1910s built a long-term credibility among some workers, which was used by the D&IR and local progressive politicians to promote the American war effort on the local level. I will, hence return to the role of the YMCA during World War I in the next chapter.
The Program for Labor Relations at United States Steel Corporation

Despite the many examples of the good results of the YMCA movement in the railroad industry, the attitude towards the welfare work of the YMCA changed in the national business community during the first and second decades of the 1900s. One of the most severe critics of the work of the YMCA was the National Civic Federation (NCF) that claimed that employers themselves should have control of the labor management functions. The NCF arranged a conference on welfare work in 1904 where welfare experts challenged the YMCA’s claims of impartiality. According to Thomas Winter the “organizational matrix” of welfare capitalism had started to change. 626 This change was, however, quite slow, both on the national level and on the D&IR, and the Railroad YMCA was to play an important role for many railroad men in the United States well into the 1920s and were active, but declining, beyond that decade. 627

In the early 20th century the U.S. Steel launched a series of reforms under the label of welfare work to counter the bad working conditions and the many accidents suffered in its plants. The program was launched as a response to critique against the corporation and has been called a “smoke screen” to obscure harsh working conditions and anti-unionism. Despite these probably justified claims, the corporation dedicated 8% of its profits between 1912 and 1922 to welfare work. In 1914 a study was carried out on welfare arrangements in the iron and steel industry and estimated the number of arrangements to 32, which in turn could be broken down into distinct activities. United States Steel was hence one of the companies in the United States during the 1910s that was most influenced by ideas of welfare capitalism. 628

In line with the national development, and as a result of becoming one part of U.S. Steel, the D&IR gradually launched an internal program that functioned parallel to the YMCA work from the beginning of the 1900s. The increasingly community-oriented work of the YMCA, hence, was gradually complemented by welfare work controlled directly and solely by the company, as the committees at least in some degree had ensured worker influence. The company’s own welfare work then gradually replaced the functions of the YMCA during the 1920s. Workers thus to an increasing degree became parts of institutional welfare arrangements with an even stronger connection to the company, especially from the late 1910s. Let us turn to the U.S. Steel program, its implementation on the D&IR and the role that officials and workers had in the various welfare arrangements. Class and ethnicity are again important concepts for pinpointing which

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626 Winter, Thomas. Making Men, Making Class, p.45,46
627 Elfenbein, Jessica. I Want my Funeral Held in the Lunch Rooms, The Industrial Work of the YMCA, 1879-1933.
groups were active in the program. The program itself I regard as one way of assessing different groups of workers’ relationship to the company.

**Health Care on the D&IR**

In the 1880s we know that a company-owned hospital had been constructed and that a company doctor was employed. In 1900 there were two hospitals in Two Harbors, neither of them owned by the railroad company, one of which was owned by the company surgeon and located conveniently right across from the railroad shops. In the 1920s, however, the health care of the workers of the D&IR was completely organized by the company. Still, there was a long and stable tradition where the company provided medical aid to its workers, and this was established long before more intricate welfare arrangements were put in place.

In 1927, the company hospital in Two Harbors had 41 beds, 6 nurses and one orderly. It was equipped with state of the art appliances to take care of workers and their families. In order to be able to take advantage of the medical care provided the company charged the workers through the payroll: one dollar for single men and two dollars for married workers, whose families could also use the available health care. The “donations” of the workers entitled them to free medical and surgical care for themselves and their families. All medicines were provided free of other charge, but confinement cases and operations not caused by on-the-job accidents were charged $5 extra. Alcohol-related accidents and venereal diseases were also charged extra. The last statement underlines how the moral aspect of Labor Relations on the D&IR as expressed in the general rules of 1907 and onward had an impact on the health care program of the company.

A chief surgeon led the hospital, but there were also hospitals at other locations on the range. In all, there were seven smaller hospitals in the range communities which could provide emergency care. More difficult cases were shipped to the main facility in Two Harbors. The company also employed an eye specialist in Duluth. As the price was low, over 90% of the workers took part in the plan. The company also made sick visits as the mining companies, the schools or the villages in D&IR territory employed thirteen visiting nurses. In a company document from 1927 it is called “a benefit of the railroad workers”. This “benefit” can also be perceived of as a company control mechanism. The work had, prior to the company taking control of it, been carried out first in a more informal way by the local churches, then by the sick committee and the secretary of the local YMCA. In 1918 the YMCA secretary made three visits only, an indication that the company program had taken over. For the Swedish workers on

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629 Bishop, Hugh E. *By Water and Rail. A History of Lake County, MN.* p.46
631 *The transportation of Iron Ore.* pp.32-33.
the D&IR the 1890s meant that the ethnic church provided this “benefit”, while the YMCA took on that responsibility from 1898. The secretary of the YMCA was then replaced with company nurses a shift that seem to have occurred in the late 1910s. By then ethnicity and religion seem to have played out its part as regulating agents and the responsibility had been gradually taken over by the management of the D&IR.

From Workers to Co-owners

A second welfare feature was the Stock Subscription plan that was established in 1902, the year after the U.S. Steel had taken over the operation of the railroad. It was active until the early 1930s. In 1902 the new president Francis E House, the vice president Mr. Viele, and the superintendent Thomas Owens subscribed to the plan, and so did a fairly large number of workers. 131 employees, including officials, subscribed, a significant number of the approximately 600 employees on the road.

The employees taking subscription to stock tended to be officers, white-collar workers, foremen or workers in the running trades, as eighteen were officials carrying the titles of president, vice president, superintendent, assistant superintendent, road master, civil engineer, chief engineer or land commissioner. Nine were foremen drawn from sections, shops and the docks. There were also eight locomotive engineers and eleven conductors. The connection to office work is underlined by the fact that eleven clerks and four stenographers, three of them women, also subscribed to stock. Subscribers were also drawn from the shop department, including three boilermakers, five machinists, one carpenter, one painter and one car repairer. Out of 131 people on the list only three were section workers, and they all had Scandinavian names. Three were stated to be laborers, while two were porters. The three laborers also seem to be Scandinavians, whereas the porters do not. Ten men carried the title ‘m.m.’, whose occupational status I have been unable to establish. To this can be added another 28 men whose occupational title was not stated at all or who only had titles with initial letters which I have been unable to interpret. These men do not seem to change the general image obtained, since the company auditor, Horace Johnson, was among these. The conclusion to be drawn is that officers and the office staff are the employees most inclined to buy stock, as more than half of the subscribers seem to fall into these categories, whereas common laborers and section gang workers were not particularly prone to invest money in the company.

The fact that a larger number of officials than workers subscribe is a case in point. The office clerks are also represented in the plan, which is an indication that these generally more steadily employed white-collar workers had an incentive and possibility to invest money. The office workers were both physically closer to management and might have felt the demand to demonstrate their loy-

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632 Schedule of Subscriptions to Preferred Stock of U.S. Steel Corporation, Dec 31, 1902.
alty, but it might also be regarded as an expression of identification from this group. Also, the higher wages of this group was, in all probability, also an explanation. The white-collar workers in 1902 must in many respects be regarded as an Anglo-American counterpoint to the least represented departments on the road, who were both immigrant in character and characterized by a generally low skill level and worse employment conditions.

Only 18 of the subscribers have distinctly Scandinavian-sounding names.\textsuperscript{633} Hence, in 1902 the Scandinavian workers were not particularly prone to partake in company stock holding welfare schemes. This might have been a result of the Scandinavians at this time forming, as in the 1880s, a large part of the ambulating work force that moved between unskilled railroad and dock work and of this segment of the labor market being of no interest to the company to maintain ties with. This is well in line with other research claiming that unskilled workers were reluctant to take part in welfare schemes. The ethnic division of labor and the skill distribution of the workers that took part in the plan support this claim, as the skill level of the subscribers seems to underline the connection between the plan and the Anglo-American establishment on the local level.

One plausible explanation of the profile of the stock program is the rather high labor turnover for groups least represented in the plan. The casual character of these workers’ attachment to the company did not encourage any financial undertakings, and the company idea of creating incentives for workers’ loyalty through ownership seems to have been a failure with respect to attracting many ethnic workers. Another interpretation is that the program was indeed directed towards more highly skilled groups on the railroad that were, in general, more steadily employed. From previous research on welfare capitalism in general and on the US Steel in particular we know that unskilled workers made up only a small portion of workers participating in welfare schemes. Those 15 percent of the US Steel workers who participated were hence largely skilled workers.\textsuperscript{634} Worker participation in the D&IR stock program did, hence, not deviate from the general image. The character of the subscribers also underlines the ethnic dimension of the subscription plan, which signals both power relations and the incentive to participate in company programs, as displayed by different ethnic groups with different connections to the company. The largely American-born group that dominated the running trades and the office work were hence more inclined to invest money in and to maintain a financial relation to the company than the largely immigrant categories of workers in unskilled employment.

The company’s main concern, as expressed in the documents presented in Chapter 7 on collective bargaining and work rules, was to secure a work force of skilled workers. In light of this, it seems plausible that the Scandinavian casual laborers were not the primary concern of the company stock plan. The Scandina-

\textsuperscript{633} Schedule of Subscriptions to Preferred Stock of U.S. Steel Corporation, Dec 31, 1902.
\textsuperscript{634} Rees, Jonathan. \textit{Giving with one Hand and Taking Away with the Other}. p.25.
vian workers in general, hence, do not seem to have established particularly strong ties to the railroad company in 1902, at least not as formal owners of United States Steel Corporation stock.

In general, however, support for the stock plan seems to have been quite fleeting, as a large number of workers – the skilled workers and the office staff that actually subscribed – discontinued their subscription during 1902. One reason might be layoffs, another that the workers had no interest in the stock plan. The workers’ reasons seem to center on the seasonal layoff of workers after an ore season, as 32 out of 71 cancelled their subscription in November and December of 1902, the last month of a regular ore season. A dozen others canceled in October, whereas the rest canceled their subscription during the winter of 1903 or 1904. None of the officials seem to have canceled their subscriptions; this behavior was rather more common among laborers, office clerks and shop employees and, to some extent, the skilled workers that participated. So, the plan had shifting support even among the more steadily employed Anglo-American workers.

In 1914, due to general cutbacks within the concern, a letter from Richard Trimble, Treasurer of the United States Steel Corporation in New York, states that the rights of laid-off stock subscribers were to be retained with all benefits until the person was offered re-employment and declines. This is, however, an order coming into play in the mid 1910s, and the workforce of more casual workers on the D&IR seems to be a concern at this point, but not before. This again indicates that the perception of the immigrant workers from company officials was still characterized by a certain degree of disinterest in these workers’ participation in the welfare schemes at the turn of the century.

The Scandinavian portion of the subscribers in Two Harbors did obviously increase between 1902 and 1911. The occupational title on the 1911 subscription list indicates that out of 234 subscribers there were sixteen conductors, six firemen, six brakemen and twenty-two locomotive engineers. Another sixteen were stated as being officers in the General Offices at Duluth, while sixteen more were higher officials in Two Harbors. Another twelve were clerks and office workers, while three were foremen. In all, more than a hundred subscribers were officials or workers in the running trades, foremen or white-collar workers. Only ten section workers subscribed, and all had Scandinavian names. How many of these were foremen was, however, not stated, as only the general department was stated. The register does not give an occupational title for the ore dock either, but out of eleven subscribers the dock agent was represented along with a female clerk and two Scandinavian born foremen. Of the other workers all save one have Scandinavian names. 32 people were employed in the station department. It is not possible to get a complete assessment of the occupational categories repre-

635 Schedule of Subscription to preferred Stock of U.S. Steel Corporation. December 31st, 1902.
sented in the plan, but in 1911 there appears to have been a certain inclusion of groups not represented in 1902.

The largest group besides the ones mentioned above was maintenance workers, including carpenters, painters and car repairers. Eight of the subscribers were machinists, at least five of whom being Swedish immigrants or children of Swedish immigrants. As shown in the quantitative surveys, American-born and English-speaking immigrants dominated both the running trades and white-collar work. These occupational groups were still highly represented in the stock plan, but judging by the departments represented on the subscription plan, a significant number of workers worked on the ore dock, the stations and in maintenance work by 1910. The survey of the ore dock force indicates that the heads of each department and the foremen dominated. By 1910 these occupations were to some extent open to the Scandinavians in Two Harbors. Obviously, a shift towards the inclusion of occupations primarily connected with immigrants occurred. The unskilled workers, of whom there were still many Scandinavians, were on the other hand still excluded or disinterested.

In the 1920s the United States Steel’s total stock program still attracted only 22.5% of the workers. There are indications that stock subscription on the D&IR had decreased significantly by that decade. The Stock Subscription records show that the number of subscribers had decreased from 234 in 1911 to 168 in 1926. There may be a number of reasons for the decrease but it suggests that there was no spectacular support, and generally less support than was the case in the Steel Company taken as a whole. The low numbers of subscribers rather supports the notion that the company had failed to attract common laborers, and that still mostly white-collar and skilled workers subscribed.

Another feature of the economically based welfare programs that were implemented was the pension system of the US Steel Corporation. This welfare feature is practically invisible in my material, but Jonathan Rees states that United States Steel made pensions available from 1911 to employees of all its subsidiary companies, including the D&IR. The pension plan was, however, largely inadequate, especially after 1915, when the number of eligible employees were halved. The management was also highly overrepresented in the plans, as 17 percent of the retirees in 1918 were managers. The less than generous pensions given to working-class retirees were many times below $20, which forced them to hold jobs in addition to their pension payment. This feature did not in any significant degree affect the relationship between the company and the Swedish workers.

637 For the year 1911 the occupational statistics among the subscribers are very sketchy, but indications are that officers, white collar workers and locomotive engineers and conductors are heavily overrepresented as stock subscribers. Occupational statistics for 1926 are entirely absent.
638 United States Federal Census for Lake County, 1910.
639 D&IR Stock Subscription Records, 1926.
640 Rees, Jonathan. Giving with one Hand and Taking Away with the Other. p.25
One final scheme of the “hard” pecuniary welfare program was the opportunity of borrowing money for the construction of houses in Two Harbors. 71 workers used this opportunity between 1923 and 1929, when the plan was discontinued. The general tendency of the D&IR welfare systems of attracting skilled workers and white-collar office employees holds true for this plan too.\(^{641}\)

The Safety First movement on the Ore Train

In the summer of 1912 the president of the D&IR hired a young engineer, a Mr. Hoyer, who was sent on a mission out to the track as an observer. His task involved trying to assess different aspects of the labor process, strong and weak points in the division of labor, and whether the employed officers and workers carried out their duties in a correct manner. He was also to suggest rationalizations of the work on the range railroads and map the relationship between the public and the company.\(^{642}\)

In a report to the Superintendent of Motive Power, the young man presented several ideas, including how to reduce the many accidents that happened to railroad men on the job. One idea of his was to analyze the labor process to find in what ways safety could be promoted for the workers on the road. He even took the opportunity to do interviews with trainmen to get their view on tasks that involved danger and on equipment that was likely to cause accidents. One of his suggestions involved putting “safety steps” on ladders on the railroad cars.\(^{643}\)

The reply from the head of the company made the enthusiastic man aware of the fact that he should leave those issues alone and that there was “nothing in it”.\(^{644}\)

A calculation is attached to the letter showing that the safety precautions suggested would have cost the company around 17,000 dollars, evidently a large sum of money to be spent on safety in the eyes of the president. The episode shows how uninterested the managers were in welfare questions at the time. Less than four years later, however, the managers launched a large safety first program. This work was begun in 1915 under the auspices of the YMCA movement. In February of that year, the safety program involved a “double header” directed to both workers and their children.\(^{645}\) A monthly safety meeting was also arranged, where safety slides was shown. The YMCA secretary called it “a community service”.\(^{646}\) In 1916 the work seems to have been taken over by the company, as an employee, a Mr. Locker, taken up on the company payroll as Patrolman, held 62 safety meetings with up to 390 participants in Two Harbors and in

\(^{641}\) D&IR Home Building Plan for Employes.

\(^{642}\) Letter from company officers to Mr. B. Hoyer May 20\(^{th}\) 1912.

\(^{643}\) Letter from Mr. B Hoyer to Company Officers July 30\(^{th}\) 1912.

\(^{644}\) Letter from Mr. Horace Johnson to Mr. B.R. Moore Superintendent of Motive Power, July 23\(^{rd}\), 1912.

\(^{645}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 20/2, 1915. p.4.

\(^{646}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 6/3, 1915. p.4.
the range towns. The safety work was generally held at the YMCA building in Two Harbors, for instance when two safety meetings were announced in May 1916. One was for school children, whereas the other was for employees and held in the evening. The company and the YMCA unanimously agreed to provide a Chaplin movie, industrial movies and a short safety lecture.

In 1917 the company management employed a “superintendent of work safety”. The role of this newly appointed person was to try and assess sources of risks to the workers in the work environment and to start an informative undertaking that would turn the workers’ attention to his or her own safety when on the job. A biography of this person, Arthur W. Rohweder, shows that he was appointed “Superintendent of Safety and Welfare” after a previous career as a safety advisor for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway from 1913-1917. According to this biography, intended as one part of a company history that was never published, Mr. Rohweder was a key figure in the safety work of the company. An indication of his importance in formulating “the safety spirit” on the D&IR is his long employment. He was still involved in safety and welfare questions with the company in the 1950s when this document was written.

During the 1920s Mr. Rohweder was one of the founders of The Duluth Safety Council. He also served as chairman of the National Safety Council during the 1920s and was president of the “Minnesota Safety Council” from 1935. The document states:

An indication on his untiring efforts in safety endeavor can be seen in the advancement made in accident prevention on this railroad. Statistics show that the ‘Missabe railroad’ has won more national honors in its group for safety achievement than any other railroad. Accident frequency and severity have been reduced and are maintained, insofar as is humanly possible, at a minimum.

The safety work on the road was thus considered very successful, judging by the anonymous biographer’s account. This is supported by statistics printed in a company document from 1927 aiming to describe the development of the company since its start. This document states that the accident rate per year fell from 291 in 1917 to 25 in 1926. All parts of the company benefited from the safety first movement.

To get a better understanding of the safety work and the model used in it, let us turn to a speech held by The President of the D&IR, Horace Johnson before the ‘Steam Rail Road Section, National Safety Council’ in 1927. The work of the company was, according to Mr. Johnson, initially directed towards the task of mechanically protecting machinery, cars, locomotives, docks

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649 From the company history files. Biography of Arthur W Rohweder.
650 From the company history files. Biography of Arthur W Rohweder. p.1
651 Transportation of Iron Ore. p.46.
and structures, whereas the second part was to instill a “safety consciousness” in the work force. This, Johnson states, had to a large part been accomplished by 1927 through an intense effort and with support from *The National Safety Council*. The most important measures included in the company policy are listed in the speech. Johnson mentions the safety magazine, safety bulletins, safety lessons, safety schools, safety slogans and the safety committees active within the company.652 These were platforms with which the company “instilled” the safety spirit in its workers.

The safety committees were very active in carrying out their task of improving safety in the work environment. There were five committees in all, one committee for every major branch of the company, as one committee was organized for the operating departments, one for the shops, one for the building departments and one for the ore and coal docks. There was also one overarching committee that led the work where the president, the chief surgeon and the superintendents were represented.653 On these committees different categories of workers were represented. On the ore dock, there were safety staff, officers, foremen and representatives of the workers taking part in the meetings, which were held once per month. The meetings discussed issues of safety and the participants made suggestions that would eliminate accidents and hazards on the road. During the ten years of practice between 1917 and 1926 over 7,500 suggestions came in. According to the company, 94 percent of them had been adopted and put into practice.654 It was also the job of the safety committees to put up safety-first posters in the work place.

We can get some idea of how important the safety work was for the company by looking at the expenses put into this particular welfare program. In 1921 the safety expenses for a six-month period ran to more than $6,600. The largest posts in the statement were salaries for the “Safety Superintendent & Force”, wages to workers attending meetings during regular hours and the costs for the company magazine. All these ran to more than $1,000 each for the period. Other costs involved safety buttons, safety films, bulletin boards, posters, photos, rent for an office for the safety department and expenses for “cigars and meals”.655 Figures from 1920 and 1925 further underline the effort that the company put into this work as the month of May 1925 contained expenses for $965, and for the month of October 1920 the cost ran to $1,040.656

The YMCA was also used as a platform for holding safety classes and showing safety-first movies and stereopticon pictures illustrating these issues. The classes were held in the evenings and most of the time the pictures were shown together

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653 *Transportation of Iron Ore*. pp.45,46
654 *Transportation of Iron Ore*. pp. 46
655 D&IR Auditors Statements, 1921.
656 D&IR Auditors Statements 1920, 1925.
with something that would draw an audience. Charlie Chaplin was one magnet with which the company attracted workers to their safety meetings. Another way of attracting an audience was to display spectacular railroad accidents on stereopticon images. The meetings were always advertised in the Two Harbors pro-

company newspaper, *The Journal-News*. The meetings were well attended, judging by articles published afterwards.\(^{657}\)

These different platforms were part of a big effort on the part of the company to create a different setting where new issues around the work place were raised. One last important aspect of this work was to give the employee magazine a safety profile. The magazine that was started in 1918 was consequently named *Duluth, Missabe and Northern Railway, Duluth and Iron Range Railroad Employees Safety Magazine*. The title gives the reader more than a hint of how the company wanted the employees to regard it. The cover of the paper displayed the symbol of the Safety-First movement, a red triangle. In time this symbol became more or less a part of the company logotype. The work on safety also included more general articles on safety written by various company officials and stating particular concerns for certain occupational groups. These articles became a display of caring officials wanting to minimize the harm done to workers. The paper also contained images of safety posters and appliances in the work place,\(^{658}\) with catchy headlines such as “Safety First Means Forethought instead of a Post Mortem”, “It’s Up to You”, “A man killer” etc.\(^{659}\)

The safety spirit and the cooperation between officers, foremen and workers were emphasized in the company magazine, and so was the responsibility of the individual worker. As the supervisor of safety, Mr. Rohweder, bluntly puts it in one of his editorial pieces in October 1923: “Remember, as an employe it is part of your duties to report unsafe conditions and practices - do you fulfill your duty?”.\(^{660}\) The emphasis on self-regulation and individualism is again obvious, but so is a system where workers were encouraged to report fellow workers for violating work rules.

Another way of boosting the spirit of safety and cooperation was to publish the statistics for accidents on the D&IR and the DM&N. There were also yearly safety competitions “for the lowest accident rate, and the lowest days lost rate”, i.e. a competition in safety that took as its point of departure the profit interests of the company. One standing column in the paper contained statistics of accidents in the railroad business as a whole and on the D&IR. The reader received

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\(^{657}\) *The Journal News*, 18/5, 1916, p.1

\(^{658}\) See for example, *Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine*, October 1923, p.17.

\(^{659}\) *Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine*, September, 1920, p.16.

\(^{660}\) *Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine*, October 1923. p.5.
information on these statistics under the heading of “preserving life and limb”. 

Without delving too deep into statistics we can conclude that the safety profile of the company was a grand success in that it really preserved life and limb on the road, where many accidents causing death or serious injury had occurred. This might also be seen as a breakthrough for company efforts at creating a policy that ultimately aimed at bridging the gap between the workers and the company and creating a common interest in this question. It was also a bare economic necessity since railroad legislation from 1908 stipulated that the employers were liable to pay for accidents on the railroad and incapacitated workers. In 1912, the same year that the suggestions on the improvement on safety were turned down by the D&IR company management, a Minnesota state law was passed that would ensure increased protection for employees and increased responsibility for employers in the state. The company, hence, had an economic interest in keeping the accident rate down, a fact that was used ideologically in its work to instill loyalty and a spirit of cooperation into the workers.

An interesting point is how the safety spirit was imbued in the company. President Johnson states in his speech that the idea of safety is rather easy to “sell” to

\[\text{[t]he president, the superintendent, the chief engineer and undoubtedly down the line to the supervisory officers, but the big problem is to sell this same idea, through the executive and supervisory officers to the mass of employees in the rank and file bearing in mind that these are the men who suffer the injuries. A willing cooperative state of mind brings about the ideal situation for the accident prevention program.}\]

Johnson stressed that the management should utilize the foremen to enforce the program. However, he then went on to discuss the men “who are really doing things, and who are surrounded by danger in some form or another - danger that must exist in the established order of things”. Johnson thus argued that a mental dimension had to be added to the safety work:

\textbf{Authorities disagree as to whether or not carelessness causes a large number of the preventable accidents. No doubt a part of the seeming divergence of opinion arises from the difference in definition of terms. What one man calls carelessness the other regards as a psychological condition, due undoubtedly to unfortunate}

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661 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, October 1923 p.7; March, 1921. p.7.
662 Asher, Robert. The Origins of Workmen’s Compensation in Minnesota.
663 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech made by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.2
664 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech held by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.3
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working, home or health conditions or to a limited mental capac-
ity… The attitude of the worker at his daily task is largely domi-
nated by psychological conditions and is determined to a large de-
gree by the environment by which he is surrounded. I would refer 
you… to the fact that a clean, orderly shop is conducive to a satis-
factory mental attitude. I would suggest to you that the man who is 
interested in activities of the company, such as baseball, basket-
ball, bowling, swimming, and Employees’ association, usually is 
inclined to be satisfied with his lot and to work along with a keen 
sense of appreciation and a keen mind, ever watchful for the wel-
fare of himself and others… all this tends to promote a state of 
mental co-operation.665

It was thus one task of the company management to create an environment that 
instilled certain values and certain mental attitudes not only to internal safety, but 
also to the world in general, and this would in turn promote safety and a state of 
mental co-operation. Johnson stressed the character of a good citizen:

[He is] interested in the solution of the problems of the community 
in which he lives; the man who tries to raise his family under 
proper environment; the man who tries to keep up a good order of 
things at his home, is a man who has developed a proper mental 
attitude which is conducive to safety.666

Obviously, the process of molding the worker’s mind was to be carried out not 
primarily in the work place or regarding safety, but more general conceptions 
and mental attitudes were to be affected to realize the safety program. In the 
safety work, as in the general instructions for hiring and promoting, the character 
of the worker was important:

The question of habits of employees when not on duty is of vital 
importance in the accident records of our company. It is necessary 
to be temperate. By temperate I do not refer alone to… the use of 
[liquor], but to be temperate in all matters of life. I refer you to the 
matter of over indulgence in sports; the over-indulgence in recrea-
tion of any kind, that brings about the lack of proper rest.667

For Mr. Johnson it was also important to get the worker to feel that he partici-
pated in the process of instilling the safety consciousness into the company. 
Management considered the suggestions made by employees valuable in two dis-

665 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech held by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, 
Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.3
666 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech held by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, 
Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.3
667 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech made by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, 
Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.4
tinct ways: “first the building up of the moral, giving proper credit to the employee for his suggestions. Second, the value of the suggestion”. The boosting of morale in the employee and creating a sense of participation in the program is obviously more important than the suggestion itself.

Johnson presented a number of thoughts on how to make the safety education more successful. The list included company facilities used for the “injection” of the safety spirit, such as safety education in public (and parochial) schools throughout the country, a system for physical examination of workers, and the investigation of accidents. Full consideration should also be given to the welfare of the employees insofar as their recreational hours are concerned. All of these methods were in use by the D&IR and Johnson praises the company for setting “a standard for all… railroads of the United States in accident prevention work for the year of 1927 which will be accomplished by the Safety Spirit that has been instilled into our employees.”

The ideas by the management on how to create consent around the safety work revolved around ways to discipline the work force on the D&IR, both on and off work. This process is perhaps best described by President Johnson:

[A]long with the training of our employees to a safety consciousness in connection with our operation we must go beyond the line of our railroad into the community and the home, thus bringing a fuller realization of the true safety spirit.

Analysis

From 1915 the YMCA and the D&IR launched a program for increased safety for the railroad workers. The program was massive and included the launching of a company magazine, the employing of a safety secretary, monthly safety meetings, a program involving workers in company safety committees and the spreading of the idea of safety in a number of other ways. Safety work became, from its inception, the most important part of the welfare work of the company, which spent large sums of money on it.

The discussion by the President of the D&IR regarding the safety work together with the different methods of instilling the Safety Spirit in the workers on the D&IR, raises some interesting points. The first one is the discussion of how far company policy is to be drawn. Johnson’s answer suggests that the company wanted to extend its authority well beyond the confines of the work place. In the safety-first ideology expressed by Johnson the fact that mentality played a large

part goes a long way towards explaining the company’s interest in structuring the leisure time of the work force. The leisure time was in many ways actually more important than the time spent at work, according to Johnson, because there the state of mind - the mentality of the worker - was molded. Johnson’s ideas, a recurrent theme in the work rules of 1907, are well in line with many of the managerial teachings of the 1920s and 1930s, namely the school of human resource management and the ways that ideas of how to imbue workers’ thinking with the ideas of the management were à la mode at the time. This thinking was, according to Harry Braverman, a way for company management to counter the results of increasingly detailed work rules and increasing management control and its influence on the labor process. 671 New personnel policies, like the ones just described, aimed at creating bonds between labor and capital, and at engaging workers in the task of rendering the labor process more effective and compensating for an increasingly structured and disciplined work place, where the possibility for making one’s own decision was slim, even in the railroad business.

A company of the D&IR type had important interests in this tradition, since it depended heavily on creating structures within the company to be able to find a stable and loyal work force. Also, not only the class barrier ran between the employer and the employee as many workers on the D&IR during the 1910 were immigrants or, in some cases, children of immigrants. It was therefore of the utmost importance for the management on the D&IR to create forums like the safety work to encourage the feeling of belonging to the company, especially since other welfare capitalist schemes had proven inefficient for this purpose. The safety-first idea also gave the company an important opportunity to tighten the relationship between different levels of the company without disturbing the “order of things”, as Johnson expresses it. As I see it, he wanted above all a rational labor process that would lead to increased company profits. With safety first, the company could delegate some of the formal responsibility for the work place and the organization of labor to the workers without actually losing control of the labor process within the company. The issue of workers’ safety had actually been raised in other places of the country long before and had been the target of some legislation. It became especially important as the federal authorities formally ran the railroads during the First World War. The work for a safer work environment started elsewhere was therefore under firm company control on the D&IR, which saw to it that no formal power to change anything in the labor process was delegated to unions or federal or state legislators on the local arena. In this respect, the integration of the safety first movement into company welfare arrangements became increasingly important. Through the 1920s it became in effect both a bulwark to influence from labor organizations and a goodwill institution aimed at creating a new basis for welfare capitalism, as other arrangements, apart from the YMCA movement, had limited support among unskilled immigrant workers.

According to Johnson’s speech, we are dealing with a process of the higher echelons of the company imbuing lower levels of authority with their thoughts and their value systems, which does not limit itself to the issue of safety in the workplace but has ambitions to create a change in the overall thinking of the workers and the relationship between worker and company. This way of thinking about integrating the worker into the company agenda on safety was also a way of strengthening loyalties towards the company. The workers were given the right to suggest changes, and most of the time these changes were granted them. They were represented in formal committees together with their higher-echelon officials, but everything was done within the frames created by an overarching committee, where the president and the superintendents were represented, and this was the forum making the formal decisions regarding changes.

The company magazine and its layout are also very revealing of how the company’s relationship to its workers had changed and were about to change during the time between 1917 and the early years of the 1920s. The tendencies to use control mechanisms such as the safety councils in the workplace took other expressions in the realm of leisure, but they were all part of an overarching pattern of company control, which was to ensure the position of the company in its relation to the workers.

Based on the statements made by Johnson and other aspects of the safety work carried out on the D&IR during the 1910s and 1920s it is possible to claim that this safety work can be connected to the discussion of the hegemonic processes at play in Minnesota during this time period, where Johnson becomes an organic intellectual representing ideas based in Anglo-American bourgeois values. The safety spirit can hence be connected both to the class interests of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie in that the economic responsibility for injured workers, and economic self interest became an argument for mutuality. The work also held an ethnic dimension since the formulation of the program for the safety work ensured that the company management also found a platform with which to reach the immigrant workers, both on the job and off as the community was defined as an interesting arena for the molding of the workers’ minds.

Beyond the railroad and into the workers’ homes

In 1918 the railroad company started its own magazine for both to the railroad workers and to their families. It was a 34-page magazine published monthly and the articles included pieces on safety, both on and off work, recipes for various more or less exotic dishes, occasional columns on fashion, a column including a presentation of various parts of the company employees, a family page with pictures of the children of employees, a page containing information on jubilees, one part where employees themselves could write short articles and stories and,
finally, short stories and articles with a moral message connected to cooperation, good work ethics and religion round out the content.

Some of the articles seem to have been written by bureaus and bought by the magazine, while most of the material was produced by officers or employees on the D&IR or the DM&N. The editor was also the safety officer on the railroad, so the high cost for the magazine was taken up as safety expenses in the auditor’s statements. This also illustrates how the safety work became an overarching frame for the general welfare work on the road. As is indicated by the money spent on various safety schemes, the magazine was one of the most expensive, and at the same time, one of the most important ways to implement President Johnson’s scheme of going beyond the railroad and into the workers’ homes.

The safety work was, as the title of the magazine indicates, an underlying theme in the company magazine in general. Fire prevention and discussions on safety on various parts of the work force are indicative of this. In some issues there is some mentioning of safety picnics arranged by the company, but there is no further discussion of the activities at these events. People from different departments that were engaged in the safety work are often portrayed. The Shop Safety Committees that were appointed for one year were routinely presented with pictures and names.  

The work “beyond the railroad” was directed towards a wide range of other spheres pertaining to modernity and new technical devices. One example was a strong drive for automobile safety. In a 1923 issue, the editor writes that “the co-operation of every engineman, trainman, section man, and all other employees has brought about a realization on the part of the automobile driver that the Missabe and Iron Range employes are working for their safety and it is up to them to do their part”. Another target for the safety work was the housewives working in the homes, while other articles emphasized safety during leisure time spent outdoors.

The broad definition of safety work also included efforts at creating a saloon-free environment. In a longer article published in the magazine in 1920, Superintendent Kreitter claimed that the most important aspect of the safety work was “prohibition, or the very much less use of liquor by railroad employees”. Kreitter stated that the company, with very strict discipline enforced through the work rules, by education, by persuasion, by examples and severe experiences,

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672 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March 1921. p.4
673 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, October, 1923. p.6
674 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, June 1923. p.20
675 Kreitter, J.W. “Advance of Safety” in Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, September 1920. p.27
had managed to reduce the influence of the saloon on the DM&N. A couple of years later Proctor became a dry town after a hard vote. The same holds true for Two Harbors and the D&IR, as the anti saloon forces found a platform in the local YMCA. These forces together with the Socialist movement voted for a dry city in 1915. The coinciding interests between the railroad company and class-conscious workers on this matter are made obvious by Kreitter’s article, which represents the view held by company management. When comparing the wet period to the dry, he stated that “we have no more trouble on Monday than any other day and when a train or engineman is late for his train, it is not due to ‘booze’ but through some misunderstanding”. He also stated:

_We are not, however, free 100% on the “booze” question. We occasionally have evidence of some non-American, law breaking, indiscreeet, low down citizen who runs a blind pig and gets some fellow in trouble who has not yet learned to let the “stuff” alone. But these are few._

The evidence to the benefit of pro-temperance was, despite Mr. Kreitter’s initial reasoning, not tied to the interests of the company, but to that of the families of the workers. Kreitter claims that the community prospered as a result of the disappearance of the saloons:

_Savings departments of the banks here arose at the rate of ten or fifteen dollars per month. Old Grocery and Meat Bills were paid up, and more of the necesseties of life were provided by the workers to those under their care._

In conclusion Mr. Kreitter argued that 85-90 per cent of all crimes formerly committed was due to liquor, and that families in 1920 were better fed, dressed and housed, and that they “above all [had] a sober and kind husband” and hence fared far better in the dry system.

Kreitter, in his 1920 article, echoed many of the aspects taken up by WA McGonagle in his 1913 speech before railroad workers in Gary, Indiana on the YMCA movement, as they both emphasized the benefit of the workers and their families under a dry system. Kreitter, however, like McGonagle seven years earlier, also mentioned the profit gained by the company, as it had suffered quite hard from blue Mondays during the wet period, much of which could be traced to liquor, as could some personal injuries and other train accidents.

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676 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine September 1920. p.27.
677 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine September 1920. p.28
678 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine September 1920. p.28
679 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, September 1920. p.28
According to both McGonagle and Kreitter, the company work for welfare was highly successful, having been carried out in a spirit of mutuality to the benefit of both workers and their employer. Judging by the discussion on the YMCA work by McGonagle and the interpretation of the development in Proctor by Kreitter, the welfare work of the company obviously had a common goal in fostering a self-regulating and loyal worker under industrial capitalist systems of production. The workers, not least the immigrants, was systematically drawn into the welfare arrangements of the YMCA and became, through the company program for safety during the late 1910s, increasingly socialized into a system where company pressure for loyalty and workers’ general behavior were required. This work was in essence a project of disciplining the work force into accepting the basic mode of production inherent in industrial capitalism and into accepting the cultural dominance by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. Hegemony and control were thus accomplished through the welfare capitalist modes of thinking about labor relations towards the end of the progressive era and into the 1920s. As we have seen, these systems were increasingly focused on the world outside the work place and thus had an influence on the everyday life of the worker, immigrant and American-born alike. The next part of this chapter will deal with how the safety work was received by the workers.

Employees and safety

As already stated the number of accidents on the D&IR and the DM&N dropped dramatically between 1917 and the mid 1920s.680 There hence seem to have existed a situation where workers and management actually had interests that coincided. Where the workers bet their health, company management risked losing large sums of money, so both labor and capital had interests in the safety program. The falling number of accidents is an important aspect when assessing workers’ participation. That the work had an impact on the individual level can be witnessed by how the workers themselves relate to the “safety spirit”. In an article entitled “My version of safety” Frank Strand, a Swedish-born section foreman, related his positive attitude towards safety-thinking and emphasized cooperation and individual responsibility.681 William Carls, another section foreman, published a poem in the October 1923 issue entitled “A partner” on safety work, while Evelyn Walberg, employed as Dr. of Section Laborers, Brimson, published another poem on the same subject in June 1923. Interestingly, two section foremen and a director of section laborers were the only ones expressing themselves positively about the safety work in the magazine despite the generally positive assessments made by company officials and the decrease in actual accidents. Given the role assigned foremen in the safety work, these men seem to have been crucial in the safety work, as they held a strategic position between management and the workers.

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680 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, October 1923. p.5

681 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, September, 1920. p.12
There were also workers that did not approve of the company schemes. In 1917 the local Socialist newspaper, *Two Harbors Socialist*, did an interview with one of the trainmen that attended a railroad banquet at the YMCA, arranged by the railroad company. The newspaper read: “the banquets were a sort of get together proposition, in which the officials and the employes would be afforded an opportunity of rubbing elbows and giving their experience for the betterment of the service”. The meetings seem to have been well attended, but the editor had been told “by the men” that a large number of the employes had felt “under certain obligation to go”.

The interviewed trainman, who did not want his name printed in the newspaper, was disappointed, because the “talkfest” was about anything and everything of no interest to the men, but not a word had been said about the eight-hour day, or of new safety equipment. Instead, according to the trainman,

*the company give us a 10-cent feed, call it a banquet and try to make us think that we like it… these get together meetings are supposed to be largely devoted to the Safety First campaign, because the men are asked to give their experiences…etc. They rally to succeed in getting some of the men unwittingly and thoughtlessly to tell on each other.*

This system where workers were supposed to “report” violations of work rules to their superiors are in evidence in some company documents. The social pressures on individual workers also seem to have been a factor in forcing the workers to the evening meetings.

That some pressure was needed in order to get the workers to attend is evident by the fact that the members of the safety first committees and the D&IR supervisor of Safety, Mr. Rohweder, were “sadly disappointed” with the low turnout of men at the safety meetings held in 1921. It is reported in the local newspaper that the only ones who attended the meetings in Two Harbors were the ones on pay from the shops.

One member of the safety committee had pointed out that some officials had started to discuss another method of putting across the safety program, namely with “the iron heel”, where the company instead of spending thousands of dollars on education starts to use “the hard hand of disciplinary measures and a system of espionage”.

From the scant evidence of workers’ responses to the safety programs it is difficult to draw any certain conclusion. It seems clear, however, that there was quite some resistance against going to safety rallies and generally to support the company effort for safety. The testimonials and poems published in the company

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683 *Lake County Chronicle*, 30/6, 1921. p.2.
magazine on this work are all written by foremen and by railroad officials, whereas workers remain silent. The little evidence taken from the local press rather supports the reluctance among the workers to participate in the safety work, since interviewees emphasize the pressure to attend the safety meetings and the company system for “reporting”. The continuation of the program well beyond the threats from company officials of a harder policy against the workers by deploying spies etc. is, however an indication of the general success of the program, as well as of the reluctance of the employer to deploy more of a stick policy against the work force generally.

That the safety work, in some sense, had been successful in creating a climate of mutual interests between labor and capital is indicated by an article in the labor-friendly *Lake County Chronicle*, which compliments both the men that serve the company and the railroad safety banquets where “the fellowship… is evidenced on these occasions by a true spirit of co-operation between the officers and men [that] inspires one with a feeling that the world is not standing still”. The newspaper also compliments the railroad company for being one of the best employers on safety thinking and the workers who are the most careful and interested in the welfare of their employers of any railroad in the whole United States, as well as the monthly [safety] meetings for doing much to foster a continuance and improvement of that sort of inclination.  

It seems clear, however, that the safety committees created a relationship between different groups of employees of the company and that the system where anyone could suggest changes was an important platform for the company in its effort to reach the workers. The reluctance to use force in the relationship to the employees is also more easily understood when looking at how the company used the company magazine to present the relationship as an example of co-operation between various social groups and trades, and how it wanted to attract not only workers, but also the wives of the railroaders to become members of the D&IR’s corporate family. As the safety committees worked to create not only better safety conditions in the work place, but also to create bonds between workers and company officials, and the company magazine worked to create the image of this company family by trying to reach the community, at least partially, the weaving together of the YMCA movement with the safety first movement became the most successful proposition. In essence, it tied the work place to the community by the program presented in the mid-1910s, where children and workers attended safety meetings at the YMCA building, which were an intricate mix of Charlie Chaplin, ideas of safety promotion and the spreading of the gospel of mutualism.

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684 *Lake County Chronicle*, 15/9, 1921. p.2.
The caring company, familiarity and capitalist work ethics

The safety spirit was connected to other aspects of the employer-employee relation on the D&IR. The company magazine was not only a platform for the company safety work but also functioned as a way of reaching into the community outside the railroad. One part of this work aimed at creating a sense of solidarity between the company and the D&IR workers in the community. One part of this work was to connect the safety work to the world outside the work place. One major component in this work was to publish a lush picture material aimed at underlining and strengthening the connection between company welfare systems and the community. In every issue there was one photo section entitled “D&IR kiddies”, where children of railroad workers posed, sometimes with their railroading parents or grandparents. In some issues the photo page was entitled “safety boosters”, to make the connection between the company’s safety work and the world outside the workplace even more obvious. Hence, workers and the children of workers were presented with name and, sometimes, occupation, so that readers were able to recognize those pictured. Apart from workers and their children and families, the reader could also find pictures from different departments of the company, from company leisure activities such as picnics, and from sports events.

Other images presented the leisure time of some employees where the reader could follow fellow employees’ gardening, fishing trips, picnics, bathing trips and berry picking with both employees and their families presented with names, departments and relatives. There were also images from grand local events such as “Home Coming Day” in Two Harbors in 1920, with a picture of a column of cars driving through the streets of the city.

The picnic was an important scene as it was a recurring theme in the published photos where employees, mostly skilled trainmen from “the big four”, posed for photographs. One example is a picture with the text “Condr. King and party at Horseshoe Lake”. Another is a picture with the caption “Picnic Party near Two Harbors”. Both images presented a company having a picnic in the green, dressed in their Sunday best, men in black suits and women in white dresses and hats. In one issue a cartoonist, probably an employee, presented some of his work on some well known railroad officials and foremen on the D&IR.

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685 Here a parallel can be drawn to Lars Olsson’s work on the women employed at Munsingwear. The knitting company tried to conjure up feelings of familiarity and cooperation between management and the workers. Olsson, Lars. Evelina Johansdotter, Textile Workers and the Munsingwear Family, pp.88,89.
686 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, September 1920, pp.35, 36; October 1923, p.38.
687 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March, 1921, p.33.
688 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March 1921, p.34.
Intermingled with the recount of leisure activities and pictures of children and skilled workers, the company magazine also portrayed a couple of company officials in each issue. In the June 1923 issue the reader was introduced to portraits of Chas E. Wachtel, the treasurer of the D&IR, who entered the service of the company in 1900. In the same issue Paul A van Hoven, assistant auditor on the DM&N, is also introduced with a picture.\textsuperscript{689} The presentation allowed workers to at least put a face to the names on their paychecks, or the official company documents that they encountered, of people that they otherwise seldom or never met in their daily toil. It is also emphasized that most of the officials portrayed had a long history at the railroad, which strengthened the joint connection of worker and official to the D&IR. The purpose again seems to have been to emphasize the company as a unit consisting of different equally important cogs and to counter the increasingly anonymous existence of the individual.

In line with this “corporate identity building”, one department of either company is also introduced with pictures and names of the employees. In the March 1921 issue the Telephone Operators of the D&IR were presented, 23 women in all.\textsuperscript{690} In the same issue two mail boys, aged 16 and 17, were portrayed with name and picture. Both had Scandinavian surnames.\textsuperscript{691}

These kinds of portraits of various employees are fairly common in the company magazine. There is also a certain plurality in which types of workers are on display so that no group will become invisible in the magazine. On the other hand, officials, skilled male workers and safety committee members are those most represented in pictures and articles in the magazine.

In general, all pictures and cartoons printed in the company paper were connected with the company or the local context in some way, and they all seem to have as their main purpose to conjure up a feeling for the company through workers’ and officers’ private pictures, not seldom of workers carrying out leisure activities. The emphasis put on the leisure time activities of the workers is a continuation of the community-oriented work of the YMCA, which during the early 1920s was increasingly taken over by various D&IR arrangements. The photos of children, fellow workers and articles on safety outside work all try to conjure up a feeling of the workers being included in a company family that cared about the workers and about the workers’ families. In this company family, women, both wageworkers and housewives, played a large role.

Most of the pieces directed at a female reading audience make up a quite uniform column entitled “Women’s Department”, which mostly consists of a two-page

\textsuperscript{689} Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, June 1923. p.1.
\textsuperscript{690} Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, March 1921. p.17
\textsuperscript{691} Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, March 1921. p.16
presentation of various recipes and advice for housewives. In the March issue 1921, the “Women’s department” focused on food and fashion. The first part deals with the Sunday Dinner menu, while the other one is a pattern for a “working girl” blouse in “Kimona style”. In the September 1920 issue, the Women’s department furnished the readers with dinner tips and recipes and an article that presented the image of the good housewife. Notable in this issue is the presentation of the English way of measuring sugar, flour etc., and advice on how to get pies to taste better. These kind of articles focused on home-making were complemented by other pieces directed towards the wage-working women. One published poem described the process where women enter the work place, and how young women “would rather pound the keys than steer the kitchen range”.

The above examples illustrate a duality in the perception of the two roles of women as company employees and housewives. The will to include the women that carried out unpaid work in the homes of railroad workers and other employees on the railroad is underlined by the fact that the standing column in the company magazine dedicated to home-making is called the Women’s department. Department was otherwise a term used to distinguish between different parts of the company, and workers always belonged to specific department payrolls.

The inclusion of the housewife can furthermore be seen in the safety work, too, which carried with it a strong “safety spirit” approach, “relating to good housekeeping”.

The magazine cautioned the readers:

Before attaching electric irons, vacuum cleaners, cooking utensils, or any other electrical device…consult an electrician as to the liability of your wiring to withstand this additional load.

The magazine also warned against modern liquids in use in contemporary housework: “Beware of stove polish which contains benzene or any other inflammable liquid. Numerous serious accidents have resulted from their use”. Another task for the housewife was to “warn plumbers and repair men to exercise every precaution in using blow torches or heaters around a building.”

There were also articles in the company paper on housework, canning and gardening directed to a female reading audience. This type of home safety instructions displayed by the company magazine was part of national campaigns

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692 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, 1923, p.23,24
693 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, March, 1921. p.
694 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine September 1920. p.29,30
695 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine October 1923 p.29
696 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine October 1923 p.29
697 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, March 1922, p.28,29
initiated by the National Safety Council. In an article Joel Tarr and Mark Tebeau have discussed how safety experts and society at large designated women the role of “home safety managers” providing the home with the efficiency and managerial values of the factory. Various safety organizations worked for an accident-free home in the tracks of the introduction of a modern machine park for domestic work. Throughout the 1900-1940 period, women remained the socially designated responsible party, given authority roles in the home that they were often denied in the outside world.698

Analysis
The image of women thus included two components. First, the housewife, seems to have been the most important one as a standing column in the company magazine is dedicated to home-makers. By the 1920s many women were employed on the D&IR, primarily as clerks and telephone operators. The duality in itself might underline the relationship between the railroad company and the largely immigrant group of women and their daughters in Two Harbors, both as a necessary labor supply and as a necessary work force engaged in unpaid domestic work. The results from my study of the federal censuses for Two Harbors in 1920 show that the wage-working women were generally younger, unmarried and employed in office work on the D&IR. On the other hand, most immigrant women tended to be housewives or domestic servants, as shown in the censuses of 1910 and 1920.699 My study thus falls well in line with studies on women as immigrants where younger, single women became wageworkers in a larger degree than married immigrant women.700 Worth noting therefore is that the food presented in the Women’s Department column was characteristically American, whereas the safety work provided information on how to run a modern American home with a wide range of electrical apparel and new chemical fluids used in cleaning and new foodstuffs. The articles directed to the housewives can hence be regarded both as directed to a female audience in order to get beyond the railroad and into the workers’ homes, but they are also, to some extent, directed towards immigrant women as they carry with them a trait of American modernity to immigrant women house workers encountering a new domestic environment. It is thus possible to argue that the effort of the company magazine to reach immigrant housewives was a crucial ingredient in its work for a closer relationship between the community and the railroad company and that the Safety First movement and its extension into workers’ homes constituted one platform for this work.

The railroad safety program became a vehicle by which to spread the gospel of the safety spirit that was to include the world outside work, too. It also offered

699 Census and Payroll analysis, 1920 and analysis of Swedish immigrant women’s employment in the 3rd and 4th Wards of Two Harbors in the 1910 census for Lake County.
700 Friedman-Kasaba, Katie. Memoirs of Migration.
the company a channel by which to reach the workers, primarily the immigrant workers. It offered a platform for reaching and thereby influencing other arenas of the lives of workers, as is made evident by the article written by Kreitter, in the many photographs aimed at creating a relationship between the immigrant workers and the American-born officials and in that it offered to change the perception among them about class relations. It also made the safety program a more visible aspect of workers’ lives, and the inclusion of the immigrant workers on the ore dock and in the track force who were on the committees for safety was made visible in the company magazine.

In the middle of the 1910s, the character of the welfare work of the company undergoes a marked change. At that time, a safety first program was launched. The safety work on the D&IR seems largely to have been a local initiative, partly generated by the work of the YMCA movement, but as the work picked up speed in 1916 and 1917, the safety profile became a brand of the railroad’s program for labor relations, overshadowing all other aspects in importance.

The image of a broad social program connected with the aspect of safety first becomes evident when scrutinizing the company magazine, as activities which change workers’ lives outside of the work place were stated, by company officials, as the most important factor in minimizing accidents on the railroad. The downfall of the saloon was viewed not only as a matter for pastors and moral reformers in Minnesota during its progressive era, but also as a problem, which attracted the attention of large companies.

The regular safety program in the work place, paired with a massive focus on safety in the world outside the work place, changed the role of the company and offered it a possibility to find a vehicle to weave the leisure time and the working time together, blurring the line drawn between work and own time, and indeed enabled it to go beyond the confines of the work place and into the workers’ homes. The welfare program on the D&IR pretty much rested on the Safety First program and the broad ideas that the company wanted to imbue the workers with. Again the moral values of the company shine through, and they can again be summed up in a spirit of co-operation, Christian ethics, taking one’s own responsibility, and harmony between capital and labor.

The employees’ own attitudes towards safety underline that employees indeed were engaged in the safety first movement on the road through suggestions and through other types of engagement. This is rational behavior in light of the decrease in accidents, and the engagement of the worker is hence easy to understand. However, what was meant as a benefit to the workers (better job security) seems, to the employers, to have been a means to promote a larger program, where the safety first movement was but one part.
Company morals and the relations between labor and Capital

The moral state of the work force was something that occupied officials of the D&IR after 1900, and the moral aspect of the worker is visible in the YMCA program, which aimed to create a worker who was both mentally and physically fit for the trials of life. The moral aspect is also emphasized in the work rules published by the company and it is considered a key factor in the “safety spirit”. The meaning of moral values was often emphasized in short poems and stories published in the company magazine. In general they seem to be connected with a number of different aspects of moral values of mutual interest to labor and capital, where religion, loyalty, cooperation, personal responsibility and a strong work ethic played important roles.

The article “Wanted - A leader” in the company magazine illustrate the company’s view of good morals as a solution to the class struggle was presented:

The press is full of remedies for the industrial unrest, which results in strikes and lockouts. Editorial after editorial explains that all that is needed is a fuller understanding between capital and labor; a mutual forbearance... a cooperation between them for their mutual advantage. All, it is explained, which is needed is for some great corporation to lead the way and treat labor as something to be considered, consulted, profited and helped, or some great body of labor to lead the way and, instead of seeing how much they may exact from an employer for the least work, to try the other scheme and see how much they can do within a given time to profit the employer and let the wages depend not on organization and threats, but on the work done and the spirit of cooperation.

The writer defined the self-interest of both parties and an entrenched position where neither takes any responsibility for the other as the problem. He also emphasized a mutuality of interest in the relationship between employer and employees and argues that the common ground should be religion and religious values:

And if you ask why, the answer is plain; because men are selfish, because men distrust each other, because experience has proved that neither is wholly to be trusted. Then the answer, the real answer, is an inculcation of a spirit of unselfishness, and a spirit of trust. In other words, all those who stand in church and admit the fatherhood of God, must stand in the factory, at bench, beside desk, in a bank, on farm, railroad, and in mines and practice the Brotherhood of Man. Then - and not until then, will the leader...
arise who will make capital and labor truly fraternal instead of opponents.  

The statement falls well in line with the work of the railroad YMCA in Two Harbors, which also emphasized mutuality and the role of religion in improving the relationship between labor and capital.

J.J. McGrath, a locomotive engineer on the D&IR also discussed cooperation in the magazine, stressing that: “Co-operation means to work with as well as for others” and claims that the word is “used most by those who practice it least”, concluding that “co-operation is the motive power in collective accomplishments and the most potent factor in modern business”.

The third aspect emphasized personal responsibility and can be illustrated by a quote pertaining to the safety work on the railroad:

Like in every other line of the Industrial world, we people in the railroad business forget the common laws of nature, the rules for the industry in which we work, and as a result a repetition of accidents occur… the answer to the whole question of past accidents and future accidents can be summed up in the following: ‘You are paid to do your work safe regardless of time it takes and are required to report unsafe practices and conditions.’

The work ethic comes through in a wide range of articles. It is perhaps best expressed in a poem called “Worry”, by Edgar A. Guest:

\[
\text{The Way to Worry when you see} \\
\text{That things are not as they should be,} \\
\text{Is just to work with all your might} \\
\text{To make the troubles end all right.}\]

The moral message quoted above interlocked very well with the work of the YMCA and the spirit of co-operation and familiarity that the D&IR tried to conjure up through its broad community work in the late 1910s. This mix of company “family spirit” and the moral values that it wanted to transmit to its work force is summed up in the poem “The Success family” published in the company magazine in 1923:

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\text{The Father of Success is work} \\
\text{The Mother of Success is ambition} \\
\text{The oldest Son is common sense}\]

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701 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, June, 1923 p.32
702 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, September 1920, p.5
703 Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, June 1923, p.1.
Some of the other Boys are, Stability, Perseverance, Honesty, Thoroughness, Foresight, Enthusiasm, Cooperation
Some of the Sisters are, Cheerfulness, Loyalty, Courtesy, Care, Economy, Sincerity, Harmony.
The Baby is opportunity.
Get acquainted with the Old Man, and you will be able to get along pretty well with all the rest of the family.\textsuperscript{704}

All these different aspects of morals that the company sought in workers and tried to invoke in them aimed at one goal, creating a model worker that was loyal, had good work ethics and that showed temperance both on and off work. The backdrop of all this was to create a sense of mutuality of interest through the use of the company magazine.

\section*{Analysis}

When scrutinizing the images of the workers and their families in the company magazine it becomes clear that it was a vehicle to carry out company labor policy, not only regarding safety work on and off the work place. The Safety-First profile of the magazine was merely one aspect in a more general work to reinterpret the relation between labor and capital in harmonic terms. In this context the safety work on the railroad served a bigger purpose than to merely decrease the number of work accidents on the D&IR and its costs for them.

The purpose of the images of fellow employees, of children of employees (sometimes referred to as safety boosters) and of workers’ everyday lives with a focus on the realm of leisure tends to stress the image of the railroad company as the good employer that cares for its family, where every worker was needed and welcome but had his/her place in the hierarchy. This is one way of conjuring up feelings of loyalty to the company with an emphasis on family values and a safe work environment. The tone in many of the articles in the company magazine is intimate, with a tendency to stress the collective experience of being an official or an employee of the D&IR or the DM&N. This is one expression of how the company gradually changed its relation to the work force during the course of the 1900-1920 period, when the company intensified its effort of tying a regular work force to it, trying to counter radical tendencies among the immigrant workers and to reformulate the relationship between labor and capital.

The images of children presented in the magazine together with contributions from company employees give us a direct view into the everyday life of the workers on the D&IR and allow the readers, primarily other company employees, a glimpse of the good life on the D&IR. The higher ranked officials that are displayed in each issue give a human face to the bureaucracy who administered

\textsuperscript{704} Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, June 1923, p.34. The Poem taken from A.&A.S.R. Bulletin.
the operation of the railroad but whom common workers and enginemen seldom met in their everyday toil. This also played a role in the effort of humanizing the D&IR as an employer.

The women are fairly visible in the company magazine but I have found a duality in the material that was intended for female readers. One group of articles (mainly recipes and advice on home safety and house work) are aimed at the wives of the male railroad workers, but there are also poems and pictures aimed at women employed by the company stressing changes in gender relations, and the new role of women as wage workers on the railroad. This material is, however, quite brittle and it is difficult to draw any far-reaching conclusions from it. My preliminary interpretation, however, is that the company tried to include women in the “D&IR company family” in the dual role that women served in the company policies during the 1910s and the 1920s, as wage workers in the offices on the one hand, and in the role of housewives in the homes of railroad workers engaged in the reproduction of the D&IR work force on the other. In this respect the safety movement and the company magazine managed to tie the work place and the D&IR closer to the community.

The combination of the intimate tone, the focus on the community, the way that the company program for safety transcended the boundaries of the workplace, the inclusion of women in the company family and the emphasis put on mutuality, religion and work ethics is in my interpretation a way of reshaping class relations by strengthening the bond between the workers, many among them immigrants from non-English speaking countries, and the company, whose officials were still largely dominated by men of Anglo-American descent or by immigrants from English-speaking countries.

Athleticism and sports in the 1920s

In the early 1920s, the D&IR internalized much of the work that had previously been executed by the Railroad YMCA. This work included a very active Employees association started in 1926, but there had been various associations organized under the auspices of the company during the 1910s too. Some kind of employee organization sponsored by the D&IR had been present as early as 1911/1912, since company expenses for an association were recorded in that year. For 1911 the donation made up $200, while in 1912 the donation was for $100. This organization seems to have died off, since no records are preserved of it, and it is not mentioned in the histories of the railroad either. The company also started a veteran’s organization in 1916.

As we have seen, sports were an important branch of the work of the YMCA during the 1910s and 1920s. During the 1910s the Railroad YMCA and its secre-

tary had arranged most of the athletic program, but the development of welfare institutions during the late 1910s and up to the late 1920s meant that the role of the YMCA as a mediator between labor and capital decreased in importance, as many of the functions were moved to institutions within the company. In the 1920s Two Harbors had both company teams and city teams. In 1920 a series of two games were arranged between the office employees at the Wolvin building in Duluth and the office employees at Two Harbors. The safety committees at their safety conferences also played baseball in the early 1920s.\(^{706}\)

In a lengthy article in the March 1922 issue of the company magazine Joseph J. Wolfe writes about sports, and what sports company employees practiced. Basketball seems to have been most popular among the employees of the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad, but indoor baseball, handball, curling, cribbage, hockey and canoeing were also practiced. There was at the time one basketball team in Two Harbors, “The Two Harbors all star team”, which was composed of eight players and a manager, all of them “employed in some capacity or another for the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad”. The YMCA team of Two Harbors was also primarily made up of employees of the D&IR. Another popular sport was ice hockey, which was played by a number of employees in the general offices.\(^{707}\)
So, sports seem to have been important and attracted workers in large number, both to YMCA sponsored activities and others. In the early 1920s, the company program had not readily taken off yet, but there were indeed sport events arranged by the D&IR and sports were an important mobilizing factor among the employees of the D&IR.

In this respect they had much in common with other workers in companies engaged in welfare schemes. The meaning of the leisure time in relation to labor relations has been under scrutiny for decades. This is not the time and place for a more thorough historiography of this literature, but it is possible to relate the experiences on the D&IR to other interpretations of American companies’ use of sports in their labor policies.

According to Gerald Gems, sports became an important factor in combating labor unrest and proved instrumental in the acceptance of a capitalist economy and the homogenization of American popular culture.\(^{708}\) Gems claims, following Herbert Gutman, that the old-world customs of immigrants created problems for the employers in the sphere of production, but also regarding more general notions of labor and leisure.\(^{709}\) Therefore, quite early on, as was also done by other American employers,\(^{710}\) the D&IR made sports an important part of the efforts

\(^{706}\) Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, September 1920, p.35.
\(^{707}\) Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employees Safety Magazine, March 1922, p.32,33.
\(^{708}\) Gems, Gerald. Welfare Capitalism and Blue Collar Sports. The Legacy of Labor Unrest. p.43.
\(^{709}\) Gems, Gerald. Welfare Capitalism and Blue Collar Sports. The Legacy of Labor Unrest. p.44.
at bridging the gap between labor and capital, primarily through its YMCA program. Sports held a certain meaning for immigrant workers in that it was often connected with an American way of spending leisure time. In fact, some researchers have seen the program of sports as fostering obedience and promoting American values. Without overstating its importance on the D&IR, it is clear how both the YMCA and, after 1926, the personnel club, focused on distinctly American sports such as basketball and the “national game of baseball”. Many employers favored American sports such as these for their inherent symbolism. The focus on distinctly American sports might also be claimed to be a result of the dominance of the American-born in the running of the YMCA. In this respect, sports, the construction of a YMCA and the company construction of an athletic field all in their ways contributed to the Americanization of the largely Scandinavian immigrant work force on the D&IR. By looking at the sports practiced, basketball and baseball stand out over a longer period of time.

Gerald Gems also emphasizes sports as schooling in capitalist competition as well as team work and obedience to authorities in the form of game officials, captains and team managers. For the workers the meaning of sport differed perhaps more than the meaning for the industrialists that deployed sports as an important part of their work to harmonize labor relations. Most workers simply won local recognition and the esteem of their peers, giving them a benefit denied them by their role in industrial capitalism. This can explain the highlighting of baseball teams and local sport stars in the company magazine as well as in the local newspapers in Two Harbors. Others simply found an arena where their physical prowess, in itself an expression of their necessary skills as workers, could be played out in public. It is clear that company leagues and matches between different departments were important enough to attract the attention of fair-sized audiences, the local press as well as the company magazine during the 1920s. The fact that different departments faced off against each other in different sports might also be a factor in tightening relations to the company as a collective, but also a factor in diminishing class consciousness among the workers participating, as leagues were organized where the teams were drawn from different departments of the company, thus emphasizing the belongingness to a certain trade while competing against other workers. The tournaments arranged by the YMCA in the 1910s was organized in this manner.

Gems also claims that the workers’ interest in sports was a conscious investment in pure meritocracy - on an arena where they could achieve status and self-respect based upon their own physical prowess. Sport also offered more immediate rewards, achievable without the violation of class norms and values. In many instances, Gems claims, workers negotiated power more successfully in this sphere than in the work place.

711 Gems, Gerald. Welfare Capitalism and Blue Collar Sports. The Legacy of Labor Unrest. p.47
Given the increasing control of the workers in Two Harbors and on the D&IR more generally as displayed in company work rules this seems to hold some truth on the D&IR. The systems for collective bargaining and the hearings before company management paired with the activity of the worker in the safety first movement could not completely wash away the workers’ sense of an increasingly structured and increasingly controlled environment on the railroad. Sports might, indeed, have been an arena where workers legally and without any strong opposition from the employer could meet in what resembled a mutuality of interest, where the space for negotiation was larger than in the workplace itself.

But sports was also a very subtle means of controlling the leisure time of activity and to place the leisure time under company control in a larger framework based on the idea of a mutual interest between immigrant workers and Anglo-American bourgeoisie. This might have been especially true for Two Harbors in the 1920s, where company influence and World War I had changed social and cultural relations to the extent that the radical movement had practically withdrawn from the public sphere of the city.

Conclusions

The welfare systems on the D&IR were, despite some of its quite flawed performance, a distinct success. The work of the YMCA was one important component in the work, and so was the increasingly visible work of the company during the period from World War I, when a number of company clubs and additional institutions were founded and used to complement and diversify the work of the YMCA, which was still strong and vibrant in the 1920s. The company hence seems to have taken an increasingly active direct interest in its relation to the workers, however, this process falls somewhat outside my research period that ends in the mid 1920s. It seems clear however, that a process of secularization of labor relations seem to have occurred as the company takes a responsibility that the YMCA had previously.

The D&IR had by the end of the 1920s drawn a larger number of workers, both skilled and unskilled, into its welfare capitalist schemes through the broad and community-oriented program of the employees’ club and the YMCA. The YMCA in itself seems to have been a very important platform for the company work all the way from its inception, since the railroad officials’ involvement in the YMCA created the connection between the company and the YMCA which leads one to question the impartiality of the work. On the other hand, the railroad YMCA attracted workers by the hundreds to their activities, and by 1910-1911, the peak year, more than 1,000 of them were members of the YMCA in Two Harbors.

Most of the attraction seems to have come from the athletic facilities where many workers chose to spend their leisure time, but the reading room also appears to have been quite well attended. In some sense, the YMCA has apparently
been a very successful transitional phase between the Laissez-Faire period into the 1890s and the company-controlled welfare capitalism schemes directed towards the community that were launched from the late 1910s. The mutual character as a mediator might have been preferred to company-sponsored activities by the radical immigrant workers, and many workers attended not only sports sessions, but also used other facilities. The meaning of the YMCA also comes through by means of almost weekly advertisements for programs on the YMCA being announced in the Socialist newspaper of Two Harbors in the middle of the 1910s. The broad support, despite the lack of evidence of unskilled immigrant workers attending the YMCA in any larger numbers, seems to have held at least some appeal to the socialists of the community.

At the same time many railroad officials were very active in the YMCA movement, and the superintendent on the railroad was a strong champion of it. When the United States entered the war in the spring of 1917, the YMCA had created credibility for itself among the workers and has obviously achieved the type of cross-class connections that the organization basically strived for. During the war the YMCA movement became an important part in promoting and supporting the American war effort, for instance as a platform for selling liberty bonds.

Another function was to promote Americanization among the largely Scandinavian workers on the railroad up to 1915. Its role during the war years in Two Harbors has not been possible to assess, but the Americanization work was after the fall of 1915 taken over by the local high schools within a federal program. Hence, YMCA must be regarded, at bottom, as connected with the interests of the railroad company and as a platform for the workings of it. In fact, the low credibility that the railroad company and the steel trust seem to have had during much of the 1910s made at least one attempt to create company-sponsored organizations such as a personnel club fail in 1913.

The YMCA was thus to some extent used as a platform for the railroad to create the kind of cross-class identity that was later used to construct a company identity and a bond between workers and officials on the railroad.

The personal relationship played a crucial role in the railroad company magazine from 1918 to 1930, as the employer clearly wanted to build further on the cross-class identity founded in the YMCA movement. Furthermore, the community orientation is quite strong in that work too, since wives and children of railroad workers also play a large part in the image of the “company family”. This indicates that the situation on the D&IR was characterized not only by welfare schemes of a more formalized character, but that, to a very large extent, it was based in a more complex and long-term work of molding a company identity among the immigrant workers on the D&IR, an identity that contained both American markers and that strove to play down class conflict through a message of mutuality based on religious ethics, co-operation, self-discipline and a strong work ethic. Much of this work of molding the mind of the worker was carried out in the company magazine’s strong focus on safety matters, a program which in effect became a bridge between the work place and the community and which
was an important framework for welfare capitalism on the D&IR, aiming at creating the image of the caring company and still not, as President Horace Johnson expressed it, “disturb the order of things”. This in turn offered the opportunity that the company capitalized upon during the 1920s in expanding its reach and fulfilling the vision of company officials of reshaping a community that had prior to this decade been characterized by the emergence of radical ethnic identity formation among immigrants and Anglo-American workers.

In this respect the work on the D&IR to some extent resembled the situation encountered by Gerald Zahavi at Endicott, Lester and Johnson in that the practiced Welfare Capitalist ideas became part system, part personality, part ideology and part informal practice.713 The ideology that controlled this work clearly had its roots in Anglo-American bourgeois interests in the de-radicalizing and the Americanizing of workers to cut them out to fit the economic, political and social systems and the cultural context of which they were now one part.

The company program to promote worker loyalty, primarily through the program directed towards the community, entered a new phase in the late 1910s, when the Great War erupted in Europe, spawning a lively debate about the role of the United States in the conflict and how to get the culturally diverse largely immigrant population in Lake County to support an American entry into the conflict. This discussion meant an increased focus on the work of Americanizing the population and on the character of the American national project, which entered an intense phase during the war years. This came to affect the large Swedish immigrant population in Lake County, too. If the class component of integrating the dissenting workers happened through the welfare arrangements of the YMCA and the US Steel program, the American war effort became an important opportunity to reshape American identity and push for a monoculture based on a white racial identity with a base in Anglo-American culture. I will also discuss how the company used its welfare schemes to discipline the immigrant workers and integrate them into the larger project of the development of industrial capitalism. Finally, I will try to connect this analysis to the process of industrial capitalist development in the political economy of Minnesota and to Anglo-American dominance. In short, I will regard welfare capitalism on the D&IR as one expression of the power wielded by a dominant cultural and economic group in American society with the power to define societal problems and to channel immigrant entry into American society through organizations acceptable to the railroad officials in Two Harbors. The welfare work on the D&IR was based on a railroad YMCA, which was established in 1897, and on the internal program launched by United States Steel Corp. in 1902.

713 Zahavi, Gerald. Workers, Managers and Welfare Capitalism. p.40
9. The Class Based, Ethnic Opposition to Anglo-American Bourgeois Hegemony

The public sphere of Two Harbors underwent radical changes between the 1880s and the early 1920s. One important factor in this transformation is the conflict that arose in the newly established village with the emergence of a political and cultural alternative to Anglo-American bourgeois leadership. Gradually it used publicizing, the established political democracy and various organizational efforts to challenge this leadership and to negotiate power relations based on class and ethnicity. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the growth and the transformation of this political and cultural alternative to company dominance in Two Harbors between 1890 and the early 1920s. The chapter will also analyze the role of the Swedish workers in these efforts to establish an alternative to complete company control over workers’ everyday lives, as well as how alliances between segments of the working class formed and reshaped under the pressure of industrial capitalist structures and Anglo-American cultural dominance between the 1890s and the early 1920s. The chapter will primarily focus on the political arena, the cultural expressions of political resistance to and the promotion of Anglo-American dominance in public, the emergence of an everyday radical culture before world war I and, finally, the transformation of the political and cultural climate of Lake County in the aftermath of the Americanization efforts of the late 1910s connected with American participation in the war.

Despite the complexity of the composition of the working class and of the general class structure in Two Harbors, it is, from the evidence I have found, possible to align political opinions, economic interests, specific cultural manifestations and everyday culture in Two Harbors to two ideological groupings based on their relationship to the Anglo-American capitalist project. The duality of this classification is perhaps not as elegant as a more nuanced analysis, but, as these two general standpoints were the ones dominating in politics and more than anything else characterizing the public political and cultural debate, I am quite confident that there is a value in this streamlining, provided the nuances between political expressions are adequately presented within the two blocks.
The first standpoint was primarily founded by the railroad company officials and parts of the local business community. These interests were firmly based on the establishment and growth of industrial capitalism in the Midwest and came to the region with the mining industry and the railroad establishments.

The local businessmen were chiefly involved in land business, had smaller manufacturing establishments, were local bankers or were self-employed as store, boarding-house or saloon owners. The business community and representatives of the D&IR came together in the local commercial club, which is first mentioned in the sources from the late 1890s and whose membership consisted of both railroad officials and local businessmen. The tasks of these interests during the establishment of the railroad were to secure a labor force, to stimulate farm settlement and to attract customers to their businesses. These interests thus on many points coincided, all being based on the idea of establishing an adequate supply of wage laborers and small farmers in the region. In short, the activities of these groups established a class society where none had existed before. As we shall see, this group dedicated much effort to controlling the political arena from the mid-1880s. One part of this work was to help a Republican journalist, James Cogswell, establish a newspaper in Two Harbors in 1890. The newspaper, the Two Harbors Iron News, largely supported company interests, and may thus be regarded as a mouthpiece for the social and cultural interests of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie embedded in the company. The editor furthermore showed up on D&IR pay records during the years after the establishment of the newspaper. The company support of the pro-company newspaper and the use of the newspaper as a way of maintaining control of the political arena are consequently quite evident. In this perspective, the establishment of the newspaper might be seen as one part of the establishment of a bourgeois public sphere where none had previously existed.

James Cogswell carried on the publication of his newspaper until his death in 1907. It was an outspoken Republican newspaper, the editor himself being quite active in local politics. His support of the railroad interests and local businessmen is unquestionable for most of the period. Even though he claimed to be a Progressive I will henceforth call this newspaper tradition pro-company, in the sense that it provided nearly full support for the dominance of the interests embedded in the railroad company. After his death, the newspaper was then taken over by his son, who sold it to Theodore G. Johnson in 1909. Johnson was the son of Swedish immigrants and merged the newspaper with The Iron Trade Journal in that year, changing the name to The Journal News. The resulting newspaper has been described as politically conservative, was clearly anti-Socialist during the 1910s and was pro-company during all of its existence. It folded in 1920.

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714 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 2/8 1890. p.3.
715 D&IR Auditor Records vol. 1890-1894.
The initial company dominance on the political arena was not to last. Instead, forces arose desirous of, interested in and, in time, capable of challenging the dominance of the interests embedded in the D&IR. This political alternative started to take shape in the 1890s, and I will henceforth call it the opposition, as it opposed the leadership of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. It did not primarily express itself politically, but the opposition had a platform in a Progressive newspaper that existed during the first years of the 1890s. DeLacy Wood was a Progressive Republican, who edited the newspaper *The Two Harbors Iron Port* from October 1887 into the early 1890s. Wood supported candidates for office who opposed company dominance. The newspaper changed hands in 1891, and then folded a year later.

A few years later another newspaper, *The Iron Trade Journal*, under the editorship of Morley Metcalfe, a Progressive, filled the void after the demise of the earlier paper. Metcalfe was clearly interested in attracting the Scandinavian workers of the local community, as a standing column in his newspaper was called “Scandinavian News, Happenings in the Fatherland”. He supported the Populist-Democrat fusion party ticket and its reform program in the 1898 election. The newspaper soon changed hands and Henry Burwell, a “staunch Democrat”, leased the newspaper in 1899. Burwell supported the Populist-Democrat ticket in the 1900 election, and, as Wood had done before him, opposed the interests of the company and the local business community, supporting the opposition’s bid for control of local politics. In 1901 the newspaper again changed owners. The new owners did not provide the opposition with the same support as the Progressive newspapers had done in the 1890s. Instead the newspaper tended to grow more generally Republican and quite conservative in character. It did not, however, become an outspoken voice for the railroad company. In 1909 it merged with the newspaper started by James Cogswell and adopted its program. Around 1910 *The Iron Port Advocate*, again edited by DeLacy Wood, provided the opposition with a critical voice for a couple of years. *The Two Harbors Socialist*, started in 1913, signaled a stronger connection between the opposition and its newspaper and supported the socialists’ bid for local political power.

In time this political alternative with connections to the Midwestern third party tradition, to the Progressive program of the Governor of Minnesota John Lind and to socialism became a strong force in local politics. The support for these expressions of opposition to company dominance came primarily from the working class of the community but also from self-employed service workers, i.e. the petty bourgeoisie. Many of these petty bourgeois supporters of the opposition were immigrants and had a previous history of railroad work on the D&IR. The broad working class support for the opposition, furthermore, acquired an increasingly visible ethnic component during the 1910s, as a multi-ethnic working-class

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716 *The Iron Trade Journal*, 1/9, 1898. p.3.
ideology opposed the Anglo-American bourgeoisie in local politics. The participation of immigrant ethnic groups in the opposition expressed itself in the three Socialist clubs that organized both immigrants and native born workers.

Despite the local business community’s strong support for the commercial club and the railroad company, its position was not simply one of supporting the railroad interests. As we shall see, it seems as if parts of the petty bourgeoisie and a few pastors of the city supported some of the reform movements that were launched. The connection between reform-friendly “middle class” and the oppositional forces of Two Harbors is not strange, given the connection between elements of the “middle class” and the Progressive movement, whose most pressing task was to oppose company dominance over public life. 718 This group was, hence, a champion for Progressive popular reform, but not for capitalist interests. Instead, there seems to have been a split in the petty bourgeoisie in that many self-employed small business owners who had direct contact with the working class, such as barbers and store owners, tended to support the opposition. Another connection was that most of this petty bourgeoisie involved in service work also had a background as railroad workers and, in some cases also were immigrants. Their place in the class structure was petty bourgeoisie as they generally owned their means of production and relied on their own work to sustain themselves, but their consciousness and business interests connected them in important ways to the working class given their background as working class and their role in the local community.

In conclusion, the parts of the business community that generally supported the interests of the company, and which were upheld by groups of employees in supervisory positions, were largely an American-born group, consisting of people who were less oriented towards self-employment in service work and more oriented towards finance, lumbering, insurance and land sales. In light of this composition the political duality of this group does not seem strange, as the local petty bourgeoisie indeed appears to have been oriented to either one of the two main groupings. The commitment of one group was apparently made on the basis of previous experiences as workers and/or immigrants or an interest in running a successful business with an important working class clientele. For the service petty bourgeoisie the workers were customers and the support of the working class, especially a class-conscious working class, a necessity. The second group, with financially oriented interests that made them dependent on transport such as the local timber merchants, seems to have been more interested in maintaining good relations with local railroad officials. Two Harbors as an emerging city hence became the meeting ground on which two constellations of interest negotiated the political and cultural space; each attracted groups based on class and ethnicity to its side. Although the division of interests into two general camps is a simplification, it seems necessary to better understand various groups’ connections with the railroad and mining company interests on the one hand and

718 See e.g. Stromquist, Shelton. Reinventing the People. Urbana, Ill., pp.3-5
the working-class oppositional forces on the other. I do not deny the split within
the petty bourgeoisie or the local working class whose interests and status varied
widely. Even the working class was in varying degrees connected with the inter-
ests of the opposition and the company.

My analysis of the newspapers indicates that the community of Two Harbors
seems to align itself pretty clearly along these two distinctly different political/
ideological groupings, one pro-company newspaper tradition which was used,
more or less, during various periods and in various strengths as a platform by the
railroad company, and another one which can be described generally as a voice
for reform, for working-class participation in politics, and which displayed itself
as an alternative to the dominance of the company and its allies in the press.

The most important sources of this emerging political alternative are the Progres-
sive and Socialist newspapers published in the city between 1890 and the 1920s.
Memorabilia published in Two Harbors and organizations of Two Harbors will
also be used, as will church and municipal records and election returns plus
autobiographical accounts from various residents.

The Growth of a labor movement and its
relationship with politics during the 1890s
and the first decade of the 1900s

The evidence for the resistance to company dominance among railroad workers
in the area is sketchy at best during the 1880s and 1890s. But on some occasions
immigrant workers become visible historical agents willing to shape the context
in which they found themselves. The first labor conflict on the railroad was in
1884 at the ore docks. It was a spontaneous action, and a miserable failure, effec-
tively crushed by the railroad officials, who simply fired the strikers and replaced
them with new workers. More organized activities based on class or ethnicity are
not common during the 1880s, but a Knights of Labor Lodge of a multi-
industrial character was present in Two Harbors, at least between 1887 and
1889.719 Shelton Stromquist has defined the Knights of Labor of the mid-1880s
as a “strikers’ union” that attracted railroad men in large numbers, as their “or-
ganizational needs could not be accommodated within the frame work of the
Brotherhoods”.720 As the lodge folded only a couple of years later, it falls into a
typical pattern for other lodges based on the railroad trades. There is some evi-
dence of strikes on the D&IR: a short brakeman’s strike on the railroad in 1888
and a strike of firemen in 1890. Both were short, and the company appears gen-
erally to have met the demands of the strikers. The 1888 strike was in all prob-
ability organized by the lodge and might also have been one aspect of its demise

the year after. The exact reasons for the disappearance of the lodge is, however, not possible to establish.

The lodge itself has unfortunately not left any records, so we know nothing certain of its ethnic composition, its social make-up or the work it carried out on the local level. However, Stromquist discusses the social composition of the mixed lodges of the Knights of Labor more generally and has, from a sample, established that many of those located along railroads were largely composed of railroad workers, primarily from the shop trades but also from other occupations. Stromquist has also found evidence that the Knights of Labor lodges attracted large contingents of skilled railroad men, among them locomotive engineers. 721 Given the distinct possibility that the lodge organized the local skilled and semi-skilled railroad workers and shop workers, it was in all probability dominated by American-born workers and Anglo immigrants, as the ethnic division of labor on the D&IR ensured the connection between these workers and skilled work. Since there is evidence of Scandinavian workers in Two Harbors who organized themselves in the 1880s, Swedish workers might have been members of the lodge. This connection can, however, not be definitively demonstrated by my sources. In all probability they were not, since the “Ore Trimmers’ Society” and the “Scandinavian Workmen’s Society of Two Harbors” 722 give the impression of having been distinct organizations that stood free from the Knights of Labor.

It seems evident that a development towards craft-oriented unionism had occurred, since the last record of the lodge dates from the same year as the Railroad brotherhoods established themselves. Three distinct organizations were perfected. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers established a lodge in 1889, and the firemen and the conductors followed suit in 1891 and 1898, respectively. The brotherhoods organized quite limited numbers of workers at this time. The lodges were initially not particularly radical but rather emphasized a more cooperative view of their relationship to the employer. This was especially true for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, which was for a long time dominated by men who emphasized the fraternal character of the organization. 723

By the early 1890s the brotherhoods had, in general, realized the potential for cooperation with other trades in the railroad business, and a movement for consolidation and co-operation between different trades was set in motion. This development was connected with the “western” part of the country. This was not a streamlined process, however, but one that pointed towards increasing degrees of industrial unionism on railroads, culminating in Eugene Debs’ American Railway Union (ARU), which was established in the summer of 1893. The movement gained strong support in the Midwest, and by the beginning of 1894 Min-

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721 For a discussion on the Knights of Labor, see Stromquist, A Generation of Boomers pp.63-69
723 Stromquist, Shelton. A Generation of Boomers. pp. 50-54
nesota had a number of locals. The ARU was apparently established in Two Harbors during the first half of 1894.\textsuperscript{724} The establishment of this union is interesting, since at its convention in June 1894 it resolved to support the populist movement and its program for government ownership of railroads and greater social control of the economy.\textsuperscript{725} As we shall see, this political movement was strongly supported in Two Harbors. Stromquist has also found an interesting continuity between the Knights of Labor and the ARU in that shopmen, both skilled and unskilled, made up an important part of both organizations.\textsuperscript{726} This underlines a potential continuity between the Knights of Labor of the 1880s and the presence of the ARU in the 1890s but also underlines the connection with the third party movement that, as we shall see, emerged in Two Harbors during the 1890s.

The ARU was practically dead in the eastern part of the country after the Pullman boycott in the summer of 1894, but in the West many locals maintained a presence. The slow death of the organization under a relentless pressure from employers seems indisputable, however, and Debs, together with other leaders, dissolved what was left of the ARU in 1897 and founded an American Social Democratic Party in its place. As we shall see in this chapter, the establishment of the ARU obviously coincided with a surge in third party activity and the establishment of the Socialist movement in Two Harbors. Judging by what happened in Two Harbors from 1898, some local railroad workers appear to have followed Debs in his transition to becoming a Socialist politician.

On the other hand, the railroad brotherhoods, at least according to local newspapers, did not in their capacity as union men claim any specific political affiliation during the 1890s, and the trade unions as such cannot readily be described as parts of a force that wanted to contest company dominance. The impulses for change towards less company dominance came instead from the populist movement and, with some certainty, from the ARU.

The union movement then gained support as other trade unions were established in the early 1900s. The trade union movement in Two Harbors was still for much of the 1910s dominated by the skilled railroad workers’ trade unions, as only about 1/6\textsuperscript{th} of union members were found outside railroad brotherhood organizations in Two Harbors in the mid-1910s.\textsuperscript{727}

\textsuperscript{724} Stromquist, Shelton. \textit{A Generation of Boomers}. P.84ff. Stromquist argues convincingly that the western railroad workers were more prone to Industrial unionism than eastern, and that they were actively challenging the brotherhood leadership in a more outspoken way than the eastern workers.

\textsuperscript{725} Stromquist, Shelton. \textit{A Generation of Boomers}. p.83.

\textsuperscript{726} Stromquist, Shelton. \textit{A Generation of Boomers}. pp.91-96

\textsuperscript{727} Minnesota Bureau of Labor Statistics. 1915/1916 report. p.188.
Politics

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the railroad company’s labor policy was increasingly based on welfare arrangements. The company was also involved in the organizing of Two Harbors into a township and a village in 1883. In a letter to his father, Charlemagne Tower Jr., wrote that the company officials “began to feel pretty seriously the need of something at Two Harbors for the suppressing of brawling and the maintenance of the peace”. Charlemagne Tower Jr. also emphasized that he and the other officials had arranged for a prescribed town election, “at which a ticket prepared to our views was elected”. At this time the work force, consisting of several hundred workers, according to Tower Jr. only held “something over 50 legal voters in the town, many of our workmen being foreigners and therefore not to be counted”.728

The plan for complete company control in the election was apparently somewhat stymied, because Tower Jr. commented that the company “had difficulty… to secure a majority”, but in the end company representatives were elected. The next step was to secure a village organization, as the Minnesota law gave village magistrates and constables jurisdiction throughout the county. This meant that company interests could obtain political and judicial control of the area of the railroad outside the town limit, too. In conclusion, officials and trusted workers got elected by other officials and trusted workers for public office in the 1880s and thereby secured effective control of local government.

The political scene in Two Harbors seems to have been quite solidly Republican in character during the 1880s and the early 1890s. This dominance is illustrated in the first elections in the county in the mid-1880s by the Republican Party being strong, primarily based on railroad officials, workers who were eligible to vote and some German immigrants living in the county at Beaver Bay. Returns from the county elections in 1888 and 1890 illustrate this, as the Republican ticket made a clean sweep in both years. The Republican candidate for Governor, Merriam, defeated his Democratic counterpart with 215 votes to 95 in the 1888 election.729

Before and after the county elections in 1890 political tensions showed up for the first time in Two Harbors, the earliest extant indication that an alternative to company dominance was claiming political power. Before the election The Iron Port Journal said that such a large number of citizens and taxpayers attended the Republican convention that the hall was crowded. It was the largest political meeting ever held in the county at that point. Many of the candidates had ties with the railroad company, and among the names mentioned are Doerr, foreman of the company paint shops, a saloon owner by the name of Urey and a board-

728 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Letter from Charlemagne Tower Jr to Charlemagne Tower, 20/9, 1883.
729 The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1889.
730 D&IR Payroll Records, 1890.
The progressive newspaperman, Wood, who reported the story seemed surprised and satisfied at the fact that so many of the citizens turned out to vote at the Republican convention. Given the state of the political scene in the county at the time, it is safe to say that the appointing of candidates that night was more important than the election, since most of the voters would, in general, go for the Republican candidates. The progressive editor Wood, wrote that the Republican ticket with the exception of one or two nominees would meet the hearty approval of “our people” and would be endorsed at the ballot box.

At the same time that the Republican ticket was in a state of flux. The mass turn-out at the convention is one indicator, and another is that there were two Scandinavian-born men nominated for county office. The debate after the convention indicates that the two immigrant candidates were controversial. The two nominees were John Olson, a fireman employed by the D&IR, and with some probability Norwegian born and John Swanstrom, a foreman at the ore docks that was Swedish. Olson ran for judge of probate and Swanstrom for county commissioner. A small note in the newspaper stated: “the people won a great victory at the mass convention [i.e. the republican] Thursday Night”. The outcome of the election was interpreted by Wood as a victory for the “people”, who attended the meeting in big numbers, but there appear to have been other political forces at play in the city around this time. At the beginning of November 1890 Wood implied that an animated political discussion was taking place:

*Keep your shirts on gentlemen! Your threats of “doing up” individuals, who have seen fit to exercise their political rights under the constitution of this country, will not scare anyone! So let all keep calm and save trouble.*

Wood also encouraged people to vote as they pleased and not to be bulldozed. The election of two Scandinavians was not uncontroversial at this time, as can be seen from the press debate that the Republican nominations created. The pro-company newspaper, Two Harbors Iron News, had obviously had its say about the two candidates. Wood, the editor of the Iron Port News wrote on the nominations that *The Organ*, Wood’s name of the Iron News, had “the gall” to insult Mr. John Olson and John Swanstrom. Wood calls the two Scandinavians “two of our honorable citizens” claiming that “this damnable insult on their capacity and

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731 City directory for Two Harbors, MN, 1889,1890.
732 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 25/10, 1890, p.3.
733 City Directory for Two Harbors, 1889-1890. United States Federal Census for Lake County, 1910.
734 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 25/10, 1890, p.3
735 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 1/11, p.3
736 The Two Harbors Iron Port. 1890, 1/11, p.3
737 The Two Harbors Iron Port. 1890, 1/11, p.3
intelligence by a man who has been in the county only a few months should be resented by every workingman and Scandinavian in the village”. Wood concluded that “the organ growls like a mad dog simply because the ‘slate machine’ was completely knocked out at the county convention this week. It is a terrible thing for the people to have anything to say in politics in the eyes of the Organ”. Wood’s use of the term “The Organ” when discussing Cogswell’s newspaper indicates that the Progressive newspaperman considered it a mouthpiece for the railroad company.

In a letter to the editor a person calling himself X states that “the organ” insulted the Scandinavian nominees, and he directs attention to the fact that the defeated party at the convention was trying to launch another candidate on another ticket to oppose the election of Olson. The letter ends by stating that “the convention was the largest held in Lake County, and the bolters will not gain anything in rebuking the will of the people”.

Hence the nomination of the two Scandinavians was, in the eyes of the Progressive newspaper editor Woods, a victory for the people, as other political interests like the D&IR, certain parts of the business community in Two Harbors and their “slate machine” were knocked out at the convention. The success of the two Scandinavian men is thus connected with the victory of the popular will against elements in the city who were interested in keeping the political arena out of reach of ethnic groups and Progressive workers.

From the very start Mr. Cogswell was regarded as a controversial person in Two Harbors. In a number of articles Wood called into question the methods surrounding the establishment of Cogswell’s newspaper. Apparently, money had been taken from the treasury of the village of Two Harbors and from Lake County in the amount of $200 in order to get the newspaper going. The matter came to the attention of the state authorities, who ruled that the newspaper, against the will of some of the officials in the village, had to repay the money. According to the board of county commissioners, two local politicians, both with strong connections to the company, had voted to support Cogswell.

The Iron Port News later returned to the subject of James Cogswell. The Irish immigrant John Kinsella wrote one letter on the subject, which was published in the paper. In line with what Wood wrote on the 1890 county elections, Kinsella claimed that Cogswell on a number of occasions had insulted candidates in the 1890 fall elections. The candidates and offices mentioned were John Olson, for probate judge, and John Swanstrom. Delacey Wood openly supported both of these candidates, and both were part of a reform wing of the Republican Party. James Cogswell, on the other hand, had obviously been campaigning against the

738 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 1/11, 1890. p.3
739 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 1/11, 1890. p.3
740 City Directory, 1889-1890. The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1891.
741 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 10/1, 1891. p.3
two Scandinavians, as he had written in one of his editorials: “John Swanstrom would never have been the candidate had not certain parties whispered in his ear that the office paid $3 a day”. Cogswell also insisted that the only qualification that John Olson had for the office was to be able to draw the salary.  

John Kinsella continued into 1891 to write letters critical of Cogswell in the newspaper and also touched upon the political establishment that he thought stood behind the establishment of Cogswell’s pro-company and Republican newspaper. In these letters he alluded to certain political appointments that had been undemocratic in character. These allusions were, however, not developed further and might simply have been an effort at discrediting Cogswell. In January 1891 Kinsella wrote that Cogswell wanted “a party” to pay A. DeLacey Wood a visit and try to have him stop publishing Kinsella’s letters. Wood rejected this, and the writing of letters continued. In the previous year someone had broken into *The Iron Port News* office and destroyed its printing press, the target at that time being Kinsella.  

Later in that same year home rule was declared for Two Harbors, and an election of president for the village council, along with some other administrative offices, was carried out. Kinsella was again in a local political hotspot, as he ran for office against one of the company candidates, a Mr. Urey, a saloonkeeper, who beat Kinsella by a vote of 153 to 139. In a letter after the election Kinsella attacked the railroad officials for championing his opponent in front of the railroad workers:

*Last Monday at noon the citizens of Two Harbors were surprised when they heard...that Greatsinger of the Iron Range Road was in the streets electioneering for Urey. He said he did not like those letters I had been writing for A DeLacy Wood's paper...Then Greatsinger said with great stress that most all those people who read my letters were ignorant and did not understand. I told the great man that those men, who worked under him in the shops and out on the road, knew their business... A special train was sent out over the road to bring in men, while the French Foremen staid (sic!) out to work against my election. When such men as E. Therrien lays off working on Election Day and gets his time, it is bad business for a railroad officer to encourage... I believe that the citizens and taxpayers of our village should have the power to select their own president...It is wrong for any railway official to dictate to men how they should vote and the people soon loose (sic!?) respect for such a man. Greatsinger is a great man in his...*

742 *The Two Harbors Iron Port*, 10/1, 1891, p.3  
743 *The Two Harbors Iron Port*, 28/2, 1891. p.3  
744 *The Two Harbors Iron Port*, 17/1 1891, p3.  
745 *Two Harbors in 1910*. pp.54ff.
own estimation, but is in reality no better than the working man on sections or section foreman who works under him…

I had a perfect right to express my views as a citizen and a free holder, and… it was wrong for their hired man here to try to retard the free will of the people! I am grateful to the boys that stood by me… under adverse circumstances. 

I hereby brand Cogswell as a dirty, malicious liar when he says I went through the shops offering drinks for votes, and I defy anyone to prove that I was ever under the influence of licquor (sic!). Now that election is over I…feel certain that if many people had exercised their own free will I would have been surely elected…some other time I will show you some of the illegal ways in which the election was carried out. 746

Kinsella also claimed that the Republican Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Craven, got the pastor of the Methodist Evangelical Church to vote against him. 747 In the same issue DeLacy Wood wrote that Greatsinger had instructed Land Commissioner Crane to deprive Wood of one of his lots in Two Harbors, which the Land Office set out to do, even though Wood had documented his buying of the lot. Wood called Greatsinger a “dictator”. 748

Less than two weeks after Kinsella’s letter to The Iron Port an article appeared in the newspaper entitled “Terrible Outrage”. The article dealt with an attempt on John Kinsella’s life by masked men. Wood detailed how Kinsella was taken from his hotel and bound and gagged after a struggle with 15 masked men. Thereafter Kinsella was dragged over the ice and snow to a barn … “[where he was] brutally treated, boiling hot tar poured over him”. He managed to escape the beating, but had three shots fired at him as he ran for safety. One shot hit the hand, and another his shoulder. Threatening letters to a number of people in Two Harbors followed upon the beating of Kinsella. The letters were signed White Caps, one of which was sent to DeLacey Wood, who responded in his newspaper:

> To our people it seems very singular that a man cannot be a candidate for office in this village and express his political sentiments, without running the danger of being killed. 749

The article ended with an accusation against Cogswell for having tried to “cover up such a diabolical outrage on any citizen of any country or state”. 750

746 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 14/3, 1891. p.3.
747 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 14/3, 1891. p.3
748 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 14/3, 1891. p.3
749 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 28/3, 1891. p.3
750 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 28/3, 1891. p.3
In the letters that were sent out to the proponents of the political opposition the White Cap organization had, according to Wood, “in their murderous threats against citizens in this village” given themselves out as being 60 strong. In response to this Wood wrote that “we are requested to say right here by the people, that we are over 200 strong of fearless determined citizens who will see that a repetition of this outrage is not attempted again upon any other citizen”.

In conclusion, the political situation in the county around 1890 was explosive, involving company interests and an increasingly politically-active immigrant petty bourgeoisie and working class represented by the Irish immigrant, Kinsella, and the two Scandinavian candidates for county office who met opposition from the railroad company. The company, hence, at least according to the quite vocal Irish immigrant, seems to have had a strategy where railroad officials were campaigning for votes among the workers, and where opponents of the railroad superintendent’s candidate were put down with the help of the Cogswell newspaper. The Methodist Evangelical Church, chiefly connected with the Anglo-American community in Two Harbors, was rallied to the same side as the company interests and against Kinsella. Another strategy was used where certain railroad workers were kept out of the village during Election Day so that they were unable to vote for Kinsella. Hence, the railroad company used both its own power over the workers, and a number of institutions in the village to affect the outcome of a political election. It seems clear that the interests around the company had applied pressure on some of the critical voices in the village of Two Harbors at this time, both at the election polls and by using its economic influence to drive Woods out of business. The immigrants also met opposition from the anti-catholic/anti-immigrant forces in the village, as in the case of the Irish immigrant, and by the local pro-company newspaper in the case of the Scandinavians. The evidence seems to support that an embryo of immigrant solidarity existed in the 1890s. Previous research has claimed that the development of a solidarity that transcended ethnic boundaries has, on many occasions been, absent during the 1890s. One example is Chrislock’s assessment of catholic and protestant ethno-cultural voting in Minnesota that hindered the possibility of the emergence of “a solid immigrant voting bloc”. The evidence in Two Harbors instead points to an initial formation of an immigrant voting bloc.

This political struggle, however, also engaged other groups, as it attracted the attention of the Swedish Lutheran minister in the village, who apparently had uttered negative sentiments about Wood and his newspaper but later took it back. The pastor of the Swedish Lutheran Church in Two Harbors, J.A. Lindahl had in front of his congregation

751 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 28/3, 1891. p3. The paper also holds supportive messages for Kinsella, by Ole Hanson the tailor.
at his regular meeting last Sunday morning at the court house, retracted in presence of his congregation the statements he had made the previous Sunday regarding the editor of the Iron Port [i.e. Delacey Wood], and added that he made the retraction as an act of justice.752

The example illustrates the actions of the immigrant bourgeoisie, which occupied a middle ground between the Anglo-American establishment, a body with which it wanted to maintain good relations, and an ethnic, largely working-class, congregation upon which it was dependent.

The rise of Populism in Lake County in the 1890s

An analysis of changes in the voting patterns in Lake County during the 1890s gives us some insight into what impact progressivism had there. It can also give us some insight into how the opposition sought to find ways to oppose the dominance of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie by using the political democracy that was readily available for all male citizens in the 1890s. The decade was a period of growth in the county as the railroad was expanded. The county growth and an increasing number of settled citizens also meant an increasing number of eligible voters. The voting patterns are presented in table 17.

Table 17. Percentual returns from Gubernatorial Elections in Lake County 1888-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total votes</th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Democratic</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
<th>People’s Party</th>
<th>Populist-Democrat</th>
<th>Prohibitionist</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Socialist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota. 1888-1900. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

In the gubernatorial elections of 1888 the Republicans were strong in the county, as 69 percent of the 313 votes cast for the office of Governor of MN were cast for the Republican candidate, Merriam. In 1890 Merriam again carried the

752 The Two Harbors Iron Port, 2/8, 1890. p.3
* The Socialist vote was evenly divided between the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party of America.
county but now with “only” 55 percent of the votes. The Republicans also dominated the elections in 1892 and 1894, reaching more than 70 percent in the latter. After these years the dominance of the Republican Party in the county appears to have been broken.

Other candidates ran for the Democratic Party, which was the runner up in 1888-1892. The Prohibitionist party also played a role in county politics, as it attracted 15 percent of the total vote in 1890.

A tendency that becomes clear in the returns is a growing support for the third parties that emerged in Minnesota and other Midwestern states in the 1890s. The Alliance Party, the first broad third party project and a forerunner of the Populists polled 4 percent of the total vote in 1890. Its successor, The People’s Party then got 7.5 percent and 17.5 percent, respectively, in the 1892 and 1894 elections.

In 1894 the Democratic Party dropped from more than 30 percent of the vote in 1892 to 11 percent. This made the Populists the second largest party in that election. Knute Nelson, a Republican of Norwegian heritage, polled more than 70 percent of the vote in the 1894 election. The 1892 and 1894 elections, however, show that Lake County must be considered as one of the counties in Minnesota that strongly supported the populist vote, as 109 out of 623 votes cast went to the People’s Party. The third party opposition to the initial company dominance via the Republican Party hence tends to get increasingly influential in the first half of the decade. The establishment of a local division of the American Railway Union, an industrial organization of railroad workers, who at their 1894 summer congress, chose to support the populist movement. But the Republican Party was strongly supported in the 1894 election, and it is not far-fetched to view the strong support for Knute Nelson, the Norwegian, as a result of ethnic voting, at least to some extent. The fact that the Cleveland administration was connected with the Pullman strike in 1894 might also have played a role in the strong Republican dominance.

Ethnicity might again have played a part in the 1896 election when the fusion ticket of Democrats and Populists carried the county, as John Lind, a native of Sweden, ran for governor in that year with a strong support of the Swedish immigrant population in the state. The competition was strong, however, and Lind won Lake County with a margin of only four votes out of a total of 925. In 1898, the Democrat-Populist ticket again carried the day in Lake County with a much larger margin, with Lind polling close to 57 percent of the votes, while the Republican Party got less than 40 percent for the first time in county history. In 1900 Lind again caught the voters and polled 55 percent of the 986 votes cast for governor.

The election in general, however, indicates that the support of Mr. Lind was, as in many other parts of Minnesota, the only offset of an otherwise fairly outspoken Republican dominance, as Republican candidates continued to be elected. During the course of the 1890s other parties drew only marginal numbers of vot-
ers. The Socialist Party was one of these and got 2.7 percent of the vote in the 1898 election.

During the 1890s the immigrants seem to have entered the political arena of Two Harbors in a way that made the county elections an affair where both Scandinavian candidates and Scandinavian votes had become important. A letter printed in one of the local newspapers gives an indication of who voted for the Progressive ticket. The letter writer has grievances about the strong populist sentiment “that seems to be so firmly established among the Scandinavian people” in Two Harbors that had gone for the Populist Democrat candidate for State Congressman in the 1898 election.\footnote{The Iron Trade Journal, 17/11, 1898. p.4.}

This connection between ethnic working class voters and the Progressive movement in the 1890s is further underlined by Carl Chrislock’s analysis of changing Scandinavian political sentiment in Minnesota “under the influence of a generation of third party reform agitation”, that had “pried many Scandinavians loose from their traditional allegiance to the Republican Party” around the turn of the century. The success of Lind in Lake County must partly be ascribed to ethnic voting, with Scandinavians choosing a candidate of their own ethnicity over another. Lind’s affiliation with the Democrat-Populist alliance was probably also a factor in changing the voting habits of the Swedish workers in the county.\footnote{Chrislock, Carl, The Progressive Era in Minnesota, p.33,34} The Progressive platform itself was also of importance as it held regulation of big business, particularly railroad legislation, high on its agenda, a fact that must have appealed to the working class in Two Harbors.\footnote{Chrislock, Carl. The Progressive Era in Minnesota . p.13.} That the program in itself held an appeal for many Swedish workers is also evident from the way the Scandinavian population was connected with the election of Charles A Towne, the Democrat Populist candidate for state congressman, although he was not of Swedish descent. Consequently, the support of the Democrat Populist ticket in the 1890s cannot be regarded as solely an expression of ethnic voting as the class dimension also seems important. The weak results for the Democrats in the years before 1896 indicate that the Populist element of the Populist-Democrat ticket had significant support.

However, the “many Socialist thinkers” also, according to an article in the Progressive newspaper, constituted a significant potential vote in Two Harbors. The article urges the Socialists in town to vote for the Populist-Democrat representative instead of the candidate launched by the Socialist Labor Party.

\textit{While this paper is not in entire accord with all ideas of advanced socialists it is perhaps well known that the paper is in sympathy with many of their principles and believes that their adoption would be for the betterment of mankind.}\footnote{The Iron Trade Journal, 3/11, 1898. p.4.}
Its title “Don’t Throw Away Your Vote” indicates a perceived ideological bond between the Progressive movement and the Socialists, but also the differences that characterized the relationship between the meliorists and class partisans that have been pointed out by Shelton Stromquist. The quote also indicates that the Socialist vote was large enough to be worth fighting for.

Before the election of 1898 the editor of the Iron Trade Journal, Morley Metcalfe, accused “a coterie” of the commercial club of Two Harbors of interfering in politics, attempting to control political matters in the village and in the county, and being quite successful at that. Metcalfe continues to say “it is plainly a part of their policy to embrace and cajole every man of political strength that they cannot successfully down”.757 In this vein he implies that this group had nominated John Olson and M.O. Aubolee for auditor and county attorney, respectively, and that they had a candidate, Bean, for register of deeds:

_This same little clique and its organ, while making a great hulla-baloo about nominating only republicans and passing resolutions that all nominees must support that party and its principles is always willing to nominate a member of any other party whom they can use if they see any chance to elect him and to oppose any Republican that they can’t use if they discover a chance to defeat him. That is the truth about political affairs in this county and the commercial club’s connection therewith._758

The article spawned a press conflict with Mr. Cogswell, who was called “the chief hog in the public trough of Two Harbors and Lake County”.759 The Scandinavian role in politics did not begin with Olson and Swanstrom in the 1890 county election. Instead, both a Norwegian and a Dane had served in some capacity on the county level before the 1890 election. The Dane was NC Nelson, who by the 1890s had had a long-time affiliation with the D&IR. There are no records preserved of these candidates stirring up any particular sentiments when they were elected.

The duality in politics is also evident in the county board that was elected at the end of 1894, where a number of Scandinavian names show up, among them the Dane N.C. Nelson. Mr. Nelson ran a boarding house, was in charge of the company sawmill in the mid-1880s and had served as County Commissioner from the 3rd district since the election of 1892. Other Scandinavians on the county board included Charles M Floathe, a Norwegian who had served on the board before. Yet another was John Olson, who was County Treasurer. Apart from these, M.T. Hannon, the superintendent of the ore docks, was auditor, and Albert

759 _The Iron Trade Journal_, 13/10, 1898. p.4.
Headley, a foreman in the car shops, who was an outspoken company candidate. Still another was John Dwan, an American-born lawyer who served as county attorney.760

The 1898 county election gives us some insight into the occupational and ethnic representation on the county board. There was no clear-cut Anglo-American dominance in politics at the county level when John Swanstrom, one of the county commissioners, was in office. Furthermore, John Olson, J.P. Paulson and the sheriff, Emil Nelson, were all born in Sweden. To this come two Norwegian-born commissioners, Floathe and Aubolee. Floathe held the position of Register of Deeds during the period 1888 to 1900 and had consequently become a prominent local politician. Towards the end of the 1890s he ran as an independent candidate. M.O. Aubolee, the other Norwegian, had lived his whole life in the United States, coming to the country as a young boy. The other seven on the board were all American-born save two, one Canadian born of English parentage and one unknown man.

Three of the Swedish-born men who served on the county administration are portrayed in Two Harbors in 1900. Emil Nelson, the sheriff, had come to the United States in 1871 at the age of four. He had then attended the common school, worked in saw mills, had been employed by the D&IR in the “engine service” and had clerked in the North Shore Hotel for N.C. Nelson. John P Paulson had come to the United States in 1880 at the age of nineteen, and had resided in Two Harbors since 1886. His first years had been spent “working for the D&IR”. He then ran the company boarding house for eight years, after which he started his own business. In 1900 he was described as an efficient officer that met no opposition in 1898 and was, evidently, strongly supported by the Republican Party for nomination to the position of county treasurer in that year. The third man was John Swanstrom. He had left Sweden in 1880 at the age of twenty-one and had been employed by the D&IR since 1883 as a sawyer in the company saw mill. In 1888 he became a foreman in the Bridge and Building Department and in 1896 he started in the “business of house building”. By 1900, he had also served a couple of years on the village board.761

The American-born men in county office were to a large extent connected with the company and had long experience of local politics. Most of the men seem to have had previous employment on the railroad but had left and gone into business. M.T. Hannon, the Judge of Probate Court, was chief clerk at the ore dock. He had a long history on the D&IR. The Clerk of Court, J.G. Miller, was also a railroad man, who had been a master mechanic on another railroad and was employed on the D&IR as assistant master mechanic before getting elected to the state Railroad and Warehouse commission on a Republican ticket towards the

760 The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota. 1895, p.356.
end of the decade. The chairman of the board of county commissioners, T.A. Bury, began his career in Two Harbors as a hotel manager. He was also one of the first trustees of the town board and had by 1900 served several terms on the village council, two terms of which as its president. According to *Two Harbors in 1900*, he was an important person in the local business community. G.S. Lowe, the Superintendent of Schools, had come to Two Harbors in 1896. Despite being a trained teacher, Lowe worked on the D&IR “with the locomotive department”. Budd, the coroner, was the company surgeon and the owner of the local hospital. Frank Kempffer, the Canadian-born man on the county administration was taken up in the 1910 census as still active in county politics as Clerk of District Court. It hence seems as if there existed a rather strong preponderance of American-born persons in politics. Many of them were related to the company and the local business community. Frank Kempffer, the Canadian-born man on the county administration was taken up in the 1910 census as still active in county politics as Clerk of District Court. It hence seems as if there existed a rather strong preponderance of American-born persons in politics. Many of them were related to the company and the local business community. So, in general, were the Swedish candidates, too, as many of them had started their careers in Two Harbors working for the railroad but had, in at least one case, gone into business only after spending some years working for the D&IR.

The third party movement does not seem to have generated any major following in the county elections during the 1890s, but there were successful independent candidates with non-Republican political affiliations. In 1898 a local barber, F.W. Walker, ran on the fusion ticket for the legislature but lost to his Republican opponent by only 64 votes. Walker, born in Michigan in 1860, had also been active in local politics as town assessor. He was a candidate for the county election in 1900. Although he seems to have lost that election, he managed to get elected in 1904. Another successful politician that was active in the opposition was the newspaperman James Burwell, who was a Democrat and edited the *Iron Trade Journal* in 1899. In the village election of 1899 he won the office of Justice of the Peace by a heavy majority. There hence seems to have been some political opposition to the “ring rule” of certain groups in Two Harbors.

**Analysis**

The influence of traditional Republican politics seems to have been quite overwhelming in Lake County, which tended to promote middle-of-the-road Republican candidates for state office between 1888 and the first years of the 1890s. However, a progressive third-party movement clearly appealed to parts of the population in Lake County. Judging from the meager sources on the subject, it is not possible to fully assess the Scandinavian vote of Lake County as a segment of the vote for the populist movement or the fusion ticket during the 1890s, but there appear to be parts of the community that were concerned about the leaning of the Swedish and Norwegian voters towards populism after the election in 1898. However, large parts of the Scandinavian community, in Lake County as elsewhere in the Midwest, tended traditionally to be Republican in politics.

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762 Burwell, H. *Two Harbors in 1900*.
763 Burwell, H. *Two Harbors in 1900*.
764 *The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1905*.
765 Burwell, H. *Two Harbors in 1900*.
which is indicated by the nominating convention that in 1890 elected a Swede and a Norwegian as their candidates in the county elections of that year. These candidates cannot by any means be regarded as self-evidently radical in politics, but they, too, had obviously aroused strong feelings in the Republican Anglo-American press.

The two Scandinavians were employed by the railroad company, one in the capacity of fireman and the other as foreman. In addition, both were championed at that time by the more progressive newspaper in Two Harbors. These were then candidates that were both an expression of immigrants entering the political arena, and of ethnic voting within the confines of the Republican Party. An indication of a split in the Swedish-American community is the local Swedish Lutheran minister who spoke very negatively about the local Progressive newspaper, which had supported the two Scandinavians running for office. The Swedish Lutheran minister in fact had told his congregation not to support this paper, but later took that statement back. This convincingly reveals class divisions and the role played by the Swedish bildungs bourgeoisie in this respect. There is thus an obvious split where the class dimension of being a Swedish immigrant with some certainty played an important role. The Swedish-American church might be considered to have had double loyalties since the pastor on the one hand represented his working class congregation and had developed both loyalties and solidarity with the countrymen based on ethnicity. On the other hand, the pastor was with some probability ideologically connected to the petty bourgeoisie since the Augustana pastors seldom were recruited from the working class.

The growth and stabilization of Two Harbors during the 1890s also meant that the 50 or so men who were eligible to vote in the mid-1880s multiplied. Voting patterns changed, and increased support for more progressive forces in the gubernatorial elections seem connected to the fact that increasing numbers of workers had settled and increasing numbers of Scandinavian working class immigrants had become eligible to vote. The progressive tendencies were seemingly somewhat stronger in Lake County in the gubernatorial elections from 1894 and onward when compared with the results of the elections on the state level. Lind’s victory in the county in 1896 and the loss of the gubernatorial election on the state level are cases in point. Hence, with an emerging and distinct class structure in Two Harbors, workers seem to align themselves with more progressive forces as third parties do very well in the gubernatorial elections of the 1890s in Lake County. The working class was, however, connected to ethnicity as many workers at this time were Scandinavians in Two Harbors. Hence, ethnicity too played a role for the success of Lind in Lake County.

Another indication of the rise of a political opposition is the Socialist vote. The Progressive newspaper supporting Lind and other fusion ticket candidates in the 1898 election brought up Socialism and the similarities between more progressive “meliorist” thought and class based radicalism. In the discussion, the progressive editor encouraged its readers not to throw away their vote on a Socialist candidate that would be unable to get elected anyway. This indicates that there
was indeed a Socialist presence in the community that was strong enough to attract the attention of “middle class” reformers bent on turning these workers into progressive voters. That this rallied at least some of the potentially Socialist voters becomes clear when scrutinizing the figures from the election, where only 16 of more than 500 votes cast supported the Socialist-Labor candidate in 1898.  

This progressive trait in the Lake County of the 1890s, and an emerging class conscious working class, in conjunction with the subordinated ethnic groups’ entrance into the political arena, might be seen as an expression of an opposition on the rise, championed by two different progressive newspapers during the decade. My results supports Carl Chrislock’s claim that there was continuity in the voting for third, reform-minded parties as support for these increases throughout the 1890s. First, the working class of Lake County supports the populist movement led by Ignatius Donnelly and then it supports the fusion between an increasingly reform-friendly Democratic Party and the populists that carried the county in 1896, 1898 and 1900. This continuity convincingly illustrates how the support for reform increased during the 1890s. Numbers indicate that the vote for the fusion was to a large extent populist in character, since the Democratic candidate had only polled 11 percent of the vote in the county before the fusion.

As also becomes evident when reading the local papers of the period, the reign of corporate interests in Two Harbors, which, according to the progressive newspaper in the city, had been channeled through the Republican Party and its nominating convention, had been broken by another alternative. This alternative manifested itself in third-party efforts culminating in the support for the fusion candidacy of John Lind.

The election of Lind was framed in a rhetoric describing the interests of the people of Minnesota as being in conflict with the great capitalist enterprises that had established themselves in the state. The rhetoric mirrored the struggle for political representation between the working class and parts of the petty bourgeoisie of Two Harbors on the one hand and the company on the other. As we have seen, the railroad company was periodically quite active in promoting its own candidates for public offices in order to secure the control of the D&IR and the leading position of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie in Two Harbors. At the end of the decade this “coterie”, according to Editor Morley Metcalfe, consisted of a strong coalition of business enterprises that integrated the elected officials into its project of dominating the local political arena.

The reaction by the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment in relation to the Scandinavian politicians and to the Irish immigrants that entered the political

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766 The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1899.
767 See Chrislock, Carl. The Progressive Era in Minnesota. for an overview of the political change that occurred at this time all over the state. Lind won the election in part because he wanted to challenge railroad interests and big business, but also due to the fact that he wanted slow reform, a fact that appealed to a broader mass of voters.
arena in 1890 and 1891, respectively, was severe. The Scandinavians, even though accused of incompetence and being unfit to govern the county, did not attract the same violent reaction from “the White Caps” with roots in nativist sentiments in the Anglo-American group as did the Irish Catholic immigrants. The strategies employed by the ethnic and class-based establishment were, in both cases, nativist in character, but the expressions of this nativism varied, as the answer to the Irish Catholic running for office became violent, anti-democratic and anti-constitutional, a fact that was pointed out and capitalized upon by the emerging immigrant/class-based opposition.

The events and political tensions at the beginning of the 1890s, were, hence in important ways related to the idea of Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony and is evidence that the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment did not readily accept an immigrant working class as competitors for influence. The answer from the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment was partly expressed in the form of a claim to define other ethnic groups and connected to ideological power. It was also expressed in the use of violence and direct exercise of power, to use Gramsci’s term, dominio. The fact that violence was used indicates the relative weakness of the dominant Anglo-American group, but from the evidence available, it appears that violence was only used on this single occasion. Otherwise the cultural process of subordination and superiority found other expressions.

My purpose in connecting nativist sentiments in the local community with Anglo-Americans is not to stigmatize all Anglo-American historical actors as nativist. Instead I want to illustrate major structural connections between power relations based on class and on ethnicity and the actions of company officials and nativists during the decade, which indicates that the question of a specific ethnic and class-based group’s dominance is reinforced and that these interests, in some sense, overlap, even if a majority of the Anglo-American population did not support the attack on the Irish immigrant, or even the questioning of Scandinavian workers in local politics. The expression of Anglo-American violence is thus an anomaly and an expression for relative weakness in relation to the other ethnic groups in the community. Bearing in mind that power relations between social and cultural groups had been established merely ten years earlier with the railroad, this tension can be explained by the fact that the system of subordination based on class and ethnicity still had not found a stable expression and was in a process of formation and constant renegotiation. The episode with the Irish immigrant indicates also the importance of dominio in the historical process and points to the fact that hegemony cannot exist in pure form in a historical reality. Instead, hegemony and dominio in some sense complements each other.

As a counterpoint to dominio, the Anglo-American bourgeoisie seems to have managed to draw ethnic working class politicians into its sphere of influence, as Olson at the end of the 1890s was accused of running the errands of the D&IR and was regarded as a conservative force in politics, despite his Scandinavian background and his subordinated position in the labor market as a worker for the company. This reveals the mechanisms of hegemony, how consent is crafted and
how ethnic workers were also integrated into a sphere of thought connected to the expanding capitalist economy. This integration was however based on consent to Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony.

The conflict between two major groupings was hence defined during the 1890s in the railroad town of Two Harbors. One was dominated by the railroad company and parts of the largely Anglo-American business community and the other was working-class-based but had the support of parts of the local petty bourgeoisie. The former grouping was held together by its connection with the industrial capitalist project, as indicated by the connection between the company and politics while indications are that the latter was based in a dawning sense of common interest, either in the form of a people that opposed the capitalist interests embedded in the railroad company or as a class based opposition.

As we have also seen in the development during the 1890s, the ethnic working class became increasingly active in constructing something similar to what Richard Oestreicher has described as a sub-culture of opposition during the following decades. I will in the following turn to the formation of this opposition up to the early 1920s.

**Radicalism in Two Harbors, the Public Ownership Party and the road to Socialist dominance**

During the 1890s and in the election of 1900 the Republicans tended to dominate local politics in Lake County. However, as we have seen, the third party movement met with significant success. Apart from the attraction of the third party movement and the progressive platform of the Lind gubernatorial campaigns, there was another movement attracting popular support, as Socialism was on the rise in the county during the second half of the 1890s. Table 18 presents the votes for the Socialist Labor Party, the Socialist Party and the Public Ownership Party in the returns from the gubernatorial elections in Lake County 1896-1910. The Public Ownership Party was a party in the mid-western tradition, based on the interests of small farmers and workers.

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768 Oestreicher, Richard. *Solidarity and Fragmentation. Working People and Class Consciousness in Detroit 1875-1900*. Oestreicher emphasizes that this subculture cut across ethnic boundaries and that this oppositional culture’s most important problem was to negotiate ethnic differences to be successful. See especially pp.60-67.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total vote cast</th>
<th>Socialist-Labor</th>
<th>Socialist Party/ Public Ownership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>(593)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>896</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td></td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1318</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota. 1897-1911. MHS, St. Paul, MN.

When looking at the returns from the elections for governor of Minnesota, the tendency towards an ongoing radicalization and increased voting for parties emphasizing farmer and working class interests seems quite obvious. From a modest 8 votes in 1896, the Socialist vote rose to 65 in 1902 to reach almost a hundred six years later. In 1904 the Socialist vote was, however, only six votes, but apart from this dip, the figures rose considerably during the first decade of the 1900s. One explanation might be the candidacy of a Democratic candidate with a labor-friendly reputation and with Swedish parents. The real change in the results occurred in 1910, when two Socialist parties taken together obtained more than 300 votes. From the 1904 election onwards candidates ran under the banner of the Public Ownership Party rather than using the Socialist Party label.

Local Politics 1900-1911

During the 1890s a number of progressive newspapermen seem to have regarded company dominance and the influence of the railroad company as a problem in Lake County, and irritated voices were heard about the actions of the D&IR, parts of the local business community and the Republican Party. However, despite the success of John Lind’s Progressive program, the Republican dominance at the local level remained for most of the 1890s and in the elections for county offices in 1900 and 1902.

One instance where a straight company ticket, not endorsed by the community, met with almost complete defeat was the 1900 election to the Two Harbors village council. A ticket of candidates had been nominated at an official caucus in late February. Nominees included Harry Holden, superintendent of the docks, F.W. Walker, a local businessman, A.J. McGee, another local businessman, Soren Jensen, blacksmith and Thomas Martin, a former locomotive engineer.

However, Railroad Superintendent Thomas Owens and the D&IR launched an independent ticket with mostly local high-ranking employees of the railroad...
company including Albert Headley, foreman of the company car shops, Doerr, foreman of the paint shops, Watts, a dock agent and John Olson, by then an old-timer in local politics. The independent ticket launched by Owens won only one seat despite the fact that “they had men peddling tickets through the shops and all over town”, and its candidates having been given good support by the “railroad vote”. 509 voted in the village of Two Harbors and 506 in the town of Two Harbors. The division into a township of Two Harbors and a village organization was initially a result of the actions by the first railroad president who sought to secure company judicial control in the whole county. The election hence underlines the fact that the D&IR was, indeed, challenged in the political arena by organized opponents. The challenge put up seems to have consisted primarily of local businessmen of Anglo descent, but at least one skilled worker, an immigrant blacksmith, was on the ticket.

Before the election for village and town of 1901 the ticket launched at the caucus met little opposition, but The Iron Trade Journal stated that the organized railroad men put up opposition and supported their candidate “Mr. Newell”, a locomotive engineer. The newspaper concluded that the railroaders had started to interest themselves more in the village and its affairs, since many of them had become property holders in 1901 and were planning to make their futures in Two Harbors. Newell was elected as a trustee, while two men of Scandinavian origin contested one of the other seats, to which the temperance man Alfred Engstrom, an American-born grocery store clerk with Swedish parents was elected over a saloon man.

Both the town and village elections of 1902-1905 seem to have been less characterized by political conflict than the previous decade, and on all occasions many of the town board members were re-elected. It seems as if the two different groupings sketched initially had taken a more firm political form. In 1903 the village ticket elections witnessed the re-election of many of the officials from the previous year, but the composition of the village council is especially noteworthy, since men that would later play prominent roles in the Socialist movement were represented together with outspoken company candidates.

H.S. Bryan, superintendent of motive power, was elected village president against no opposition. He was nominated a few weeks prior to the election by Superintendent Thomas Owens at a village caucus. The board of village trustees was composed of three men, J.P. Paulson, a Swedish immigrant with strong ties to the Republican Party, H.W. Cable, one of the leading men in the local commercial club and L.D. Rose, local businessman, also active in the Commercial Club in 1910, owner of a confectionary store and, later, very active in the Social-

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769 The Iron Trade Journal, 8/3, 1900. p.1, p.4
770 The Iron Trade Journal, 15/3, 1900. p.4.
772 The Iron Trade Journal, 28/2,1901. p.4
773 The Iron Trade Journal, 14/3, 1901. p.4
ist movement. Rose had been born in Paris of English parents. He was one of the leading characters in the English-speaking Socialist local for a long period. Another company employee elected was George W. Watts, who was the D&IR ore dock agent. A Danish immigrant, L.P. Christensen, was elected village constable. F.E. Evans was elected village recorder. He was a local businessman and secretary in the commercial club in 1910. In 1920, Evans was chief clerk in the D&IR offices.

The representation of company employees holding higher positions is, hence, significant; together with the local businessmen, they apparently dominated on the ticket elected. There were also two men that would later become active in the local Socialist movement. Interestingly, both were immigrants.

Party designation did not seem to mean very much in these elections, possibly due to the character of the town and village elections, which were not primarily connected with party politics. It is, however, possible to trace some of those who were later active in the Socialist movement as being active in the first years of the 1900s. It is also possible to see how some of the candidates that were nominated at the caucus can clearly be connected with the D&IR and its political interests.

In the county elections at the beginning of the 1900s, the Republican dominance was strong. Opposition to the Republican establishment had come largely from within the Republican Party’s ranks. In 1902, Republicans won all but one place in the county government against a score of independent candidates. The only independent candidate elected was Mr. Charles M. Floathe. The strong Republican dominance is not in itself proof of a political situation without tensions and conflicts, as the Republican Party at the beginning of the 1900s had adopted parts of the Lind platform from the late 1890s in order to attract votes. This development meant a sharpening of in-party fighting.

Two years later the situation was quite different, when a large number of voters had supported the Socialist candidate (under the label of The Public Ownership Party) for lieutenant governor of Minnesota. The candidate for that party received more than 20 percent of the thousand ballots cast in Lake County. He defeated the Democratic candidate for the statewide post in the vote within the county. That year, Rothfus, an American-born steam laundry owner of German parentage ran for the office of County Treasurer, but was, together with five other Public Ownership candidates, defeated by their Republican adversaries. One Public Ownership man, John Pearson, was elected as coroner. An independ-

776 Burwell, H. Two Harbors in 1900.
ent elected was Charles M Floathe.\textsuperscript{779} It was also notable that a railroad man, Ira Foote, ran under the label of Public Ownership and was endorsed by the Order of Railway Conductors. Other endorsements from trade unions included a Republican candidate supported for the position of Clerk of Court by both the Order of Railway Conductors and by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen.\textsuperscript{780}

In the village election of 1905 the ticket also seems to have mirrored the political divisions of Two Harbors, where local businessmen and D&IR employees in the capacity of foremen or officials got elected together with people, both railroad men and owners of small business enterprises, who would later play important roles in the Socialist movement. James H Lunz, a local coal and timber merchant, was elected president of the village council, seemingly without opposition. Lunz was native-born and had a long history in Lake County, initially working as a stagecoach driver, before getting into the timber business.\textsuperscript{781} For trustees the village elected W.A. Doerr, foreman of the D&IR paint shops, and Joseph Beck, who in the 1910s was head of the electrical department on the D&IR. The third man on the village board of trustees was Alex Halliday, a man who would run on Public Ownership and Socialist tickets for years to come. L.P. Christensen was again elected village constable.\textsuperscript{782} Some men with Progressive and even class-conscious views, hence, seem to have been elected to the village council during these early years of the twentieth century. The leadership for this opposition were, to a large extent, Anglo immigrants, as in the case of L.D. Rose, or native-born, as was the case with both Foote and Halliday. Both later became local businessmen, Halliday being labeled a barber in the 1910 census and the owner of an undertaking agency in the 1920 census, while Foote, who had been employed as a locomotive engineer, after an accident became the owner of a confectionary and cigar store.\textsuperscript{783}

Despite the immigrants running for the Public Ownership Party, a number of Scandinavian immigrants seem to have supported countrymen who were Republicans. John P. Paulson, a Swedish-born Republican and one of the leading men in the Swedish Lutheran Congregation, received strong support from the community on many occasions and was active in local politics in the 1910s.\textsuperscript{784}

**Analysis**

An interesting feature of the political changes during the first years of the 1900s is *The Iron Trade Journal*’s observation in the 1901 election that the railroad workers as a collective body and their organizations took a more active part in local politics. The observation of the newspaper is evidenced in the way that the trade unions endorsed candidates in elections.

\textsuperscript{780} *The Iron Trade Journal*, 2/9, 1904. p.6.
\textsuperscript{781} Burwell, H. *Two Harbors in 1900*.
\textsuperscript{782} *The Iron Trade Journal*, 16/3, 1905. p.1.
The difference between the county elections in 1902 and 1904 is striking, as there seems to have been a lack of organizational means by which to articulate class interests on the local level in 1902, while the latter year indicates the existence of an emerging political alternative to the dominance of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. The success of this opposition is also illustrated by the village elections in 1900, 1903 and 1905, which were dominated by local Anglo businessmen, railroad officials and railroad foremen, but which also displayed an emerging will among certain groups of immigrant businessmen and railroad workers to acquire political power, a further expression of an emerging political alternative to bourgeois dominance. These village elections show how persons who would later play prominent roles in the Socialist locals were politically active even though a formal organization into a class based party seems to have been lacking.

The election in 1904 is the first effort from a class-based alternative of the political and cultural forces in opposition to the interests of the company to claim political power in the county, but it was based on long term progressive activism and strong support for the third party tradition in Minnesota during the 1890s. Despite its failure to win the election, this effort indicates that a class-conscious, Progressive alternative to company and business dominance existed by this time, an alternative that drew votes both from railroad workers, who had started to settle down around the turn of the century, and other Progressive forces in the community, e.g. local businessmen such as L.D. Rose. The leadership, judging by the candidates running in the election, appears to have consisted of American-born or Anglo immigrants. At least two of them, were at some point employed as railroad workers in the running trades on the D&IR. The leadership of this concerted effort thus relied on Anglo immigrants and American born. There were also Scandinavian immigrants who got elected as independent candidates or as Public Ownership Party representatives in 1904. In all probability, part of the support came from their countrymen.

However, there were also ethnic politicians elected as Republicans, which underlines how the ethnic groups were fragmented by political differences. The gradual changes of local political affiliations as shown in Table 18 consequently also affected the elections to county, village and town government in the early 1900s. The shift towards support for a class-conscious Progressive alternative to company and business dominance under the banner of The Public Ownership Party thus coincided more or less with the railroad work force settling down in the first years of the 1900s. American-born and Anglo immigrants, who dominated the skilled trades, settled down to a larger extent than less skilled immigrants. These skilled workers and at least one immigrant businessman apparently formed the backbone of the activists in the early period of Socialism in Two Harbors. This does not rule out the possibility that there were Socialist sentiments among the Swedish workers. Judging by the relationship between the Progressive movement and Scandinavians in Two Harbors, and given the way that the two movements were regarded as kindered by one of the progressive news-
papermen in Two Harbors at the end of the 1890s, some (Swedish) immigrant workers, in all probability, also sympathized with the ideas presented by The Public Ownership Party. The development in Two Harbors with its increasingly settled working class points to the same conclusions as have been drawn by Joan Scott, namely that political activism demands a fairly secure and settled life situation.\(^7\) This situation had been established in Two Harbors by the beginning of the century at the same time that radicalism and class-consciousness started to have an effect on local politics.

**Municipal success for the political alternative**

In 1907 the village of Two Harbors became the city of Two Harbors, and in that year the voters elected a Public Ownership Party (Socialist) mayor, C.G. Rothfus. The election of 1907 But interestingly, the mayoral seat was the only one won by the Public Ownership Party ticket, since the other men elected save one represented the “convention” \(^6\) i.e., they ran as Republicans. The Two Harbors Iron News also stated that even the election for mayor was very close, since Rothfus, an American-born man of German ancestry who owned a steam laundry in Two Harbors, won by only 15 votes out of almost 800. The election had been preceded by a press discussion on individual skills among the people running for office. The pro-company newspaper Two Harbors Iron News wrote right before the election:

> Two Harbors seems to be rich on representative material, and with possibly one or two exceptions, no man stands out… The city election will be largely a matter of personal taste founded on personal knowledge of candidates.

The editor seeks to downplay the importance of a specific party affiliation and platform and advises the public to go for the candidate that they prefer on a personal level, since “the candidates [of the private ownership party] must personally measure up with the men who may be pitted against them in the political arena” \(^7\)

The criticism of the Socialist platform was not particularly strong, but after the election The Two Harbors Iron News claimed that

> [I]n a sense the election is a triumph of the plain voter, and his voice can be depended on to be heard with some emphasis during the next two years. The initiative, the referendum and the recall are three weapons that he will learn to wield to his municipal advantage should fitting occasions arise for their employment.\(^8\)

\(^{7}\) Scott, Joan. *The Glass Workers of Carmaux*. pp.84, 85.


\(^{7}\) *Two Harbors Iron News*, 8/3, 1907. p.4.

After Two Harbors had become a city certain new political rules came into play. However, the statement was also a threat to the new Socialist mayor not to rock the municipal boat too hard, unless the voters would have him dethroned. The Two Harbors Iron News said that the Socialist platform helped Rothfus to get elected, since it was clear and specific, while the convention nominees’ platform had been very general in its terms. Before the election, the Public Ownership Party platform declared its pro-labor stand and presented a very practical program for reform at the municipal level. It also reaffirmed its allegiance to “The International Socialist Party”, the “Socialist Party of the United States” and to the “Public Ownership Party of Minnesota”. The platform stated that it would “uphold all laws”, work for “public ownership of all public utilities” and work “for the advancement of all workers at all times”. Furthermore, the party wanted to construct a public hospital, a public coal dock and better sewerage.

In 1907 the ticket of the Public Ownership Party offers us the possibility to analyze the class base and the ethnic composition of the opposition. The ticket was composed of the previously named C.G. Rothfus for mayor. The candidate for treasurer was an American-born locomotive engineer employed by the D&IR, J.W. Woodfill, who lived in the heavily Scandinavian third ward. The Public Ownership candidate for alderman of the 4th ward was W.F. Engel, whose identity I have not been able to establish, though his name suggests German ethnic heritage. There were also two Swedish immigrant candidates for the position of alderman at large, Nels Westlund, labeled in the census of 1910 as a laborer on county roads, and Chas. E. Bergren, the owner of a photography studio, while the third position was contested by an American-born, R.E. Jones of English and Irish heritage, who worked as a fireman for the D&IR.

L.D. Rose was an English immigrant, the owner of a confectionary store and ran for the position of alderman of the first ward. The 2nd ward candidate was Alexander Halliday, a barber born in Iowa of American-born parents. Halliday had worked on the railroad and was active in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen as late as 1918. The 3rd ward candidate, C.W. Dawson, was an American-born railroad brakeman with an American-born father and a French Canadian mother. The final candidate, Alfred Johnson, was a Swedish immigrant working on the ore dock and living in the heavily Scandinavian third ward of the city.

Thus, out of ten nominees, three were Swedish-born immigrants of whom two were laborers, while one was a photographer with his own business. One was American-born of German ancestry. Apart from Alexander Halliday, there were three other American-born men who represented the railroad workers. One of these American-born had Irish immigrant parents, while one had a French Cana-

790 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1910.
791 Trade Union reports to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries, 1918.
792 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1910
The ticket appears to have been conceived as having something for everyone, and in light of this plurality it might be difficult to readily regard the opposition as a strictly immigrant phenomenon, since the railroad men employed in the running trades on the ticket were all of Anglo descent. Its multi-ethnic character is, however, in itself a challenge to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance. The ticket did, however, not win the offices contested, apart from the election of Mayor, but the immigrant representation was strong on the Public Ownership ticket, and the program also set out to capture large portions of the working class vote, not least the Swedish one. Judging by the vote for mayor, this strategy seems to have been at least partially successful.

The four different wards of Two Harbors went different ways in the mayoral election. The first and second ward went for the “convention nominee” James H. Lunz, while the heavily Scandinavian third ward and the more mixed but also quite heavily Scandinavian fourth ward went for Rothfus. This indicates that a large portion of the Swedish vote with some certainty was cast for the Socialist candidate. The goals of the Public Ownership program of the 1907 election seem to have appealed to large segment of voters in Two Harbors, and in 1911 the party was still called The Public Ownership Party. Its allegiance to the Socialist Party was, however, declared in its platform. In the 1912 election the party called itself the Socialist Party.

Perhaps the most marked change in the political arena occurred in the county election of 1910 and in the city election the following year. In the 1910 election, the Socialist candidates, who ran under the banner of Public Ownership, were complemented by independent candidates, who generally wanted to challenge the Republican rule of the county. In an article titled “Sound the Trumpet Beat the Drums” the editor of the The Iron Port Advocate, DeLacy Wood wrote: “The voice of the people has been indicated at last”. John Kinsella, who ran for office of president of the village council in the early 1890s, had, in the 1910 election, won out over the Republican candidate, who was championed by the pro-

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794 Frenkel, Susanna. An American Experiment in Socialism: Two Harbors. pp.2,3. Frenkel’s paper primarily discusses the Two Harbors Socialist in the 1910s, but also discusses the general political development in the community. I have done my own investigation of the Two Harbors Socialist, but my results are supported by the facts mined by Frenkel from the same sources. I, hence, follow Frenkel’s presentation to some extent.
795 The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1913. p.313.
company newspaper in Two Harbors, The Journal News. Mr. Wood also alluded to the events surrounding the village election in 1891 by stating:

The election is over and no one has been killed or wounded in Lake County, and the voice of the people is heard in the land... the Chinese wall of persecution, bigoting and bulldozing in Lake County was practically broken by the voters last Tuesday.

After the election Wood claimed that a political “ring” based in “the corporate newspaper and corporation interests” had dominated politics for a long time, and had opposed him and other Progressives in Two Harbors. The opinion that a small group of people was running local politics was an echo of Wood’s own analysis during the early 1890s and the same opinion expressed by other newspapermen in the 1890s. Wood called the election of Kinsella an act “of freemen that cast the vote of the people in spite of ring interests trying to bulldoze them”.

A number of Socialists were also elected to office. Mr. Nels Hillman, a Swedish-born locomotive engineer, was elected to the legislature on the Socialist ticket and beat the Republican candidate Fowler. Alex Halliday and Mr. Dawson, both Public Ownership candidates, were elected to the school board and the treasurer of school district no.2, respectively. Despite the success of the Socialists, most of the offices were still in Republican hands after the election, but again the challenge documented by the press supportive of the Public Ownership candidates and Progressive Republicans was strong. The growth of this political opposition was also visible in the fact that the candidate for the Public Ownership Party for governor received almost 300 votes while the Republican candidate received 471 (see Table 18). The support for the Public Ownership candidates by Wood and the definition of the voice of the people in this respect is interesting, since Wood himself was not a Socialist. He seems to have preferred the class partisanship of that party to company rule however.

In the elections to city council in March 1911, the Socialists, again under the banner of “Public Ownership”, decisively carried the city. Alexander Halliday was elected mayor, while a number of other Socialists were elected to other offices. In the election the Socialists ran a complete city ticket. Apart from Halliday, the ticket consisted of A.P. Overland, a Norwegian immigrant, C.G. Rothfus, Alf Johnson, a Swedish-born D&IR laborer, C.E. Bergren, the Swedish photographer, T.E. Murphy, and H.J. Irwin, a Canadian-born electrician of Scottish and Irish parents. For aldermen of three of the city’s four wards the Socialists

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801 The Legislative Manual of the state of Minnesota, 1911. p.476.
nominated L.D. Rose, Ernest Strand, a Swedish-born barber, and C. Essen, who was in all probability Swedish-born. The class and ethnic character of the ticket is fairly mixed, as both workers and smaller business owners, native-born and immigrants are represented. This ticket, perhaps to an even larger degree than in 1907, reflected the Scandinavian population of Two Harbors. The Swedish element is again prominent on the ticket as four men out of ten were born in Sweden.

Wood, in his analysis after the election, again discusses the interests involved in the political ring of Two Harbors, stating that “a lemon has been handed to the ‘old city gang’ by the triumphant election of the Socialistic Ticket”.

Mr. Wood then continues to say:

*The Death Knell has at least been given the strong ring rule in cooperation with the self constituted dictators of the steel trust that has virtually defied the interests of the people the past twenty years, and they richly deserved the big lemon so unanimously presented [them by the voters].*

Wood also expressed great happiness at having lived to see the “practical defeat of ‘ringism’, hypocrisy and duplicity in Lake County”, and that he was helped in his struggle by many “staunch and progressive republicans and several clergymen joining him and other insurgents in their fight against ‘ring rule’”. He did not withhold his agony:

*While we have always maintained that justice is sometimes blindfolded we rejoice to know that the mask of political knavery and treason has been removed from the Trojan Horse of Lake County where several Benedict Arnolds and Judas Iscariots of the modern type still exist.*

The quotes from the local newspaper of the years around 1910 hence supports the shift towards class-conscious voting, indicated by the returns from the gubernatorial election of that year as the Socialists caught a significant portion of the votes (see table 18).

The Swedish-born representatives on the 1907 and the 1911 Public Ownership tickets beg for further discussion, and there are indications that there were some Scandinavian Socialists in Two Harbors in 1906, as the well-known Swedish labor agitator, August Palm, visited Two Harbors in that year, invited by Swedish workers. How these Swedish workers were organized is implied in *Two Harbors in 1900*, where there is some mention of a Scandinavian labor organization.
active in that year. Furthermore, many Scandinavian workers seem to have organized into an Ore Trimmers’ Society. Any of these could have invited Palm, and his invitation suggests definitely some support for Socialism among the Swedish population at this time.

Analysis
The period between 1906 and 1911 is evidently characterized by an increasingly organized political opposition to company dominance and the “ring rule” of local politics. The opposition drew from two different organizational sources to accomplish its political goals. One was the allegiance to the “Public Ownership Party”, a continuation of the third party tradition in Minnesota and the Midwest, which grew out of popular discontent with the two established parties and the political machines that had been so prominent when industrial capitalism was established in the Midwest.

The use of the label Public Ownership and the affiliation with this third party tradition during the period underlines a connection back to the success of the 1896-1900 Populist-Democrat fusion ticket and the People’s Party. This tradition apparently married well with the emerging sentiments for Socialism at the turn of the century. The opposition reached a new level of political organization that came together under the label of Public Ownership.

The ethnic component in this opposition had, at least judging by the meager sources on the subject, been drawn from the immigrant working class in Two Harbors, not the least the Swedish workers. The launching of three Swedish candidates in the 1907 city election, the four Swedish candidates in 1911 and the strong support of the Public Ownership mayoral candidate in immigrant wards underline these connections. These events also indicate the importance of the Swedish working-class vote in Two Harbors at this time.

The opposition did not, however, only consist of immigrants, since the 1907 ticket suggests that the vote of railroad workers in the running trades was also important. It underlines these groups’ importance among those active in the movement, since the running trades and skilled work were dominated by Anglo-Americans. Furthermore, the choice of nominating only Anglos from these trades was probably a tactical one, as Swedish railroad workers might have polled worse than an American-born in these circles. The skilled Anglo-Americans together with the participants from the petty bourgeoisie gave the ticket the respectability needed to draw votes from others than immigrant laborers.

The mix of ethnic groups, different skill levels and representatives of the petty bourgeoisie running on the Socialist ticket also indicates the multi-ethnic and cross-class character that the opposition took in Two Harbors, self-employed men and wage workers with different cultural backgrounds being able to agree on certain political principles. This supports the discussion offered by Richard Oestreicher about the success of a working class sub-culture of opposition in De-
troit in the 1880s, whose main challenge was to negotiate boundaries between
ethnic groupings in that city.805 The Socialist movement in Two Harbors not
only negotiated these boundaries, but also crafted cross-class and cross-skill alli-
ances as parts of the petty bourgeoisie as well as skilled workers were heavily
involved in the Socialist movement. Common experience as workers or former
workers on the D&IR tied them together and provided a bridge between classes
and ethnic groups in the challenge to the company and “ring” dominance of local
politics.

The Socialist Period in Two Harbors,
1911-1919

The 1911 election in Two Harbors was not unique, being but one of many simi-
lar Socialist victories in municipal elections all over the country between 1910
and 1915, when literally hundreds of candidates were elected to public office. In
this perspective the question, originally put forward by German sociologist
Werner Sombart, of why there has been no Socialism in America seems strange
and wrongly put. In fact, previous research has shown how socialism and its
class-based language constituted an active force in shaping Progressive Era polit-
ics, through a far-reaching program of reform, and through the party’s influence
on the political scene in general, as they became a contender over the working
class vote.806

The focus on the municipal level as it was manifested in Two Harbors was one
step in a national, long-term Socialist strategy, which aimed at building a party
from the ground up, and using urban politics to gain the political and administra-
tive experience to challenge the established parties on the state and the federal
levels. However, Socialism in the US seldom attained that goal, the high-water
mark on the national level reaching its peak with Eugene Debs’ bid for the presi-
dency in 1912 when he polled only 6% of the vote. Socialist grassroot activism
close to neighborhoods and local communities in municipalities and major urban
areas all over the country gave the movement strong, if short-lived support pri-
marily during the first half of the 1910s.

There was, however, distinct traits in the development of municipal Socialism in
the US as certain cultural contexts and certain geographic areas were affected to
a larger degree than others. There was also a distinct connection between immi-
grant identity and radicalism, even though far from all contexts where socialism
emerged were dominated by immigrants. Seymour Martin Lipset and Gary Marks
has established that the Socialist parties failed to attract the largely immigrant
working class in the US and that immigrants generally were “far removed from
Socialism”. On the other hand Lipset also draws the conclusion that most Social-

p.26
ists, for extended periods of time in US history, were immigrants. In the 1910s, investigations show that the Midwest was a stronghold for Socialism, that Socialists were best supported in smaller municipalities of less than 5,000 inhabitants and that it tended to be connected to certain ethnic groups, primarily Swedes, Norwegians and Finns.\footnote{Lipset, Seymour Martin; Burbanks, Gary. \textit{It Didn’t Happen Here}. pp.137-147.}

The distinct shift in city political orientation in the 1911 election, which was followed up by a Socialist majority in the 1913 election as well, resulted in a far-reaching Socialist program for reform. The Socialists were successful in establishing municipal control of public utilities, among other things a municipal coal dock, a city ice house, a rock crusher and a publicly owned electric power plant. They also expanded local public works projects and improved sewers and streets. The political victories at the ballot between 1907 and the beginning of the 1910s therefore established a new orientation for local politics in Two Harbors.

Judging from their organization into ethnic locals in the early 1910s and the character of the candidates put up for election, the Socialists mobilized support, mainly through the various ethnic groups of railroad workers and small business people in the city. During the 1910s three ethnic Socialist locals reflected the ethnic composition of the city, especially its working class component. The locals were also in important ways connected to the ethnic communities in the city which were, to some degree, also spatially separated from each other as I have shown in the background chapter on Two Harbors. The Scandinavian local included Swedish and Norwegian members; an English language local attracted native-born Americans and English-speaking immigrants, while the Finns of Two Harbors had their own local. Both the Scandinavian and the Finnish ethnic groups had strong connections with unskilled work on the railroad, as most of the workers on the ore dock and in the track force in 1920 were from these two groups.

When the progressive DeLacy Wood’s newspaper stopped publication for unknown reasons in 1911 the only newspaper left in the city was the pro-company newspaper \textit{The Journal News}. According to Susanna Frenkel, the Socialists were unhappy with the coverage given them in the local newspaper.\footnote{Frenkel, Susanna. \textit{An American Experiment in Socialism: Two Harbors}. p.3.}

To counter the writings of the local pro-company newspaper and to bolster their political dominance, the Socialist clubs decided to start publication of their own newspaper, and the first issue of the \textit{Two Harbors Socialist} appeared in June 1913. The newspaper was owned by the Socialist locals.\footnote{Frenkel Susanna. \textit{An American Experiment in Socialism: Two Harbors}. p.3.} It offered the Socialist locals access to the public sphere and gave them a way of expanding their ideological reach via a program that aimed far beyond the control of local politics. The newspaper was published in English. No issues have been preserved for
1913 and 1914, but the activities of the Socialists in the city can be followed during the period between February 1915 and June 1918. The subscriptions for the newspaper, according to James Weinstein, increased from 752 in 1916 to 900 in 1917 and 1918.810 This indeed indicates a steady growth of the support of the paper through the American entry into the war.

Julius J. Anderson, a Swedish immigrant and typographer who came from Minneapolis in 1915, edited the newspaper.811 From the fall of 1916 Arvie Queber took charge of the editorship until September 1917, when he was replaced by L.D. Rose. There was also a change of ownership when the People’s Publishing Company took over the ownership from the spring of 1918.812 The newspaper encountered increasing problems during the war years and shrank from 8 pages in 1915 and 1916 first to six pages in late 1917 and then to four pages in 1918, so despite the increased number of subscriptions for the newspaper, the newspaper seemed in some jeopardy during the war years. In 1919 Clarence Hillman, a Swedish-born former railroad engineer and local Socialist, took over the editorship, but by then the name of the newspaper had changed into The Lake County Chronicle.

One factor in this was probably the increases in postal rate for these newspapers and the censorship of the radical press during the war that had become a tactic used by the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment to kill off parts of an increasingly controversial Socialist and ethnic press, not only in the Midwest, but nationwide.813

The changes in the editorship and the shift in ownership in 1917 and 1918 are not commented upon in the newspaper, but two likely causes stand out. First, it might have been a result of increasing tensions between the Socialist locals in the city, but as such changes were almost completely absent another explanation is more likely. As the work to increase popular support of the American war effort grew stronger and the questioning of the loyalty of immigrants and radicals increased, the Socialist locals of Two Harbors might have transferred the ownership of the newspaper to an independent co-operative to eliminate one dimension of the loyalty question. The fact that the sub headline on the front page of the new labor newspaper read “Formerly the Two Harbors Socialist” also indicates this.

The various locals met weekly during the 1910s to discuss political matters and draw up plans and guidelines for party activities. We know that the Scandinavian local occasionally met in “Comrade” Ernest Strand’s barbershop814 and that the English local met each Sunday, sometimes in the courthouse. What was dis-

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810 Weinstein, James. The Decline of Socialism in America. p.88.
cussed at the meetings is not generally stated in detail, but we get some insight into it from a meeting of the Scandinavian local in 1918, where the falling membership and recruitment into the party was discussed. Judging from the way that the Scandinavian local described its meetings in 1913, these gatherings seem to have been consumed with discussions, debates on various subjects and the development of internal party strategies. The meetings made Socialism a more permanent political entity in Two Harbors between elections. It was probably also regarded as a social event where people met in a friendly environment out of the home and was an aspect of party building developed by the Socialists during the 1910s. Some of the time the locals had common arrangements and common meetings, and on the whole the relationship between the clubs appears to have been harmonious.

The newspaper played an important role for the socialists in Two Harbors. It was used first as a way of presenting the local community with the work carried out by the Socialists in local politics. It was also used as a way of profiling Socialist candidates for office (at no cost) in the elections, and to propagate for public ownership. Most importantly, it offered a platform where the language of class was used to interpret local and national news and hence clearly represented an effort to “teach” class-consciousness to the workers of the city. At the same time it also documented the activities carried out and gives us an insight into how Socialism developed in the city. The Socialist movement became the most successful incarnation of an opposition to company dominance in the community and not only received strong political support, but also, through an extensive cultural program, changed the face of the community in important ways during the 1910s.

The 1915-1918 elections
In 1915 the Socialist grip was strong on city government in Two Harbors. The preparations for the elections were carried out in cooperation between the three socialist locals, and on February 27 a Socialist mass meeting was held at Glen Hall. The editor of The Two Harbors Socialist wrote that it was one of the largest of its kind ever held in the city. The meeting was considered an important booster for the city Socialists as it gave the activists a “feeling of confidence”. The meeting elected a preliminary ticket that would be made official at a mass meeting on March 4, where not only male voters could have their voices heard, since “it is the custom of the Socialists to transact their business in the meetings of the locals where all party members, both men and women, are allowed to par-

815 Svenska Socialisten, 10/3, 1913, p.3.
816 Two Harbors Socialist, 12/7 1918, p.4; 3/5, 1918, p.4, an event arranged by the Finnish and English-speaking Socialists at Glen Hall is discussed and advertised; 11/1-1918, p.4 an arrangement by the Scandinavian local is advertised.
ticipate”. The editor concluded that the meeting was harmonious and that all were well satisfied with the ticket.\(^{818}\)

The Socialist platform for 1915 was not a very ideological one, but kept to the tradition from the 1907 and 1911 elections with a focus on the day-to-day community concerns. Hence, the ticket emphasized clean government and the expansion of municipal service to help people get rid of “corporation extortion”.\(^{819}\)

One important argument used by the Socialists in their bid for the municipal elections concerned the progress made in previous years towards municipal ownership of a coal dock and a power plant and the resulting low rates for electricity.\(^{820}\) The coal dock had previously been operated by the D&IR.

Under the headline “Weak ticket put up by opposition” the editor of the Two Harbors Socialist, Julius J Anderson, discussed the “Fuzzy Wuzzys” that had held their 1915 caucus. The caucus was the result of a merger between the non-Socialist political forces in the community whose aim was to dethrone the Socialist movement on the local level. This cooperation between Republicans and Democrats was not an uncommon response to the Socialist challenge on the municipal level during the 1910s. In Two Harbors it had been used since 1913.\(^{821}\)

Anderson presented the list of nominees made by the gathering of about 90 people present at the convention, but implied that some of the candidates running against Socialists were not presented at the caucus. So, the Socialists expected political “maneuvering” from the anti-Socialist forces. M.H. Brickley, an official of the D&IR, headed the meeting. Anderson stated that Brickley did not try to “railroad” someone, but that all present were allowed to speak their minds. Anderson described the people attending the meeting, concluding that a dozen were connected with the liquor interests in the city, bartenders, saloon keepers and beer salesmen. Another three or four were local businessmen, while six or seven were clerks. The rest of the 90 people present were all officials or prominent employees of the company. Anderson held the opinion that the crowd was not representative of the citizens of the city but that the motley gathering “showed wonderful harmony due it would appear, to the pervading influence of men like T. Owens, F.E. Evans and other company men”.\(^{822}\)

The headlines and the description of the meeting of the opponents of Socialists clearly indicated the political divisions in the city which became increasingly obvious as F.E. Evans, one of the leaders of the coalition against Socialism, according to Juls Anderson “stated publicly that the editor of this paper should be hanged”.\(^{823}\) In yet another promotional article before the election the Two Harbors Socialist recounted what had happened in the past two years with regard to

\(^{821}\) Svenska Socialisten, 7/12, 1916. p.4.
\(^{823}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 20/2, 1915. p.4.
the coal dock: “We realize only too well that every petty political trick will be
tried to discredit the beneficial undertakings that have been carried out by the
Socialists”.

In another article right before the municipal elections, the editor
Anderson asserted that the candidates from the independent ticket mainly in-
cluded small business people and people under the domination of the D&IR, and
that “they tried to get some workers to run on their ticket, so as to get the people
of Two Harbors to swallow their dose, but the strongest men they had refused to
run”. He continued to discuss the importance of the various offices up for elec-
tion and concluded that voters should not overlook the importance of the position
of city treasurer, since “if you place the funds of the city in the hands of a man
who is under the domination, even if ever so remotely, of men like F.E. Evans,
you are putting in the hands of the company a stick that can be used to hamper
the Socialist administration.”

The Socialists won the election by a narrow margin, with William Towl, an Eng-
lish immigrant employed as a machinist on the D&IR, again winning the may-
oral seat, accompanied by five other Socialists on city council. The Socialist
candidates for treasurer and assessor lost to “the company ticket” by a small
margin. The election was, to a large extent, focused on whether the city would go
wet or dry, and editor Julius Anderson stated that this fight lost the Socialists one
man on the city council. The election also seems to have been characterized by
the struggle between the opposition and the railroad company and its supporters.
One illustration of this comprises the allegations thrown at the Socialists by the
pro-company newspaper right before the election, which in essence claimed that,
due to the Socialist rule of Two Harbors, the city was broke. In the aftermath
of the election, a vote was taken in the city council on the contracting of munici-
pal printing for the coming two-year period, and it went to the Two Harbors So-
cialist, despite its higher bid. City and County printing was an important
source of income for the local newspapers and spelled, more or less, life and
death for the small newspapers published in Two Harbors. It also illustrates
the strategic role of the local press in the struggle between the Socialist move-
ment and anti-Socialist interests in the community. The importance of the sup-
port of a newspaper in the everyday political work hence became obvious in the
discussion.

In the county and state elections of 1916 the anti-socialist alliance seems to have
been better prepared and organized. There was, at this time, a quite confident So-
cialist movement in Two Harbors, which sought to increase its good track record
from previous years. The county election in 1916 came as a rude awakening for
the Socialists, who nominated a ticket with mainly veteran activists. Despite this,
the 1916 election was more or less a disaster for the Socialists. The fusion candi-

827 Two Harbors Socialist, 8/5 1915. p.2.
dates from the mixed Republican and Democratic convention defeated the Socialists for county commissioners in three out of four districts and also won the position of Judge of Probate and Clerk of District Court. Only Hjalmar Matsson managed to get elected on the county level. However, the Socialist candidate for the 57th legislative district (Lake and Cook Counties), the Swedish immigrant Ernest G Strand, was elected state representative. Strand was in 1916 the Socialist mayor of Two Harbors as Towl had resigned his position in that year.829

The Socialist paper called the election “rather humiliating for us Socialists” and meant that the Socialists of Two Harbors had “advanced into an “office holding class”, but that the movement had failed in “[educating] the people sufficiently to cast an intelligent vote”. One important explanation given for the defeat of the Socialist ticket is the way that the “church and temperance vote” failed to support the Socialist temperance program. It seems evident that the movement had gambled for that support but had not received it and in the process it had alienated certain voters. The Socialist paper calls the temperance and church vote “the most unreliable, incompetent and hypocritical to be found”. 830

Furthermore, the loss in the election was, according to the post-election analysis of the Socialist editor, partly due to the tactics of the “sneaky” opposition. The editor also claims that the voters of Two Harbors had failed to appreciate what they had and that the best cure might be another “opportunity to try out the old guard once more”. The bitter editor concluded the post-election debate by asking the question whether it was advisable for the Socialists to put up a ticket in the spring city elections of 1917.831

The post-election discussion did spill over to January of the following year, when the Two Harbors Socialist, now under the editorship of Arvie Queber, published an open letter from the Socialist movement directed to the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad. In the letter, the Socialists wanted “a confidential talk” with “the concern”. The letter was not directed to specific individuals, as it was considered “of no matter what person or persons” had been connected one way or another with the infamous attacks upon the Socialist movement. Instead, the company itself was held to account, because “lesser officials… are under the supervision of the superintendent; the superintendent is under his superiors at Duluth; and the Duluth officials have their bosses in the east”. The editor questioned the company and wondered whether it was “anxious to continue the fight for control and supremacy” or if it was willing to leave city government to the people. He also accused the D&IR of influencing local politics both on the county and city levels and said that it had “dictated the policy of the council for many years”.

He also stated that the company seemed “peeved” for not being able to completely control the political situation. The Socialist editor also claimed that the company interests in the city at one point proposed to buy out and consolidate the Two Harbors Socialist with the pro-company newspaper in the city, which was, according to Queber, often accused of being “edited in the company offices”. The company was also accused of having tried to frame Ernest G Strand for taking bribes during his term as Socialist mayor of Two Harbors, and of having used company detectives to construct a frame-up.

Furthermore, the editor claimed that the company was actively trying, by threats from railroad officials, to get the employees to stop supporting the Two Harbors Socialist. The writer wondered whether the company could blame the Socialists for connecting these actions “with the general scheme of persecution against the Two Harbors Socialist, the Socialist Party and the men elected to represent that party?”

The editor tried to reach a solution to the political controversy between the Socialist movement and company interests, as he ended the letter by saying that if the D&IR was willing to leave the matter of government to the people, the Socialists would “cheerfully co-operate with [the D&IR] for the best interests of the people and the community”.

According to the Socialists, the main adversary in the 1916 election was again the D&IR and the interests expressed by it through the actions of its officials and the men running for office on the anti-Socialist ticket. The role of the petty bourgeoisie and the temperance vote was also revealing in that many of the local pastors, despite the union of interests between the Socialists and the church community, would rather choose a non-Socialist candidate than a Socialist even when the latter was pro-temperance. The community was hence to some extent polarized between two alternatives in the 1915 and 1916 elections. The Socialists promoted municipal reform and temperance and made extensive use of the language of class. The other alternative, non-Socialist- or rather, the Anglo-American bourgeoisie- had strong ties to the D&IR, to the business community and to a large part of the church community and it was not particularly appealed by a language based on class experience. Instead the language of class, in some sense, promoted an alliance between groups that, for some reason, disapproved of class partisanship. The alliance, in effect became a mix of corporate interests and “middle class” reformers, and the most important thing they seem to have had in common was their anti-socialism. The election, furthermore, triggered a press debate between the Socialist paper and The Journal News, further illustrating the political polarization of the community in the elections of the mid-1910s and the alignment of the points of view of the people in Two Harbors into two distinctly different political, social and economic groupings.

832 Two Harbors Socialist, 13/1 1917. p.1.
Despite the accusations and strong words after the 1916 county elections in Lake County, the Socialist locals nominated candidates for the spring 1917 election. On March 7 the Two Harbors Socialist announced: “Socialists Nominate a Strong Ticket”. Many of the nominees were long-time political activists, and the program offered was clear and to the point on what the Socialists wanted to do if they were elected. Again the focus was on locally-based municipal improvements such as the construction of a water filtration plant and the pledge to continue honest and economic city government. In the 1917 election, however, two aspects of a more principled character were stressed in the party platform. The most important of these seems to have been the connection between the Socialist movement and “True Americanism”. This Americanism, the Socialists claimed, stemmed from the Constitution and its guarantee of “free speech, free press and the right of assembly and petition”. This Americanism with the freedoms presented therein was also connected with the “present day Americanism which demands for the workers the product of their labor and that the AMERICAN PEOPLE should have a right to secure the necessaries of life at reasonable prices before anything is exported.”

The Socialist locals of Two Harbors also affirmed the general principles of the Socialist Party program regarding workers’ right to the products of their labor and the socialization of business. This had been routinely done ever since 1904, however, and did not represent anything new. The time of war preparedness and the questioning of the loyalty of the Socialists seem to motivate the new ideological discussion on Americanism, however, and apparently the language of class, which had been a prominent feature in the Socialist programs, was now complemented by a claim to Americanness. Such an emphasis is particularly noteworthy in the light of the ethnically diverse Socialist clubs and their work in Two Harbors.

The candidates for office were Bergren, the Swedish photographer, for mayor, Albin E. Erickson, for treasurer, and Frank Lundquist, a Swedish track laborer for the railroad, for assessor. Three aldermen-at-large were to be elected, and the Socialists put up Thomas E Murphy, an American-born of Irish parents who was foreman of the lighthouse, J.F. Wickstrom, a Swedish track worker, and Ira W. Foote, a former railroad engineer, who had his own business. For the aldermen for each of wards 1-4 the nominees were Chas Alm, a Swedish-born blacksmith and head of the local blacksmiths’ union, Andrew Beck, August Strand, a Swedish immigrant and the brother of Ernest G Strand, and Peter Klemmetsen. The nomination meeting was held under the auspices of the Scandinavian Socialist local. Despite the explicit statement from the Socialist locals that both men and women were allowed to vote and to express their opinion at these nominations, the only mention of women being active at the meeting was that “the ladies of
the Scandinavian local served coffee”. 834 The impression of masculine dominance in the Socialist clubs, as in other parts of contemporary society, seems indisputable, despite the Socialist rhetoric.

Meanwhile, anti-socialist politicians joined under the banner of “The Citizen’s Progressive League”, which, according to its program, was a non-partisan organization composed of citizens of the city that wanted to elect honest, conscientious and competent men who supported the platform of the league, and whose oath of office “will be a bond between themselves and our citizens. All candidates of the league, said the editor of The Journal News, “have agreed to serve all the people of the city to the best of their ability and understanding, regardless of race, color, creed or politics”. In the platform, no ideological markers were used, and on many points the League’s program even coincided with the program launched by the Socialists. 835

Despite these similarities a number of keywords are found in the “citizen’s” declaration that clearly opposes the language of class used by the Socialists. First, the way that the league claimed to represent all citizens and not one class or specific segment of the community stands out. Second, the way that the league uses a language similar, and connected, to the language used by e.g. the YMCA movement based on the idea of individual self-improvement and a specific moral code (signaled by word such as “honest”, “conscientious”, “competent”). In this respect, the league clearly used a language connected to the meliorist progressive tradition described by Stromquist, where the citizenship and the individual virtues and responsibilites of the candidates were important. In this way, the class partisanship of the Socialist movement was put in contrast to the seemingly more inclusive language used by the league. The broad alliance was, hence connected in important ways to both the middle class language of reform and to corporate interests that wanted to overthrow its strong class-adversary in the local community. Another aspect that made the Socialists and the progressive alliance differ was in their respective position on the war.

Unlike the Socialists, who for years had been deeply critical of the war in Europe and of any measure or rhetoric that would involve the US in the conflict, the League stated its support to the war policy of the President. 836 In an article printed merely days before the election the whole first page of the Journal News sported an article called The Actual Facts about City Finances, Abundant Reasons Why the Candidates of the Citizen’s League should be Elected Next Tuesday. It claimed that the Socialist government of the City had brought it near bankruptcy. This offensive was followed by a comment on the candidates for the Progressive League: “never in the history of the city have the voters had an op-

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portunity to elect such a truly representative body of men as has been put forward as candidates… by the citizen’s Progressive League”.

In a “communication” in the *Two Harbors Socialist* the League representatives were accused of being prone to fall for pressures from the Railroad Company. The League stated in its answer that “we will not be dictated in any manner by the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad Co., nor by any political organization, party or person, OTHER THAN THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY”. The editor of *The Journal News* added that the candidates of the Progressive League were all men of good standing, which would not be under the domination of either the railroad or any political ring, and would be "free to transact the business affairs of the city… for the best interest of all". The Journal News also displayed this line of argument, where the Socialist program was portrayed as a liability to the politicians after the election. Two Harbors, for the first time in six years, was said to have a chief executive “free to exercise his best judgment in the management of the affairs of that office”, and that “the city council will be representative of the whole city and all the people thereof”.

Despite the Socialist preparations for being able to continue governing the city, the company ticket, as it was called in the Two Harbors Socialist, carried the election and won the mayoral seat, the assessor seat and four aldermen positions. The Socialists, on the other hand, won the position of city treasurer and three aldermen seats on the city council. The Socialist editor seemed mostly surprised by the defeat, and commented thus:

*Apart from the eleventh hour roarbacks the Socialist defeat was partly caused by persecution of party members, some of whom have had to give up their activity in the movement to hold their jobs. And some of our best friends could not come into our offices before a company gunman appeared on the other side of the street to keep watch during Election Day.*

The editor also claimed that the election of “the company ticket”, as it was called in the *Two Harbors Socialist*, was also due to the actions of the railway company, where a system was in place to distribute train crews that made it possible for anti-Socialists to vote in the election while keeping as many Socialists as possible at work and away from the city during the election:

*Two years from now the voters will be in a position to judge what they had and what they got, and they will not again be fooled by*

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In *The Journal News* another set of possible explanations of the defeat of the Socialist administration was launched. One was an internal split in the movement which had driven away members from the party because it had been run by anarchist and radical elements within the party following a “lawless doctrine” that deterred presumptive members. A more concrete evidence for the radical stand of the party in Two Harbors was said to be the intimate association between the former Chief Executive of the city, the Swedish immigrant Ernest G Strand, and “the agents of disorder who depend for their living upon the creation of trouble and turmoil and that this would have a tendency to prevent God-fearing men to join such a movement”.

These agents of disorder cannot be any other than the wobblies of the IWW, which still had some presence in the area even after the failed strike of 1916. Its members are said to have been given the opportunity by the Socialists of Two Harbors to do everything possible to create a condition of suffering, instead of throwing them out of town. The “lawlessness” was also illustrated by another concrete factor that explained the loss of the Socialists, namely an “account of a treasonable resolution”, signed by Arvie Queber, the editor of the Socialist paper, August Omtvedt, a Norwegian store clerk active in the union, and L.D. Rose, the English immigrant Socialist that had been on the Socialist ticket as early as 1904. All were activists in the local Socialist movement, but their actions in giving its support to the IWW movement on the range in 1916 drove away members, according to the interpretation of the editor of the pro-company newspaper.

In the county election of 1918 held in the aftermath of the war and just one year after the October revolution in Russia, the Republican dominance was almost complete. The *Lake County Chronicle*, the successor to the *Two Harbors Socialist*, supported “certain” candidates, but the term Socialist was not used for the supported ticket. For Sheriff it supported Clarence Hillman, a Swedish immigrant who ran against long-time Sheriff Nelson, also a Swede who, according to the editor, by “his many years of tenure has alienated him from a working class point of view”. The “Central Committee” reportedly had nominated Hillman, the only indicator that the Socialist clubs had been behind the nominations.

August Omtvedt ran for county auditor, and the president of the retail clerk’s union, Victor Elmgren, ran for the office of county treasurer. Finally, the paper supported the candidacy of Erick D. Anderson. Judging by the ticket put up in the 1918 election, the Scandinavian representation was quite outspoken, as had been the case in the 1916 and 1917 elections. The election also seems to have

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843 *The Journal News*, 22/3, 1917. p.6
been influenced by the war climate, evident in the efforts of the editor of the Socialist newspaper to downplay the connection between the candidates and the Socialist Party. In the presentation of the Socialist candidates the word Socialist was not mentioned once, and it was not even completely clear in the article whether they were Socialists. Instead the emphasis was placed on the candidates’ friendliness towards labor, on their knowing “what it means to toil” and on the farmer background of some of the candidates. This was probably an invitation to farmers in outlying districts that seem to have been skeptical of the Socialist movement. In fact, the Socialists, as we have seen, never dominated the county elections. Instead, a sprinkling of Socialists and independent candidates complemented the “regular” candidates put up for office.

Despite this effort to draw rural votes, the Socialist candidates, with one exception, were not elected, and all the candidates presented as having a rural background lost. The 1918 election to the county administration does not in this respect stand out in any other way than by showing the new rhetoric used by the Socialist movement as it adapted itself to a new post-war context. This in turn points forward to the next incarnation of radicalism in Lake County, namely farmer-laborism.

In 1918, an advertisement in one of the last issues of The Two Harbors Socialist indicates a change in the strategy of the Socialists. Ernest G Strand, who had served as both Socialist Mayor of Two Harbors, and as representative from the 57th district to the state legislature in 1916 on a Socialist ticket, now ran again for the state legislature, but on a different ticket, and on a different platform.

This time, Strand ran on a Non-Partisan ticket. Illuminating for the ideological change, and the change in how the opposition had integrated certain ideas in its program generated by the war discussion of loyalty and the quite aggressive American nationalism that grew strong during the war years, is a statement made before the election made by Henry Dworchak Jr. of Duluth, a radical candidate for State Senator.

Dworchak uses rhetoric far from the dense language of class conflict reflected in the Socialist programs in previous elections. Instead, Dworchak argued for the use of the legislature to work for laws that would help the broad layers of people who belonged to the producing classes, and that he, if elected, would work for “social, political and industrial justice”. It is clear that both farmers and workers

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845 For a discussion on this third party see e.g. Vallely, Richard M. Radicalism in the States.
846 Two Harbors Socialist, 14/6, 1918. p.4. The Non-Partisan movement was one way of American radicals to negotiate the American Two Party System that had established a political arena where new parties had difficulty in establishing themselves. Instead, they used mainly the Republican primaries to launch labor friendly candidates within the frame of the Republican Party that were endorsed by radical movements such as the “Non Partisan League”. For a thorough discussion see e.g. Vallely, Richard M. Radicalism in the States.
were the groups he was interested in reaching. He also stated that he would support the American war effort and the American president.847

Analysis
The 1915 to 1918 elections in Lake County indicate the strong shifts in popular support that occurred during the 1910s in the county and in the city. From the success in the 1915 city election the Socialists suffered ever worsening defeats in the 1916, 1917 and 1918 elections. In 1916 and 1917, the language of class was a prominent trait in the Socialist platform together with the reform program that had characterized the work of the Socialists from the 1904 election. In the 1915 election the Two Harbors Socialist again defined the political battle lines as the Big Business interests against the people of the community in view of the fact that the caucus that opposed the Socialists in politics was drawn from the same groups as had been the case a decade earlier. Represented in that caucus were railroad officials and parts of the local business community, and a company official chaired the caucus.

The confrontational rhetoric before the election underlines the ongoing polarization of the voters, a polarization that is illustrated by the fact that all the elections between 1915 and 1918 were won by a narrow margin. Another interesting trait in the development of local politics is the increasing number of Scandinavians on the Socialist ticket in the 1917 election, where all but two had distinctly Norwegian or Swedish names. The increased participation of the Scandinavian local is further underlined by the fact that it arranged the Socialist nomination meeting in that year.

The tendency towards polarization between the opposition and the groups supportive of the company hence divided the community along ethnic lines as indicated by the increasing proportion of Scandinavians running for office between 1907 and 1917. The post-election discussion also indicates a split within the Socialist movement over the support given to the IWW activists on the range during the conflict the preceding year. The pro-company newspaper, the Journal News highlighted this as the most important explanation of the defeat of the Socialists in 1917. Nothing of this was mentioned in the Two Harbors Socialist, but the explanation seems plausible, as the gradual stigmatization and criminalization of the IWW were, as we shall see, connected with the discussion of Americanism that grew in importance during the period. Given the prominence of the Scandinavians in the 1917 city elections, it does not seem too far-fetched to view the split within the movement as a result of American-born skilled workers ending their support for fear of becoming mixed up with a criminal organization.

The strategy of abandoning the Socialist platform in the county and state elections of 1918 illustrates the importance of the war, the discussion of loyalty and the changing perception of radicalism as the importance of the connections to

847 Two Harbors Socialist, 14/6, 1918. p.4.
Socialism was clearly down-played in the election. The action of the Socialist editor of writing an open letter to the company after the 1916 election also illustrates that the company was perceived as a platform for anti-Socialist sentiments that actively encouraged its workers not to support the local Socialist movement.

The language of class that had been such an important ingredient in the Socialist platforms turned into a liability during this period. In 1917 the primarily Scandinavian ticket ran on a platform that emphasized the connections between American nationalism, multi-culturalism and radicalism. This appears to have been a counterpoint to the preparedness period and the war years with a rhetoric underpinning one homogeneous national identity where class rhetoric had no place and where the Anglo-American bourgeoisie used nationalistic sentiments, primarily appealing to the American-born workers to build on the Progressive ideal of citizenship and the idea of the people, borrowing heavily from the Progressive language of reform that had been established as a main ingredient in middle class reform efforts. As we have seen, this language was put to use in the welfare capitalist program of the YMCA and the D&IR, and welfare capitalism, in essence, created a necessary connection between middle class reformers and the corporate interests, as both were clearly represented in the “Citizen’s Progressive League” that opposed the Socialists.

The elections between 1915 and 1918 hence marks an interesting development as the two alternatives in Two Harbors both, to some extent, represented the progressive movement. Shelton Stromquist’s discussion on progressives as falling into one of two main categories seems fruitful here, as the citizen’s progressive alliance represented a tradition of “meliorist” middle class reform while the Socialists represented the class partisanship of the minority fraction of the progressives. Interestingly, the in-fighting between progressives in Two Harbors, to some extent, became the main conflict as corporate interests and middle class reformers allied against the Socialists.

The actions of the Progressive citizens’ alliance in the elections seems, judging by the Two Harbors Socialist, to have been supported by the railroad company in a number of ways, primarily by agitating against Socialism. The Citizen’s Progressive League, on the other hand, tried to downplay the number of company officials and hence the connection to higher echelons of the railroad company on its ticket, which also underlines how the League wanted to make the impression of taking the middle ground, distancing itself from railroad company interests and opposing the language of class that constituted the basis of the inter-ethnic alliance formed by Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and Anglo workers and parts of the petty bourgeoisie for more than a decade before 1917. But the language of reform was, in important ways, connected to the class interest of the bourgeoisie and the D&IR by the end of the 1910s as it had become an increasingly visible component in the secularized welfare and disciplining efforts from the the railroad company.
The main difference between the different political alternatives was articulated as support for the war or opposition to it. The discussion was, as we shall see, intimately connected with the class dimension, as the support for the war was dressed in a rhetoric underpinning Americanism, while the radical movement in Two Harbors and some of the trade unions used the language of class to oppose the war.

**The elections of 1919 and 1921**

The city election of 1919 started off with a quite intense pre-election discussion, where the radical Lake County Chronicle was now a more general labor paper under the editorship of Clarence Hillman. Hillman was a Swedish immigrant, long-time Socialist activist, former locomotive engineer and farmer in the area. Before the election he accused the Citizens’ League administration of not being active enough while in office. A reply from the “Citizens’ League” was printed in *The Journal News* merely a few days after. A ten-point program showed the extent of the work started and carried out by the alliance during the period, and the potential voter was addressed “Mr. Citizen”. The Citizens’ Progressive Alliance presents itself as standing for a Progressive administration and possessing the proper financial skills for administering the city. The League also renounces all suggested connections with the D&IR, pointing out that many of the Socialists running for office also work for the railroad. In what capacity was, however, not discussed. That there was a distinct difference between the tickets put up by the Socialists and the “citizens” is convincingly shown in the 1919 election as three of the eleven men up for office were railroad officials and the YMCA secretary, whereas the other positions were all held by either foremen or owned their own business with strong ties to the company. One of the railroad officials was head of the telephone and telegraph department and would succeed Owens as superintendent during the 1920s. Interestingly, most of the men on the ticket were Anglo-Americans, and only one of the men had Swedish ancestry, but he had been born in the US.

The Socialist ticket, on the other hand, was profiled in the *Lake County Chronicle*, which championed the ticket. Again the two newspapers clearly sided with their specific ideological, political and cultural grouping. The election went the way of the Socialists this time. They elected as mayor, a Norwegian immigrant, August Omtvedt, assessor, A.G. Nelson, five aldermen, Harry van Dyken a machinist with Dutch ancestry, I.W. Foote, T.E. Murphy, August Strand, and Ed Kronman. The Socialists also elected a municipal judge and a special municipal judge, as Nels Westlund and L.D. Rose took these positions. The alliance, on the other hand, got the post of city treasurer in Tranah, an English immigrant and company clerk, and two alderman posts taken by Emil Strom and R.J. Tubman.

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The Journal News did not further discuss the result. This was, however, done in the Lake County Chronicle, which stated that the stars and stripes, despite the Socialist victory at the polls, still flew over City Hall.

This was the triumphant answer to the previous years, which had largely been characterized by anti-Socialist agitation and the loyalty question. One part of this chapter details this work, and what role the company interests played in it on the local level. The propaganda had been pumped out from St. Paul via the MCPS, headed by Republican governor Joseph A. Burnquist, which in part had a direct impact on the public sphere of Two Harbors and other Minnesota cities and towns during the time between 1917 and the end of the war. This propaganda was, as we shall see, largely directed against immigrants and the radical movement.

The Lake County Chronicle, which in 1919 presented itself more as a main stream labor newspaper than an outright Socialist one, did not, however, make any declarations in favor of Socialist power, but instead both what the newspaper wrote and the way the officials chose the new administration tend to underline a more co-operative line in the development of radicalism in Two Harbors. The election in 1919 was nevertheless a demonstration of the strength of the Socialist movement, since it now had a broad labor newspaper that supported it, a strong electoral base that believed in the Socialist politicians and a strong tie between the Socialist locals to build on. There also seem to have been strong connections between labor unions and the Socialist locals during the war years. The fact that the Socialist Party label was still used in the city while it had been abandoned on the state level is interesting and illustrates the staying power of the local movement. A number of union leaders and activists were also leading figures in the Socialist locals, which perhaps made the next step in the development of radicalism easier to take.

Two Harbors followed the same development as many other industrial communities in the United States in that the trade union movement swelled its ranks considerably during the war and the immediate post-war period. A number of new organizations emerged.

Judging by the statistics on the growth of the local union movement presented in Table 19. Hence, when more distinctly American organizations, without the stigma that was put on Socialism during the war were offered, many workers chose to join. As we shall see, other functions that had been carried out by the Socialists before the war, such as the organizing of Labor Day, were taken over by the trade unions in the early 1920s.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Union</th>
<th>1912</th>
<th>1916</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locomotive Engineers</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Trainmen</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firemen and Enginemen</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Conductors</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinists</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Clerks Union</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boiler Maker’s Union</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmiths and Helpers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheet Metal Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Carmen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firemen Stationary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Clerks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ore Dock Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Way</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>1418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The trade unions grew steadily throughout the 1910s, as they organized 486 workers in 1912 and more than 1,400 eight years later. In 1912 there were seven trade unions, four of which connected to railroading. These four also organized the highest number of workers by far, as more than 400 men out of 486 were members of these unions.

The other three trade unions organized retail clerks, blacksmiths and machinists. By 1916 the trade union movement had grown to contain 666 members organized into eight trade unions. Still, the running trades dominated, as 215 men belonged to the Railway Trainmen Union, 167 to the firemen’s and enginemen’s
union, whereas 109 belonged to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. The men, particularly in train and engine service, dominated the trade union movement. The other four unions in Two Harbors, taken together, organized 113 workers. The lack of union organization in the unskilled occupations on the railroad also meant that immigrant workers were not generally union members, whereas American-born and Anglo immigrants in the running trades underline an ethnic division between unionized and non-unionized workers on the railroad.

The dominance of the running trades among the union activists in Two Harbors was diluted after the war, when a large number of unions were organized. Most of these were connected with either unskilled work on the railroad or organized specialized shop workers such as car men. Out of 1,418 members only 584 belonged to the previously so dominant railroad brotherhoods, whereas the unskilled workers in the maintenance of way union and the ore dock men’s union organized almost 300 men. The shop trades experienced a marked growth, particularly the machinists, who had doubled their membership from 62 to 125 in four years. A new union consisting of car men also reached a membership of more than 100.

The growth of the trade union movement hence mirrors a shift towards greater influence of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers outside the running trades. Scandinavian and Finnish immigrants largely carried out the unskilled work on the railroad in 1920, as these groups dominated both the track department and the ore dock work force. The running trades at this time were still largely an Anglo-American affair with Anglo immigrants, American-born and the children of Anglo immigrants being the largest groups. We might therefore draw the conclusion that the post-war boom of trade union activity came to organize many Swedish immigrants that had previously been without union representation. Some of the trade union leaders were Swedes, as evidenced by Charles Alm, who led the Blacksmiths’ Union in the 1910s. The machinists were an ethnically mixed group including Scandinavian immigrants, Anglo immigrants and American-born.853 It seems safe to say, however, that part of the growth of the Machinist Union between 1916 and 1920 consisted of Swedish workers. To what extent is not possible to establish by the material I have used.

The growth of the trade union movement was manifested in the establishing of a trade union council in 1920. The council was, hence, constituted at the same time as the running trades and the skilled railway men lost their dominance within organized labor. The branching out of trade unions to new occupational groups thus resulted in a formalized connection between socially and ethnically quite heterogeneous trade unions. The labor council also offered a new way of organizing the labor vote.

In January 1921 the trade unions of Two Harbors announced that they were holding a meeting that would nominate union candidates to the elections for city off-

853 United States Federal Census for Lake County, MN, 1910.
fices, the newspaper commented that “it is the intention to put an all union ticket in the field, which in all probability will mean that there will be but one ticket and that the personnel of the next city administration will be selected at the meeting”. The meeting was only for “card men”, i.e. unionized men in the city, their wives and their daughters. The week after the Lake County Chronicle commented that the union meeting had been very well attended, but that the decision of the union men to put a ticket in the field would mean “the death” to a Socialist administration of the city. The editor thought it unlikely that the Socialists would oppose the union ticket “as all of the Socialist adherents are union men and many of them are the prospective choice of the union men to enter the city political arena”. Many of the union men were reluctant to accept a nomination, and an effort was to be made to persuade some of the old city council, i.e. from the Socialist administration, to serve again.

At the end of February 1921, the union ticket was presented. Alex Halliday was nominated for mayor, Harold Churchill for treasurer, Gus Morton, for assessor. The aldermen at large elected for the ticket were C.E. Woolsey, Bert Robbins and Aug. Omtvedt, while the candidate alderman in wards one to four were, in order, Fred Wickstrom, Frank Kotney, John McCafferty and John Hillman. There was no opposition to this ticket at that time. Thus, only three men were Scandinavians, two of them Swedish-born, while six have been identified as Anglo immigrants or American-born. All of the Scandinavians had held leading positions within the Socialist movement, while only two of the Anglos had been active Socialists running on previous Socialist tickets. A significant change in working class activism was evidenced by the ticket that tried to downplay both the immigrant component as fewer Scandinavians were represented than previously and fewer radical workers were on the ticket. A plausible explanation might be the will of the working class to find new strategies to negotiate capitalism and an adaptation to an environment where perspectives on class partisanship and ethnic identities had changed significantly since 1915. This might also have been connected to the impact of the language of reform and the impact of the broad post-war program for class peace that was developed and that I will touch on more in this chapter.

This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that the Lake County Chronicle called the 1921 city election “the quietest campaign in its history, the only contest being for the office of city treasurer”, and exclaimed that the union ticket would control the city for two years. The union ticket won the election, except for the office of city treasurer, which went to the independent candidate William Tranah. A Mr. James Pickering received 20 votes for the position of mayor, but

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854 Lake County Chronicle, 6/1, 1921. p.1
855 Lake County Chronicle, 13/1, 1921. p.1
856 Lake County Chronicle, 17/2, 1921, p.1
857 I have been able to establish this fact by looking on the Socialist tickets launched during the 1910s.
858 Lake County Chronicle, 10/3, 1921. p.1.
Alex Halliday won by getting 748 votes.859 The election of a non-union man was, however, a cause of concern to the labor-friendly Lake County Chronicle. The union candidate had been beaten for the one post that someone put up a fight for, which, according to the editor, “proved that the referendum was not an expression of the union men at large, or that union men cannot be depended upon to support their own ticket if there is any opposition.”860 Politics in Two Harbors at the beginning of the 1920s was, hence characterized by harmony rather than conflict, and the absence of a company ticket.

Analysis

Despite the success of the Socialist ticket in the 1919 election, the newly established broad trade union movement chose to run a trade union ticket in 1921. As is indicated by the editor of the Lake County Chronicle and by the names put up on the ticket, there was some continuity between the Socialist period and the shift to trade union politics. The shift towards a more liberal, generally labor-friendly government which was not primarily based in a language of class conflict was probably a way to strengthen a common working-class participation in politics, since Socialism after the war did not appeal to all groups in Two Harbors any more, a fact that was illustrated by the cultural component in the development of the movement during the war and in the post-war period. It is also striking how the Anglo-American representation on the union ticket was stronger than in 1917, when the Socialist ticket had a more Scandinavian character. This underlines the connections between the immigrant workers, Socialism and the trade union ticket, whereas only two Anglo had radical backgrounds. What strikes one is also the absence of Finnish participation, given their involvement in Socialist activities outside politics during the 1910s.

The shift might also be explained by the red scare that was a prominent trait in the bourgeois propaganda after the war and that was connected to anxieties, not only in the US, over the events in Russia after the October Revolution. The split of the American Socialist Party in 1919 into one Social Democrat and one Communist part probably also contributed to the changes in tactics. Given the orientation of the Socialist movement in Two Harbors, most of the Socialists seem to have belonged to the Social Democrats rather than the Communists. But as illustrated by the 1921 election, both directions were increasingly marginalized. So, in conclusion, the election of 1921 illustrates a shift away from Socialism, and from radical immigrants in politics. Interestingly, the marginalization of the Socialists also illustrates a shift towards more harmonious relations between the company, who did not even launch a ticket in that year, and the workers. The next part of this chapter will try to connect culture and politics in a discussion of the opposition to company dominance outside the political sphere. This culture emanated from the community of Two Harbors.

860 Lake County Chronicle, 24/3 1921. p.2.
Culture and Politics

The saloon as social problem and social possibility

Despite the obvious lack of a coherent opposition in Two Harbors during the 1890s, there was also another, more informal meeting-ground for workers in public. The saloons formed an arena where workers could not only meet to drink, but indeed, also to discuss contemporary issues, to meet fellow workers, and to get out of their cramped and congested housing quarters. Roy Rosenzweig discussed the role of saloons in Worcester, Massachusetts, for the many manufacturing workers in that city, showing how the saloon indeed can be seen as part of a counter culture, often with an ethnic edge to it, as workers tended to prefer ethnic saloons. In fact, Rosenzweig shows how the saloon became an important aspect of the immigrant community. His foremost example is the Irish home saloon, the shebeen. Research on the welfare capitalist programs of the first two decades of the 1900s underlines the connection between the ethnic saloon and an oppositional working class, as many workers preferred these facilities to the imposing but quite bourgeois milieus created within the framework of welfare work by companies. Rosenzweig says that the saloon was “operated in a distinctly working class context”.

Two Harbors was rather rowdy and attracted saloon keepers in its early days. The first D&IR president, Charlemagne Tower, wrote in a letter to his father that the place where Two Harbors was first organized in the summer of 1883 was “covered with a colony of small drinking saloons, the natural out growth of every western town; they follow civilization as the crows do an army”. This “colony” was soon dubbed “Whiskey Row” by the railroad workers and the first settlers, and there was a great deal of violence and drinking going on in the area as railroad workers and lumber jacks on leave went into town to spend their pay checks. There were, according to the estimate of one local historian, 22 saloons and dance halls in this area.

By looking at the national background of the saloonkeepers in Two Harbors during the period until 1900, the connection between the Swedish workers and the saloon is strengthened. It also further underlines the connections found in previous research between ethnic working class culture and the saloon.

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864 Charlemagne Tower Papers. Charlemagne Tower Jr. letter to his father dated 28/6, 1883.
865 Interview with Thomas Saxton. MHS Oral History Collection.
866 Elliot, R.B. Mrs., unpublished paper presented before the North Shore Historical Assembly, St. Louis, Cook and Lake Counties, at Two Harbors, Minn., August 22, 1929. p.3.
The named and presented individuals engaged in the saloon business in 1900 are:


P.O. Peterson, born in Sweden, proprietor of the Klondike Saloon.

Axel Algotsen and Emil Lingren, both born in Sweden, proprietors of the North Shore Hotel Saloon. Lingren had previously owned the Stockholm and the Klondike saloons.

Fred Hagberg and August Lingren, both born in Sweden. The owners of Hagberg & Lingren’s Saloon.

John B Boyer, born in Montreal, Canada.

Eugene La Force. Born in Montreal, Canada.


E.R: Niggeler, born in the United States, the owner of Niggeler’s Saloon.

E.F Cook, owner of the Bodega.

Mr. Howard and Mr. Merrill, owners of Howard & Merrill’s Sample Room.

The saloons in Two Harbors in the 1890s seems to have been ethnically coded, as the saloons to some extent mirrored the ethnic composition of the city’s working class, and the business was run and directed towards the Scandinavian workers to a rather large extent, since four out of ten saloons were Swedish. So, a number of Swedes set up saloons in the town during the 1880s and the 1890s. As two of the saloons owned by the Swedes had Swedish-sounding names, they were clearly aimed at Swedish customers. The background of all but one of the Swedish saloon owners as workers on the D&IR in either the shops or at the ore dock further strengthens the connection between the saloons and the Swedish workers in the city. This does not separate the Swedish bar owners from the rest of the group, as practically all men owning bars in Two Harbors in 1900 had a past experience as railroad workers. The working-class character of the saloon was, according to Rosenzweig, a result of higher wages and an increase in workers’ leisure time. It could also accommodate workers with a meeting space away from the work place and the home.

867 Burwell, H. Two Harbors in 1900.
868 Minnen från anläggning av Svensk evangeliska Lutherska Immanuelsförsamlingen I Two Harbors, Minn., tiódårsfest. p.11
869 Rosenzweig, Roy. Eight Hours For What We Will. p.46.
The connection between the Swedes and the saloon business illustrates a path by which Swedish immigrants could become self-employed and make a living from their connection with the Swedish working class in locations such as Two Harbors. This connection between the Swedish petty bourgeoisie and the Swedish working class is further underlined by similar careers among the Swedish restaurant owners and grocery store owners in the city. By changing their class position, they, to some extent, distanced themselves from their identities as laborers and wageworkers, but still it seemed important for many of these entrepreneurs to maintain ties with the very ethnic segment of the working class that they had left, since their customers came from these segments. In giving the saloon a Swedish place name such as “Stockholm”, or the Saloonkeepers’ own family name, these saloons clearly aimed at attracting Swedish workers.

The drinking and the many problems attached to the life led by many railroad workers in the region was only one side of the coin. The saloon seemed to have been, in Two Harbors, too, a meeting ground for the working class, and drinking was merely one activity in which workers took part. Rosenzweig has emphasized that the saloon was also a place where practical matters such as a check cashing service could be taken care of and where workers picked up their mail. It was also a place where workers heard “political gossip” or scanned the local labor market.870

At least two different accounts confirm that the Swedish workers who attended saloons had started what was called by Reverend Collin of the local Swedish Lutheran Church an “anti-treat organization”. Collin asserts that it was started by the Swedish-born ore trimmers and was hence a temperance association on an ethnic base, which was instigated to control the drinking habit of the Swedish working class, not by abolishing the saloon, but by changing their drinking pattern and that of their fellow workers.871 This organization was somewhat influential in that it is mentioned in a memory volume from 1900 as the “Ore Trimmers’ Society”. This must, however, be the very same organization, a fact that is confirmed by the way Collin describes it. It was accordingly still in existence in 1900, which further underlines the function of the association, not as an anti-saloon entity, but an anti-drinking society that realized the potential of the saloon as a meeting place for (ethnic) workers.872 The name “Ore Trimmers’ Society” also underlines the more general character of the organization as not being only a drinking reform society, but broader than that. This evidence thus leads us to the conclusion that Swedish workers organized fairly early in Two Harbors, and that these organizations created connections by using the saloon as a meeting ground. This is not strange, since the saloon comprised the only official meeting grounds at no cost for workers.

870 Rosenzweig, Roy. Eight Hours for What we Will. pp.53,54.
871 Minnen från anläggning av Svensk evangeliska Lutherska Immanuelsförsamlingen I Two Harbors, Minn., tiårsfest. p.11
872 Burwell, H. Two Harbors in 1900.
The activities of this Ore Trimmers’ Society are unknown. However, in the volume *Two Harbors in 1900* a Swedish grocery store owner, Chas. Anderson, who previously worked on the ore dock, was still a member of the society in that year. This indicates the same type of continuity in the way that the Swedish working class and the Swedish petty bourgeoisie established ties, both through their common experiences as laborers and through the business interests of the Swedish petty bourgeoisie, which coincided with the interest on the part of the workers in having a place to meet. The membership of the Ore Trimmers’ Society by individuals of the petty bourgeoisie further underlines these contacts. It seems clear that the saloon became an alternative to the church for many Swedish workers during the early 1890s, since the Swedish minister discusses his problems with getting the workers to come to his sermons and how he many times sought them out at the saloons in the village.\(^\text{873}\)

The saloons hence seem to have held a double meaning in that they were, without doubt, a source of a wide range of social problems for the workers. However, the saloon also seems to have taken on another meaning for the Swedish workers, as it was not only a drinking ground but a more general place to meet, a fact that is underlined by the reminiscences of the Swedish Lutheran pastor in Two Harbors during the period between the late 1880s and the early 1890s. The saloon, hence was a place where the organization of “The Ore Trimmers’ Society”, firmly based on the principles of class as well as Swedish ethnicity, found a public space where it could meet. In this respect, the saloon must be regarded as a forerunner of the more organized Socialist public sphere in Two Harbors during the 1910s, which was also based on Scandinavian ethnicity and cross-class co-operation between the working class and parts of the petty bourgeoisie. The society does not seem to have generated any direct political action.

The ethnic saloons and the workers’ own efforts at staving off “the demon rum” might consequently be regarded as an alternative to the control of the church and the disciplining of the pastors of the Swedish ethnic church. It might also be interpreted as part of a resistance to the pressures brought to bear by the hard work and the strict control under industrial capitalistic structures on the D&IR. In light of this it is possible to draw the conclusion that the saloon culture in Two Harbors was an expression of resistance to bourgeois dominance, both in the guise of the ethnic church and the industrial capitalist system. In this the Swedish workers’ connection to the saloon resembles the way that Rosenzweig interpreted the Irish immigrant workers’ connection to the Shebeen saloons as an expression of resistance towards bourgeois control. The Swedish workers in Two Harbors seem to have regarded the saloon as a meeting ground where they could carve out their own space in which they were free to spend their leisure time according to their own will.

\(^{873}\) *Minnen från anläggning av Svensk evangeliska Lutherska Immanuelsförsamlingen I Two Harbors, Minn., tioårsfest.* pp.11-14.
Everyday Radicalism

Despite the successes of the political opposition to company dominance in the period from 1907, it is difficult to find any traces of a more coherent everyday expression of this opposition before the early 1910s. However, the presence of a local of the American Railway Union and the success of the political opposition in the elections in the mid-1890s and in the period after 1904 indicate that large groups, among them a group of Scandinavians, were active in challenging company dominance. One part of this opposition was the emerging saloon culture that opposed the control of the ethnic church and the company.

The emergence of a more coherent radical public sphere in Two Harbors is in important ways connected with the establishing of the three Socialist clubs in the community. An English Socialist local was formed a few years into the 1900s, which is evident by the way the Public Ownership candidates that ran for office from 1904 connected their program to the third party movement in the form of “The Public Ownership Party”, the Minnesota Socialist Party and the Socialist Party of America. This local organized native-born Americans and English-speaking immigrants. There is also some evidence indicating that the Finnish workers of the community organized a Socialist Finnish Workers’ Society in 1907.874

A Scandinavian Socialist local with primarily Swedish and Norwegian members was formed in 1911 but that organization folded. The next year another organization experiencing steady growth during the period up to the First World War was perfected. However, there must have been a presence of Swedish Socialists in the city even earlier, since Swedish candidates ran on the Socialist ticket from 1907 onward. Another indication of a Swedish Socialist presence is an article in the Swedish language newspaper Duluth Posten, published in Duluth, which tells us that the prominent Swedish Socialist, August Palm, had held a well attended speech in Two Harbors in 1906.875

As we have seen, the Socialists dominated politics in Two Harbors between 1911 and early 1917, and then made a strong comeback in the 1919 city elections. The political orientation was clearly reformist and moderately radical, following the patterns for both Debsian Socialism and the development of Socialism generally in municipalities and cities, implying that the movement’s orientation toward acquiring political power through practical reforms rather than the immediate overthrowing of capitalism seems to have guided the work of the Socialists in Two Harbors. The reformist strategy also becomes evident in the community orientation of the Socialists during the 1910s.876 The movement was, however,

875 Duluth Posten, 3/8, 1906. p.11.
876 The Historiography on Socialism in America is vast, but some examples on this reformist tradition includes: Stevens, Errol Wayne. Labor and Socialism in an Indiana Mill Town 1905-1921.; John-son, Daniel L. "No Make-Believe Class Struggle": The Socialist Municipal Campaign in Los Ange-
firmly based on the language of class and the will to imbue the workers with class-consciousness. This will was manifested in a large social program launched during 1915.

The Public Sphere is a well-known concept created by Jürgen Habermas, describing an arena where “something approaching public opinion can be formed”. The public sphere has been defined as “a sphere, which mediates between society and state, in which the public becomes the bearer of public opinion”. Its growth is connected with processes where wider political participation and citizenship ideals play important roles. The emergence of this public sphere is also connected with the drift of western societies towards more advanced forms of capitalism and hence also coincides with the emergence of a bourgeoisie. Habermas claimed that the only public sphere of significance was the one dominated by the male bourgeoisie. Rational communication between men from a specific class in public thus constituted this Öffentlichkeit. Habermas’ model has been criticized for giving a too streamlined and simplified version of the emergence of a public sphere and for downplaying and hiding societal conflict, as it reduces all alternative cultures to a plebeian variant that was easily dispatched by the bourgeois intelligentsia.

Geoff Eley presented another perspective on the public sphere, that can better include all the empirical evidence of struggle over the public space during the 1800s and early 1900s. Eley has claimed that the male bourgeois sphere was but one of many competing public spheres and that it did not get fragmented over time, but that it was indeed always crisscrossed with political ideas based on various societal interests. Eley connects the idea of the public sphere with Gramsci’s ideas on hegemony to account for and explain differences in power relations and the way public discourse becomes a way of defining broader societal norms. In Eley’s interpretation the public sphere therefore in actuality contained a number of public spheres fighting over the right to interpret and define THE public sphere. In this perspective the project of the Socialist clubs in Two Harbors becomes a sphere competing with the bourgeois public sphere.

The Socialist public sphere challenged the earlier dominance of a bourgeoisie public sphere that used newspapers, the churches and the reading rooms and lecture halls of the local YMCA to shape the public discourse and that had previously given the bourgeoisie the opportunity to dominate the public sphere and local politics.

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These organizations aimed to include workers in the Anglo-American bourgeois project. Arenas, such as the YMCA, and the churches that worked for the integration of the working class into the public sphere were, however, all based on the idea of Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony. The role of the workers in public, particularly immigrant workers, was based on their subordination, which in turn was based on class and ethnicity.

In her account of the work of the Socialist locals in Two Harbors Susanna Frenkel writes that at least one organized Socialist activity was planned throughout the period between 1915 and 1918. This might be a slight exaggeration, when talking about the work directed to the community, but in 1915 the English Socialist local sketched a program that was to involve members more in the party. At a meeting the members suggested that it would be necessary to take action to bring members together or people would lose interest. Therefore, as an offset to the “dry routine of business meetings”, the local suggested social programs. These activities included informal dances, card parties and other social activities aimed at attracting the people of the city to Socialist activities. The meetings aimed at attracting not only English members, but also all members and “friends” in the city. All the Socialist locals seem to have been involved in this work.

The first card party was held on February 19, 1915. It was, according to the Socialist newspaper, a roaring success with many people attending. The hall became “well filled”, and a number of card games were played. Afterwards someone opened up the piano and an informal dance followed, which lasted for an hour, refreshments in the form of coffee and cake were served, and the evening was rounded off with a speech by Julius J. Anderson, the Swedish editor of the Two Harbors Socialist. The arrangements were not aimed solely at a male audience, and the event did attract women and children. As an entrance fee of 15 cents for a similar card party was advertised again in late April, the activities indeed seem to have been popular. These card parties became part and parcel of the work of the party during the winter of 1915.

The card parties then made a comeback during the winter of 1916, at request of the public. The program was the same, and the entrance fees again indicate the will of the Socialists to involve men, women and children in these social events, as the entrance fee was set at 25 cents for gentlemen and 10 cents for ladies. Children were allowed at no charge. The card parties seem to have become increasingly ambitious events, as when “The Dixie Orchestra” provided music on March 18, 1916. It was announced that the parties were to be held every Saturday due to their high popularity. 50 cents were charged per couple, while single women were admitted for free.

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882 Two Harbors Socialist, 18/3, 25/3, 1916. p.1
There were also other social events arranged by the Socialists. In February 1916 a dance was given at Glen Hall. The Marine band of Two Harbors provided the music and “Everybody” was invited to attend.883 These events with music and dancing seem to have been arranged by the Socialists in unison. These arrangements were often planned at the joint meetings between the Socialist locals that were also a regular part of the Socialist program.884 Sometimes, however, the ethnic locals arranged activities on their own. The Finnish local, in time, became increasingly active in the efforts to create a Socialist public sphere as indicated by the notice in the Socialist newspaper:

*Tomorrow night the Finnish local will give another of these entertainments for which it has become so famous. The Finnish comrades are rich in talent and good will, and they have accomplished wonders.*

Many of the events also seem to have been arranged by the Scandinavian local alone; in fact, judging from the sheer number of articles on such events, this local seem to have been the most active one. At the beginning of November 1915 the Scandinavian local planned a “big fest” with a speaker, a Mr. Algot Enge, from Duluth. The program also included songs, recitals and declamations in English and Swedish. The committee offered coffee and cake to the attendants. The admission was 25 cents.886 In November 1915 the Scandinavian Socialists held a program at the Happy Hour Theatre. They showed a motion picture in five acts entitled “The Little Brother of the Rich”.887 On another occasion in January 1916 the Scandinavian local presented an anti-war play performed by members of the Scandinavian local in Duluth, which had organized a Dramatic Club in that city. The name of the play was *Ned Med Vapnen* (‘A Farewell to Arms’), tickets were sold and refreshments furnished by the Scandinavian local.888 The performance was part of the intense work of the locals to oppose American entry into The First World War. The Scandinavians also routinely sponsored annual Christmas celebrations. One such event was in December 1915, when the women of the local had arranged a basket social.889

The Scandinavian local also founded an amateur theater company, which performed plays with an outspoken Socialist message. At least one play was performed in 1916, and some of the Swedish Socialist leadership held leading roles. One case in point was Ernest Strand, a Swedish immigrant and the owner of a barbershop in Two Harbors. The play *Världens Undergång* (‘The End of the

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883 Two Harbors Socialist, 22/1, 1916. p.1. Other dances were also held e.g. an advertisement for a dance in Two Harbors Socialist, 18/11, 1916, p.8.; 28/2, 1917, p.8
885 Two Harbors Socialist. 25/11, 1916. p.8
886 Two Harbors Socialist. 30/10, 1915. p.1
889 Two Harbors Socialist, 18/12, 1915. p.8
World’) had a distinct radical message and was given in Swedish in front of a
“fairly large audience”.\textsuperscript{890}

Speech-making dominated well-attended Socialist events. The Scandinavian lo-
cal again organized many of them. At one point it had invited Ture Nerman, a
nationally known Swedish Socialist, to speak. Many of these lectures were well
attended, as witnessed by reports afterwards.\textsuperscript{891} Many of the invited speakers
were, however, English-speaking. Many were prominent Socialists from Min-
neapolis, St. Paul or Duluth\textsuperscript{892}, invited by the locals, or were, as in a couple of
cases, nationally known. Elisabeth Gurley Flynn, the rebel girl in Joe Hill’s song,
was one of the guests of the English and Scandinavian local, which invited her
for a two-day speaking session in 1916. One was dedicated to organizing and the
other to preparedness.\textsuperscript{893}

As indicated by the strong Scandinavian character of the socialist public sphere,
the Socialist locals hosted different kinds of arrangements, but sometimes they
came together. The cooperation between the locals seems to have been very
good, judging from the Socialist newspaper’s reports on activities in the period
1915 to 1918. This is partly indicated by an article written in late 1916, which re-
lates the plan by the Socialist locals in unison for a series of entertainments dur-
ing the coming winter. The intention was to “utilize and develop the talent found
among the members and its friends, and to give programs that will be both in-
structive and enjoyable”. A committee made up of members from all the locals
was appointed to plan these events.\textsuperscript{894} The social events from 1915 and 1916
went on into 1917 under the auspices of the Socialist clubs in unison. Another
very important feature of the Socialists was their strong anti-war stance. There
are many articles on manifestations and discussions in the \textit{Two Harbors Socialist}
on the war question and on preparedness. This is in evidence all the way from
1915 and into the war period. This aspect of the work of the Socialists has also
been recognized by Susanna Frenkel.\textsuperscript{895}

The Scandinavian local grew quite fast after 1912. At the beginning of 1913 the
local had 42 members.\textsuperscript{896} Per Nordahl has shown that the Scandinavian Socialist
Federation Club No.16 of Two Harbors Minnesota continued to grow, as it con-
sisted of 98 members in 1914, with about the same number of members in 1915
and 1916. There seems to have been a drop in the 1917 membership, when only
75 members were registered. This development was, however, broken in 1918,
when the club had 106 registered members. In 1920, the club still held an appeal,

\textsuperscript{892} \textit{Two Harbors Socialist}, 6/3, p.1. Julius F Emme is announced, and has been invited by the Ma-
chinist union.
\textsuperscript{893} \textit{Two Harbors Socialist}, 29/7, 1916. p.3.
\textsuperscript{894} \textit{Two Harbors Socialist}, 25/12, 1916. p.4
\textsuperscript{895} Susanna Frenkel, \textit{An Experiment in American Socialism}. p.15.
\textsuperscript{896} \textit{Svenska Socialisten}, 17/4, 1913. p.3
as the membership in that year was 87 in good standing.897 From 1912 the Scandinavian local met weekly, to begin with in “Comrade Ernest Strand’s Barber Shop”. But that same year the Scandinavians started to meet in the hall owned by the “English speakers [Socialists]”.898

A letter published in the Chicago-based Swedish language weekly Svenska Socialisten, (‘The Swedish Socialist’) described the situation of the “Freedom Movement” in Two Harbors of 1912 as having a number of sharp opponents among which the correspondent included the churches, big business and the saloon industry.899 The Scandinavian Socialist club arranged some social events for its members at this time, like a picnic with fifty attendants mentioned in a letter in the summer of 1913. The meetings of the local during that summer were, according to a reliable observer, well attended.900 Another letter to Svenska Socialisten testifies that the local experienced some turnover in the membership as some activists left the city. Despite this turnover of membership, the local was still active and growing, a fact that is supported by membership figures from October 1913. The Scandinavian local primarily organized men, but there were also some women active in the movement. In 1913 seven members were women.901 The following year sixteen women were active.902 The local seems to have been dominated by Swedish immigrants as indicated by the articles and letters published in the Svenska Socialisten and Two Harbors Socialist.

The Scandinavian local regularly sent Christmas greetings to their Scandinavian “comrades” in the United States via the Svenska Socialisten. In December of 1917 a list of 99 names of Socialists in Two Harbors were published. Assuming that the persons on this list were registered members at that time, the Scandinavian local was composed largely of Swedish immigrants. By using the census for 1910 and 1920 for Lake County, I have been able to identify 61 of the persons on the list. No less than 50 of these were Swedish immigrants, while only 4 were American-born. The other 7 were Norwegian immigrants. Despite the fact that a number of the persons I have been unable to identify carries distinctly Norwegian names, the overall impression still is that the Swedish immigrants made up a major part of the local.903 In 1913 a sick relief and benefit society was formed in the local. The following year it had nine members, which rose to 37 members in 1916.904

A great many Swedish and Norwegian Socialist speakers visited Two Harbors on their nation-wide tours to promote Socialism among the Scandinavians in the country. When Carl Bergstrom visited Two Harbors in November 1913 and

897 Nordahl, Per, Weaving the Ethnic Fabric. table 4, p.222.
898 Svenska Socialisten, 20/2, 1913, p.3.
899 Svenska Socialisten, 20/2, 1913 p.3.
900 Svenska Socialisten, 10/7, 1913, p.3.
901 Svenska Socialisten, 18/9 p.3 and 16/10, 1913. p.4.
902 Svenska Socialisten 26/2, 1914. p.4.
903 Svenska Socialisten, 28/12, 1917.
904 Svenska Socialisten 7/4, 1914, p.4; 2/3, 1916, p.3.
spoke on “Arbetarrörelsen och Nykterhetsrörelsen” (‘the Labor Movement and the Temperance Movement’) the strong support for Socialism among the Scandinavians of Two Harbors becomes evident as the speech attracted a larger audience than the 200 that had attended his speech in Duluth (a city 10 times bigger than Two Harbors). On another occasion the Scandinavian Socialist Fritiof Werenskjöld spoke three days in a row in the city. The first day at Glen Hall he spoke more generally on Socialism to an audience of 225. Dancing, music and coffee followed the speech. The second day his speech before 230 people was dedicated to the question on women and Socialism. The final speech was dedicated to temperance and was held before 300. The hall that evening was filled to its capacity and more than fifty had to be turned away. The Swedish agitator Einar “Texas” Ljungberg also visited Two Harbors on one of his trips to America. During his visit in the summer of 1916 he describes how the barber and Swedish-born Socialist mayor of the city, Ernest G Strand, shaved him. “Texas” writes that a couple of hundred attended his meeting.

In 1915 and 1916 a number of different localities were used for Socialist activities. Glen Hall, the property of the English Socialist local, seems to have been the most used, but other venues also furnished the Socialists room. In 1918, however, an article in the Two Harbors Socialist stated that the Finnish workers had secured lots “upon which to build a home for the toilers”. The hall was not only a Socialist undertaking, but seems to have been a cooperative effort involving the unions, cooperatives and Socialists, since these are the groups mentioned as being able to claim space in the building. Shares were to be issued for $5 apiece and offered to workers. The plans presented by the Socialist Arvie Queber were high-flying, as he proposed in the article a two-story building with an auditorium, a reading-room and meeting-halls. The building was said to provide “a home built and maintained by workers themselves without the aid of corporate interests, and where the workers can enjoy all the privileges now enjoyed by the grace of big business”. This last comment was clearly directed toward the strong position of the YMCA and the growing tendency towards company influence over the leisure time of the railroad workers of Two Harbors and toward the increasingly strong community orientation of the YMCA, which wanted to involve not only railroad workers, but the wives, sons and daughters of the workers as well.

The optimism of the years 1915 and 1916 and the bid to claim public space and maintain continuity in the Socialist presence in Two Harbors is, by these accounts, obvious. Furthermore, the Socialists were quite successful, as they established a newspaper and created appealing social spaces in the city where people came together for a good time and for political lectures. Judging by the accounts in the Socialist newspaper, the social arrangements continued all the way into

905 Svenska Socialisten, 20/11, 1913. p.3
1918 and beyond, but even the social activities were marked by the crisis experienced by the movement in Two Harbors during the European War.

In January 1918 the Scandinavian Socialist local again arranged a social, involving a scheduled debate on what could be done by the members to produce a stronger organization. The plans of the Scandinavian local also involved speeches like a Socialist lecture by Nels R. Swenson, who spoke in “Scandinavian” at Glen Hall in March 1918. The Finnish local was also active in arranging socials, a performance by the Finnish athlete club of Duluth being announced for May 1918. The Finnish local also held other socials during the spring. The cooperation between the Socialist locals seems to have still been good in 1918, as joint meetings between the three locals were still announced in that year.

These meetings, whether carried out by the clubs in unison or by one single club, shaped the development of the Socialist movement and, in effect, became an important part of a Socialist public sphere in the city. The function of the program can thus be connected with the words of the Socialist editor who was also appointed city organizer in 1915:

> It is not enough to capture a city, there are many workers here who still take off their hats to the boss; they need to be taught self-respect and class-consciousness. Our work is still ahead of us—not behind.

The editor then goes on to say that the things achieved on the local levels are all good, but that the work of reform and improvement still remained to be done, and that the movement needed to educate the workers “who are still asleep or think this slave system was sent by God.” The quote illustrates in important ways that the local Socialists had realized the importance of the social program as a way of forming long-term political opinions, and hence had realized the potential of using the public sphere to that end.

**Analysis**

As indicated above, the various ethnic Socialist locals created their own cultural spaces, by which they made their program contribute to the construction of ethnic worker sub-identities, of which the most prominent and self-conscious seems to have been a Scandinavian one with its Swedish component as its most important carrier.

909 Two Harbors Socialist, 18/3 1918. p.4
910 Two Harbors Socialist, 3/5, 1918. p.4
911 Two Harbors Socialist, 12/7, 1918. p.4.
912 Two Harbors Socialist, 5/4, 1918. p.1
914 Two Harbors Socialist, 22/5, 1915. p.8
Furthermore, the actions of the locals seem to fall well into a Scandinavian popular movement tradition where the worker was taught class-consciousness through speeches, movies, the Socialist newspaper, plays and through weekly meetings with other workers under leisurely but organized forms. But the construction of this Socialist “öffentlichkeit” was a cooperative undertaking by the English-language and the Scandinavian and Finnish locals and was primarily initiated by the English-speaking local. The presence of a Scandinavian local and the way it contributed to a distinct Scandinavian radical identity, made obvious in the extensive cultural program carried out by the Scandinavian Socialists, underlines the distinct multi-ethnic character of the oppositional public sphere, held together by a language of class and the opposition to company interests.

The success of Socialism in Two Harbors can thus not only be explained by Scandinavian popular movement traditions, even if these traditions certainly were part of the work of the Scandinavian local and thus contributed to the socialist public sphere. The co-operation between the English-speaking local, which was established earlier than the Swedish, which could draw on an American third party tradition, and which organized skilled American-born workers, was also a key component in the establishing of this öffentlichkeit that emerged in Two Harbors during the mid 1910s.

Through organizing into ethnic locals the Socialists were able to fuse different segments of the working class together via the everyday program for “instruction and enjoyment” and occasional other events. Especially important for the establishment of this public sphere was the local Socialist newspaper. The opposition to Anglo-American bourgeois leadership in Two Harbors during this period had consequently, due to the close cooperation between the locals, a distinct ethnic component, as evidenced by the strong element of Scandinavian, and especially Swedish, involvement, the large number of Scandinavian Socialist agitators who came to Two Harbors and the cultural program presented by the English, Scandinavian and Finnish locals in cooperation. This inter-ethnic cooperation to some extent achieved its goal of creating a Socialist public sphere that was upheld between 1915 and 1917. The inter-ethnic character of the everyday activities reflects in important ways the ethnically diverse election tickets put up by the Socialists in city elections. It also further underlines how the Socialist movement was broad and primarily supported by people with common experiences as workers, or former workers for the D&IR who had moved into the petty bourgeoisie. The work of the Socialists was firmly based on the idea of “educating” the workers of the community and socializing the population into opposing class cultures or at least contending with the Anglo-American capitalist project by using a language based on class and common experiences from railroad work.

The Socialist public sphere was thus successful and, judging by the events in the mid-1910s, constituted an important component of the public space in Two Harbors. The fact that the workers built a labor hall is also indicative of the aim to challenge the efforts of the company in trying to shape the lives of the workers through the influence of the YMCA and the increased focus on a company wel-
fare program. In fact, the company program can be regarded as a response to the success of the radicalism of the workers during the 1910s. A visiting Swedish Socialist who called Two Harbors “one of the most Socialistic cities in the country” indicates the importance of the Socialist public sphere. Another indication of this was the claim of this opposition to “true Americanism” during the years preceding the First World War, aiming at giving the term a meaning beyond the patriotic slogans and the increasingly narrow definitions given to it in wartime Minnesota.

This fact as well as the success of the Socialists is also evident in the way that the locals arranged various public celebrations during the 1910s in particular. Let us hence turn to three distinct holidays all with important symbolic meanings related to class and/or ethnicity.

**Class and Ethnicity on May Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day**

The Socialist presence in Two Harbors had one expression in the celebration of three different holidays connected with class relations and nationalism between 1915 and 1917, each with its own important symbolic meaning, which through the involvement of the Socialist locals became contested territory for the period, being also in themselves distinctly culturally and socially coded. The celebrations were the Fourth of July, the First of May and Labor Day.

The first note of a May Day celebration in Two Harbors derives from 1913, when it was arranged by the Scandinavian local. After the celebration *Svenska Socialisten*, a Swedish-language Socialist newspaper published in Chicago, published a short account written by Hjalmar B., a member of the Two Harbors club. The Scandinavians furnished singing, music, dancing and coffee to “club members and others in attendance”. This was also the first official “fest” arranged by the Scandinavian local.

This ethnic component in May Day celebrations seems to have characterized the high-water mark of Socialism in Two Harbors, as the Scandinavian local would lead the May Day celebrations again in 1915. In that year an evening program was held at Glen Hall. The program included speeches by principal speaker Juls. J. Anderson, music and singing, with lunch and coffee provided. The entrance fee was 35 cents. The *Two Harbors Socialist* presented a short history of May Day as one aspect of the education of its readership. The article also calls Labor Day, the distinctly American labor holiday, a capitalist event that the radical wing of the labor movement “had little time for”. Oddly enough, the aftermath of the event is not taken up in the newspaper.

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915 *Svenska Socialisten*, 20/11, 1913. p.3.
916 *Svenska Socialisten*, 15/5, 1913. p.3.
917 *Two Harbors Socialist*, 24/4, 1915, pp.1,4.
In 1916 the May Day program was again arranged by the Socialist locals, this time in unison, as a committee with members from the English-speaking, the Scandinavian and the Finnish locals were engaged in the preparations in late April of that year. The committee originally planned for a parade in the city, but decided against that, since the intense work on the ore docks and on the railroad made a large portion of the workers either working nights or kept out on the road.918

The other part of the planned program was, however, carried out and included speeches by Juls J. Anderson. The report after the celebration tells us that there was a good turnout of people and that the speech was followed by dancing to the “Marine Orchestra”. Some Socialists from Two Harbors also participated in the celebration of May Day in the Range cities. In Virginia a turnout of 1 000 people took part in a parade, and afterwards listened to a speech held by Juls J Anderson.919 The celebration, hence, indicates the tying together of the Socialist clubs in Two Harbors and the radical movement that emerged in the Range cities. An indication that the Two Harbors Socialists wanted to play a role in a broader regional movement is also indicated by the speech of Anderson, who had been appointed organizer the previous year.

The Socialists organized no May Day celebrations in 1917. One factor behind this was the takeover of an alliance between the two established parties in city government in the municipal elections the month before. Another might have been the grand patriotic parade that was staged by the new city administration and a range of other groups promoting American participation in WWI.920

The celebration of May Day in 1918 was held at Glen Hall and was “well attended”. A speaker invited from Duluth talked about the war and its relation to the working class. The entrance fee for attending was to contribute to the campaign fund of the Socialists in the 1918 elections. Lunch was served and a musical program presented. The newspaper also commented that “the only damper on the evening was the fact that neither of comrades Gillan or Christensen were present, and their absence was much commented on”.921 This seems to provide further evidence, the first being signaled by the discussion after the election in 1916, of key figures leaving the Socialist movement. The two men, whose absence was commented on, were both police officers. Mr. Gillan is taken up as a company policeman in the early 1920s, while Christensen had run as The Public Ownership candidate for village constable in the 1904 election. He had then served from this period and into the 1910s as city police officer, a position that the city council appointed. The strategic position of the two men as enforcers of law was thus critical in the light of the laws passed in 1917 by the new city ad-

921 Two Harbors Socialist, 3/5, 1918. p.4.
administration, setting limits to radical activities and agitation (see p.x). This lack of support from the local police authorities might have turned out to be fatal to the local radical movement.

The next day the Finnish local gave a program at the Workers’ Hall featuring speeches, one by a Professor Oksanen, recitals and music. The main event was a performance of a workingman’s play in two acts performed by the dramatic club of Smithville College. The hall was, according to the newspaper, packed.922 The following years there is no mention of any local May Day celebrations in the Lake County Chronicle, a fact that illustrates how un-American the holiday was thought to be by a labor movement increasingly pursuing other organizational arrangements that would contribute to the political mobilization of the local community.

The May Day celebrations seem generally to have developed from being an occasion where the Scandinavian Socialists came together without the support of the other two locals into becoming an inter-ethnic enterprise where the preparations were carried out in unison. It is also clear that the holiday never played a particularly large role for the Socialist movement in Two Harbors with the exception of one year, in 1916, when the clubs together tried to mobilize the local working class. It is, however, an important fact that the Scandinavian local seems to have gradually integrated May Day into a Socialist public sphere, at least for a short while. The celebration was hence widened to transcend ethnic boundaries in 1916 and was one part of a class-based opposition to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance, a fact that is underlined by the way Labor Day is criticized for being a capitalist holiday.

Given the timing of the holiday at the beginning of the ore season, the celebrations were difficult to orchestrate, as this was the busiest time of the entire year. This was a factor limiting the way in which the Socialists could use May Day. The celebrations themselves with their mix of education and entertainment fall well in line with the general program of the locals during the 1915 to 1917 period. May Day also offered a possibility to create ties with the radical movement on the Range, and the editor of the Two Harbors Socialist held speeches up there on at least one occasion. A more important celebration for the local Socialists was July 4, and during a few years, given their local political strength and the cultural program based on both a solid class-conscious working class and ethnic sub-identities, the local Socialists tried to claim this distinctly American holiday.

The Fourth of July 1915 was a well-prepared celebration. The Socialists of Two Harbors had sponsored the celebration in 1914 and were taking charge of the celebrations the following year. The English language local started preparations for the event and as early as May 1 the Two Harbors Socialist announced that a committee had been appointed. The committee had at that time been promised by

922 Two Harbors Socialist, 3/5, 1918. p.4
the city council to use the city park for free. A month later another article reads: “Two Harbors is...to have this year, the greatest Fourth of July celebration in its History”. The work also seems to have been delegated to the other Socialist locals, since five committees had been established working on the celebrations. The presentation of the committees does seem to underline a strong Swedish participation among the Socialists arranging the celebration. Chairman C.E. Bergren, a Swede, led the committees. They were dominated by men but included a few women, and the ethnic make-up seems to have closely reflected the Scandinavian and English locals of Two Harbors.

Apart from planned races, most prominently an auto race, and various other forms of entertainment, the celebration of the Socialists also included a civic parade in which all unions, lodges, business houses, auto owners and societies generally, were invited to attend. On June 19 The Two Harbors Socialist announced a more finished program. We get to know that the advertising committee had prepared and were ready to print a souvenir program for the event, and that they had practically sold out the advertisement space in the booklet. This fact signals strong support for the movement from parts of the local petty bourgeoisie.

The general program was sizeable for the Day and included a parade. The parade would form in the center of the city and proceed to the city park, where music and speaking were provided. The speakers were Julius F Emme, a St. Paul Socialist, William Towl, the Socialist mayor of Two Harbors, and John Dwan, a well-known lawyer and long-time “Two Harborite”. After that there was to be an intermission for lunch and refreshments, after which a program of races and sports would follow. Judging from an advertisement in the newspaper, more than 25 different sports activities had been arranged for women, men, boys and girls, ranging from running races to pie-eating contests. Later in the afternoon dancing to the Two Harbors Marine band was furnished. From the advertisement it becomes clear that cash contributions and donations of prizes had been made by parts of the local business community and from “public spirited individuals”. This fact again signals strong support for the Socialist celebration.

In a last note before the great festivity the editor of the Two Harbors Socialist, Julius J Anderson, drew a parallel between the “American REVOLUTIONISTS” that overthrew the then existing “American government” and, “the American REVOLUTIONISTS of 1915, that in Two Harbors Monday will celebrate this day”. Anderson also asserts that the celebration will not be used to catch votes or to promote any political party but emphasizes that the celebration will “carry out the spirit of the day as there will be speeches showing the origin of the Fourth, its

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924 Committees on advertisement and program, committee on Finance, Committee on Refreshments, on Music, sports and dancing and on grounds and decoration.
925 Two Harbors Socialist, 5/6, 1915. p.5
926 Two Harbors Socialist, 19/6, 1915. p.1
927 Two Harbors Socialist, 26/6, 1915. p.5
history, as well as thoughts on the growing ideals of liberty, both economic and political". Anderson requests all members of the Socialist locals who can, to attend the parade “so as to make the showing as good as possible”. The celebrations seem to have been a distinct success, and the parade was “declared to have eclipsed all former efforts along those lines”. As it began to congregate, the sidewalks “were crowded with spectators”.

The make-up of the parade interestingly displayed both class markers and ethnic markers that two years later would be considered very suspect in the eyes of many Americans. The parade was headed by police officers on horseback, followed by a band. Then came fifty girls waving American flags, followed by the city officials in decorated cars, the fire department, a float representing the municipally owned power plant, and a Norwegian singing society. This group was followed by 25 boys with Socialist pendants, after which marched the Socialist locals under a red flag. Then came the fraternal orders, among which were represented the local lodge of the Swedish ethnic Vasa Orden and a couple of other fraternities. Many of the orders turned out in decorated autos and in full uniform. Last in the parade came the Happy Hour Heinigeboobelminkum band that played out of tune and turned out in grotesque costumes. These seem to have been a spoof on the “pranksters”’ own and their parents’ Scandinavian heritage. According to the Socialist newspaper, the joke was well received.

The article ends: “it was the unanimous opinion that it was the biggest and best Fourth of July celebration that Two Harbors had experienced for many years. The Socialist locals who had charge of the parade, expressed gratitude over the assistance rendered them in the undertaking, and felt that success was mainly due to the friendly co-operation of the bulk of the citizens of the city”.

Despite the remarks on not promoting any specific political fraction, the parade seems to have been a manifestation of force by the local Socialists. The parade was apparently elaborately arranged in order to display the characteristics of the opposition and the respectability of the local movement and to conjure up additional support. The Socialists used the parade in essence as a way of connecting radicalism to nationalism, as both Socialist and established American symbols were used.

The police officers, the band, the fire engines and the support from the fraternal orders all displayed traditional features of municipal parades of the time and illustrate the connection that the Socialists wanted to make between American culture and the Socialist movement. The girls waving American flags also connect the Socialists with Americanism and nationalism when this is tied together with the strong class markers of boys carrying Socialist banners and the Socialist lo-

931 Two Harbors Socialist, 10/7, 1915. p.1.
cals marching under a red flag. Finally, the fruit of the Socialist administration was also displayed in the form of a raft for the municipally owned power plant. The composition of the parade, hence, wanted to underline what Anderson wrote about the Revolutionists of 1915 and the concept of true Americanism that was used in the 1917 city elections. By using traditional symbols displayed on the national holiday in this way the Socialists arranging the parade wanted to establish a connection between radicalism and nationalism and between Socialism and respectability.

Ethnicity also played a part in the parade, as fraternal orders and the Norwegian singing society, together with the Socialist clubs, all had a distinct Scandinavian character. The spoof on Scandinavian identity sported during the parade by the children of immigrants, in itself a proof of a generational difference in the perception of ethnicity, is also interesting in that it underlines a quite self-confident ethnic identity, without being under any specific pressures or particularly controversial in character.

The parade symbols connected with American nationalism, ethnicity and class also held a gendered dimension, as the parade displayed a distinct connection between gender, class and nationalism. American nationalism was in the parade connected with girls who waved American flags, thus linking nationalism with femininity. The class aspect of the parade was, on the other hand, related to masculinity, as boys and men carried red banners and Socialist pendants. The gendered character of the parade finally illustrates how the Socialists skillfully used these established symbols to strengthen the radical identity of the community while at the same time connecting it to American nationalism.932

The program following the parade also underlines how the local Socialists wanted to display an opposition, because it supports the analysis of the parade. Socialist speeches were hence mixed into more traditional ways of celebrating the Fourth of July the same way as pie contests, sack races and Socialism were mixed into a distinctly American radicalism, but one that embraced ethnicities other than Anglo-Americans. A Swedish Socialist who was given the opportunity to speak on the national holiday is the chief illustration of this.

The Socialist Party of Two Harbors again, as in 1914 and 1915, arranged the Fourth of July in 1916. However, this year the locals decided against a parade, since the cost and labor involved had taxed the resources hard the year before. Instead the celebration was held in the form of a picnic in Lake View Park with a program consisting of speeches, sports and dancing, going on from noon until midnight.933 Speakers in English, Finnish and “Scandinavian” were to be involved, and again, a souvenir book was produced containing advertisements

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932 For a discussion on the gendered character of class and its development from the 1910s see: Faue, Elisabeth. A Community of Suffering and Struggle. pp.66-68.

from sponsors of the event, and the grand program of sports provided “for old young, fat and lean”, The advert encouraged the readers to “come yourself and bring the children and the rest of the family.” The arrangement was again well attended, although we do not get to know much about the speeches given, because on this topic the Two Harbors Socialist remains silent. By the ethnic composition of the speakers attending, the multi-ethnic character of the opposition seems strong in the 1916 celebration, too, and the program again gives the impression of a traditional celebration of the national holiday with a distinctly Socialist touch, as the speakers obviously address an ethnically diverse audience drawn from the local working class.

In 1917, as has been emphasized by Susanna Frenkel, the celebration mirrored the political differences in Two Harbors, as two distinct celebrations of the Fourth of July were held in that year. The Scandinavian local of Two Harbors was arranging a picnic and had invited the Socialists of Duluth to join them in their celebration at the city park, followed by dancing in the pavilion. Unfortunately, the plans miscarried and the park and dancing pavilion were let to “some other individual”. The result was that the Duluth visit was postponed and the committee had to look for some nice spot near the city. The picnic was held at the “old ball ground” outside the cemetery. Arrangements were made by the Scandinavian local to arrange for some music, and a program of sports with prizes and speaking were to be arranged. The advert in the Two Harbors Socialist stated: “The workers and farmers and their families are cordially invited”. The names on the committee arranging the celebration included Arvie Queber, the Scandinavian editor of the Two Harbors Socialist, and Ernest G Strand, the former Socialist mayor of Two Harbors. This further underlines the Scandinavian connection to this celebration.

The celebration in the city in that year was arranged by a “citizens’ committee” as a patriotic parade, a way of celebrating the 4th that had been “recommended” by the central authorities of Minnesota in the form of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. The celebration included two speeches on the war effort entitled “Why U.S. is fighting Germany” and “Patriotic Address”. There was also a recital of “the President’s War message”. The songs “America” and “Star Spangled Banner” were supposed to be sung in unison by the choir and the audience. The program was in line with the dictates of the state authorities, supposedly directed more towards the present than the past.

Under the headline “Two Harbors Celebrate the Fourth of July” articles on the organized activities of the “citizens’ committee” celebration and the Socialist celebration were put side by side in the columns of the Two Harbors Socialist. The speakers at the Socialist picnic had focused on the meaning of the Declara-
tion of Independence, the class struggle and the relationship between the Socialists and the American war effort. The lead speaker was W.E. Reynolds, editor of the Duluth Labor Leader. The picnic attracted close to 800 participants from Two Harbors, and speaker and band traveled by boat from Duluth. The boat ride was a result of the band having been denied access to the D&IR train. Interestingly enough, the Scandinavian Socialists local were the only local responsible for this arrangement, and all involved in the preparations were Norwegians or Swedes. Nothing indicates that the English-speaking local supported this celebration.

In the speeches held at the patriotic parade the main speaker congratulated the Republicans and the Democrats of the city for having united in the cause of getting rid of the Socialists from city government. The editor of the Socialist newspaper wrote, not without bitterness, that the speaker, after having foulmouthed the Socialists, discussed freedom of speech in America. He then “spoke at length on the war question”. The parade was made up of the cadet band, Company A, a military force stationed in Two Harbors to protect the railroad facilities, the Red Cross, children waving flags, and automobiles. We also learn that “[a] number of families enjoyed basket lunches in the park, each inviting a couple of soldiers”. Richard Hudelson has discussed the strong nationalistic sentiments that characterized part of the Minnesota public debate during the preparedness period from 1915 and the period when the United States participated in the European War. He has concluded that these strong sentiments created a public climate where certain opinions were very hard to express and which stigmatized the Socialist movement. These sentiments were generally promoted by the bourgeoisie, which had strong support from large parts of the working class, as the national debate and the actions of the AFL structured the actions of organized labor.

The events during the 1917 celebration places the citizens’ progressive league squarely in the center of a process dictated by the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, which aimed at securing the loyalty of the population in the state. In the event of the Fourth of July celebration, the “citizens” on the local level carried out the “recommendations” of the MCPS, as it created a connection through the Fourth of July between American Nationalism and basic American rights such as freedom of speech. Socialism, on the other hand, was branded as an idea to be ousted as un-patriotic. American Nationalism, as expressed by the President’s war message, was connected with the obligation to fight for these American freedoms. The celebration was also given a militarist touch through

938 Two Harbors Socialist, 6/7, 1917, p.1
939 For a discussion on Socialist draft resisters in this emerging context, see Douglas, William R. The Germans Would Court Martial Me Too.
940 For a discussion on the trade union position on the war, which was divided before the war, but where the critics of the pro-war stance of Gompers and others were silenced after a speech given by Mr. Gompers in March, 1917. McCartin, Joseph A. Labor’s Great War. The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the origins of modern American Labor Relations, 1912-1921. pp.63-74.
soldiers from the force that had been dispatched to protect the railroad facilities from the inner enemy (the so-called Company A), who became a showpiece in the citizens’ parade, further underlining the connection with American nationalism and the obligation to go to war. The work of the MCPS thus achieved a concrete expression in the celebration of the Fourth of July in 1917 in Two Harbors. The celebration must in this light be regarded as part of the work to promote the war effort and to ensure the loyalty of the citizenship.

The celebrations seem generally to have comprised two manifestations of sentiments for and against war, but they also highlight a number of other distinct features. At the Socialist celebration, the class dimension seems prominent and the ethnic component is obvious, since the Socialist local organizing Scandinavians stands for the arrangements. In the other celebration patriotic speeches, singing and nationalist sentiments are displayed, as national unity, anxiety over dissent and the contrasting of American democracy to dangerous Socialism are emphasized. An ideological shift hence seems to have occurred, since the establishment managed to rally portions of the population of Two Harbors to back the American war effort in Europe. The marginalization of the use of class in the public discourse hence illustrates a shift back towards an increased influence of the bourgeois public sphere. Simultaneously the manifestation based on ethnicity and class, two prominent elements in the opposition to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance is, in some sense, marginalized in the 1917 celebration. The question of the role of the English language local is difficult to assess, but as the only local mentioned is the Scandinavian one, it seems as if the Socialist celebration had a distinct ethnic character. Judging by the large attendance at the Citizens’ Committee celebration, some American-born Socialists chose that rather than the Socialist one.

Labor Day had been observed in Two Harbors since 1907 and had initially been carried out in cooperation with company officials. The company picnic in 1907 took place on Labor Day, forming one aspect of a company program for the integration of the immigrant work force into company structures. As the political climate changed, however, and the Socialist movement grew numerically stronger, it tried to claim Labor Day for Socialism. An indication that this was a quite short-lived claim is presented in a discussion before May Day 1915 when Juls J Anderson, the Socialist editor and organizer, called Labor Day a capitalist holiday and nothing that should involve the Socialists. This opinion seems to have changed, as the Socialists the same year, and judging by the remarks by the editor on May Day, for the first time organized Labor Day.

On September 4 a full-page advertisement for a Socialist Labor Day celebration was published, and the object of the advertisement seems to be to claim Labor Day for Socialism in Two Harbors. The reason given in the advertisement for arranging the Labor Day celebration was that there was no central organization of the labor unions in the city, but since the Socialist locals “having in its membership men of all Unions, crafts and calling of the city”, they were considered in some part representative. The advertisement emphasizes the importance of Labor
Day being a day to “fittingly commemorate the one day in the year that has been set aside as a day for labor to rest from its toil. …A hundred different methods will be adopted to keep alive the flame of working class solidarity”. 941

The advertisement also heavily used the language of class to emphasize the importance of the holiday for the local workers:

On that day we forget we are German or French or Swede or Norwegian, or English, or what not, and only remember that we are part of that class who are doing all the work in the world, and yet have to organize into unions in order to wrest from the exploiters even a bare living as the reward of our industry…. Labor knows no nationality; it breathes the spirit of the brotherhood of man … it builds its towering structure on the common interests of all workers… The worker who gets grey hairs worrying over the profits of the Master never joins a Labor Day celebration.

The celebration was taking place in the city park (Lake View Park) and consisted of speeches on “strictly Socialist matters”, a picnic, and dancing. 942

An article critical of the company for keeping the railroad running on that day and not allowing the workers from the big four trade unions to participate in the celebration was published in the Socialist newspaper. The railroad company was charged with making the Automobile Association (many of the railroad officers were members of that organization at this time) celebrate Labor Day for them. The editor:

The Superintendent of the railroad is one of the “pillars of the church” and it would seem that he would make every effort to permit the men under his charge to every wholesome desire to better the conditions under which they work instead of crushing out every such desire. 943

A large-sized crowd attended the picnic, despite the company’s desire to keep the railroad running. 944 The Socialist language of the 1915 celebration stands out, as this is the first and last time that the Socialists arranged the celebration. The railroad officials seem to have opposed the Socialists claiming this day, as it had, against its practice from previous years, kept the railroad running during the holiday.

The Labor Day Celebrations in the fall of 1916 were not arranged by the Socialists, but by one of the fairly recently organized fraternal orders, The Loyal Order of Moose. A parade was organized with attendance from a number of organiza-
tions in two Harbors, including the retail clerks’ union and the boilermakers’ union. These were followed by “a big number of private vehicles in the parade”. There is no mention of a Socialist presence, but Julius J Anderson was the president of the local Moose, so Socialists were probably there in other capacities. This illustrates the start of a general change in the political climate and a Socialist movement increasingly on the defense. Labor Day is not even mentioned in the Socialist newspaper in 1917, probably due to shrinking maneuver room for the Socialist movement generally and to the evident problems of the newspaper in late 1917.

In 1919, however, Labor Day was celebrated, this time under the auspices of the local trade union movement. The Labor Day celebration of 1921 was arranged by the Federated Trades Assembly, and seems to have had a quite union character to it. A machinist and a trainman who represented their respective trade unions spoke at the meeting. Three vaudeville acts were planned instead of the competitions that previous to this year used to be a standing part of the program. The most commented of the acts was a minstrel show with local talents. The actors being taken from the members of the Library Board. The show was called “Forty-five minutes in Dixie” with the editor commenting that “the Chronicle is assured that versatile black face talents have been enlisted in its production”.

Plans were also made to have a “monster parade” and a picnic dinner. The general committee chairman, “T.A. Berry, is “appealing to every union man to fall in line as a living rebuke to the so called American plan”. The program was, according to the newspaper, apart from the parade an unqualified success. But the parade was a disappointment, as only 150 took part in it, more than eighty of these coming from the Carmen’s union. The editor of the Lake County Chronicle commented: “The four brotherhoods were conspicuous by their absence”. This is another indication of the split in the local trade union movement which had gone into politics.

The speaker of the day was Gottfried T Lindsteen, chairman of the legislative board of Minnesota Brotherhood of railway trainmen, and alderman for the third district in Minneapolis. He talked on the union movement, the union in politics and the efforts from the church and the “pseudo patriots” to split the union vote in Minneapolis. The “hit of the afternoon” was said to be the minstrel show, performed by a YMCA club called the Campfire Girls. The girls and women of the club entertained the audience with grotesque costumes, blackface and with playing jokes on local people.

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946 Lake County Chronicle, 1/9, 1921. p.1.
947 Lake County Chronicle, 8/9, 1921. p.1.
Analysis

Judging from how the celebrations of holidays connected with class and ethnicity were carried out during the mid-1910s in Two Harbors, the ethnic Socialist clubs became hubs of working class activism and an important base for the opposition in Two Harbors. The celebrations also convincingly illustrate how the activities of the Socialist locals with their respective ethnic activists changed the cultural and political character of the community.

During a few years the locals led the celebrations of July 4, Labor Day and May Day. In general, the everyday culture of radicalism was promoted and displayed in the celebrations of the holidays, and they all in some degree became important manifestations of the opposition. Generally speaking, ethnic identities seem to have been subordinated to the language of class and the construction of a larger Socialist public sphere at these events. However, the celebrations also indicate that ethnicity and immigrant status doubtlessly played large and important roles for the opposition. The most telling indication of this is an advertisement for a Labor Day celebration arranged by the three locals in unison in 1915, which emphasized the common class experience shared by immigrant workers. The different holidays seem to some extent to have been ethnically coded, as the celebration of May Day was primarily connected to the Scandinavian and Finnish locals. But most of the time the celebration was handled by committees representing primarily the Scandinavian and English locals.

It also seems clear from the celebrations how ethnicity became connected with radicalism. The locals were clearly the most dominant expression of the ethnic groups in local politics but also a platform for ethnic groups and their working class component to carve out their own specific brand of Americanism based on ethnic markers, radicalism and values perceived as genuinely American. This was one of the primary functions of the celebrations in Two Harbors. In this respect, the Americanism displayed by the Socialists in the 1915 celebration of the Fourth of July, which tried to fuse Americanism and radicalism, resembles the working class Americanism discussed by Gary Gerstle, which became an important aspect of the identity among immigrant workers during the 1930s. This radical Americanism argued for workers’ right under American democracy, workers’ rights as connected with the Declaration of Independence, and a general rhetoric underpinning the idea of ethnic workers as “true Americans”. The same kind of discussion was carried out on the pages of the *Two Harbors Socialist* in 1915 and got an especially forceful expression in the celebration of the Fourth of July in that year, as radical symbols and American national symbols were mixed during the celebration. The Swedish Socialist leadership seems to have played an important role in the planning of the celebrations.

The ethnic working class in Two Harbors, through the Socialist bid for the public sphere in these celebrations, seems to have laid claim to a radical, multi-ethnic

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American working class identity that stood in opposition to the industrial capitalist project connected with the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. In this opposition, Americanism became one important component, which was made evident by the celebrations during the 1910s. The cultural dimension of the class struggle that has been described by Gramsci hence got a forceful expression in two clashing societal interests in Two Harbors during the 1910s. This struggle over cultural symbols and the national identity thus got a concrete expression in the struggle over interpretations and symbols, where nationalism, ethnic sub-identities and a hegemonic cultural identity came to play important roles.

The class-based multi-ethnic character of the opposition consequently claimed the Fourth of July in 1915 and 1916, and through the holiday challenged the bid for a uniform Americanism, which grew increasingly strong during the preparedness period in Minnesota. This struggle seems to have intensified after the American entry into World War I, which is made clear during the celebration of the Fourth of July 1917, when two separate celebrations of the national holiday were carried out and where the Scandinavian radicals in Two Harbors made up the backbone of the “Socialist” celebration.

During 1915 and 1916 the celebrations may be thought of as proof of the success of this ethnic radicalism, reflected in the support it received. The 1917 celebration, on the other hand, illustrates the limits of these organizational efforts, as the economic and political establishment on the state level had an increasing impact on the process of identity formation. This year marks the beginning of the end of the Socialist presence in Two Harbors.

The war, the company and the workers

The immigrants and their children dominated the population of Lake County in the 1910 census, and the Norwegians and the Swedes were the largest groups. The immigrant question does not seem to have attracted any particular attention before the mid 1910s. As was shown in chapter 8, the most important institution for the Americanization of the immigrant workers seems to have been the railroad YMCA and, to some extent, the workplace. From the turn of the century the YMCA was carrying out Americanization work in the community in the form of social studies groups and English language classes for the immigrant workers on the D&IR. In fact, despite some outbursts of anti-immigrant sentiments during the 1890s, the perspective on immigrants appears generally to have been quite positive in Two Harbors and Lake County. In a county presentation of 1910 it was said that the immigrant element of the community should be regarded “of the better class”. Evidently at that time the Anglo-American establishment generally regarded the Scandinavians as an important and welcomed ethnic group in the community. Despite this generally positive assertion of immigrants, other social contexts generated quite different Anglo-American responses to

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949 Two Harbors in 1910, p.13
Swedish immigrants. A testimony of this is an Anglo-American man writing his parents in St. Paul, MN from a lumber camp in Lake County in 1901.

9/10th of the men here are roundheads & the most disgusting dirty lousy reprobates that I ever saw... There are probably 15 white men here to 60 Swedes... It is only in the evening that I am forced to associate with these beasts they call Swedes that I get depressed... Walking behind a string of Swedes is something impossible to a person with a delicate nose... It is an odor which could only come from generations of unwashed ancestors & no man can hope to acquire it in one lifetime without the aid of heredity.\footnote{950}

In the wake of the preparedness period of 1915 and 1916 and the American entry into the European war in April 1917, the work to instill loyalty in American citizens and non-naturalized immigrants picked up momentum. The work had an impact nationwide, but Minnesota with its large Scandinavian and German-born population became a good breeding-ground for xenophobia, distrust of immigrants and efforts aimed at Americanizing the immigrant working class.\footnote{951}

The strong arm of the state government in this work was the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS). The MCPS was a state bureau with practically unlimited powers to ensure the loyalty of the people of Minnesota and was initiated and headed by the Republican governor, Joseph Burnquist, himself a son of Swedish immigrants, who had been elected to office in 1916 with quite strong Swedish electoral support. The work of the commission is well documented and analyzed on the state level by Carl Chrislock, who has called the work of the commission, as well as his book, \textit{Watchdog of Loyalty}. The \textit{Watchdog} was not only to ensure the support of the immigrant population for the war effort but its work was also to monitor and, preferably, to destroy the Socialist movement and the radical union movement. Radicals, hence, were also perceived as un-American and as potentially disloyal, since they were regarded as a threat to a capitalist order of production that was a prerequisite for the war effort. As a consequence of the changing federal and state policies against these potentially disloyal groups, the perception of what Americanism, patriotism and freedom were supposed to stand for also changed. How this work usually played out in a small community and what role local organizations and industrial establishments played in carrying out the policy dictated by the commission will hence be treated in this part of the book.

The purpose is to analyze the actions of the Anglo-American establishment between 1916 and the early 1920s. A starting point will be the discussion of preparedness and the miners’ strike, which brought to the fore the question of loy-

\footnote{950 Quoted from: Vecoli, Rudolph. \textit{Immigrants and the Twin Cities, Melting Pot or Mosaic.} p.17}
alty and dissent in the region around Two Harbors. I will furthermore explore what roles the company and its officials played in ensuring the loyalty of the workers on the railroad during the period of war and how class and ethnic dynamics created specific responses from the radical movement and from the railroad workers more generally to the struggle by the Anglo-American bourgeois establishment to keep its hegemonic position in the region.

The commission’s focus on getting the ethnic groups to support the war effort was primarily aimed at German immigrants, and the “German spy” became a staple in the propaganda of the commission. Other ethnic groups were, however, also affected by the drive for loyalty, for instance the Swedish immigrants. The perception of Swedes changed quite strongly during the 1910s. In the summer of 1913 the Minnesota Governor A.O. Eberhardt spoke to a Swedish audience of more than 20,000 in Chicago on the celebration of the 20th annual Midsummer festival in that city. During his speech the governor declared that he “could see no harm” in paying honor to both the Swedish and American flags, and that to honor the Swedish flag was to honor the American. He concluded his speech by saying that the Swedish-Americans had always followed the stars and stripes.\(^{952}\) A few years later, in 1917, the Swedes of Two Harbors even refrained from celebrating the distinctly Swedish holiday because it could be misinterpreted and perceived as disloyal.\(^{953}\) In fact, previous research has concluded that the Swedes were generally regarded as potentially disloyal by the state authorities during the war. In a hearing before the Federal War Labor board, one of the leading figures in the MCPS, McGee, pointed out the Swedes and the Germans as potentially disloyal.\(^{954}\) The Swedish historian Sture Lindmark has shown how the bourgeois Swedish-American leadership in countering the tendencies to regard Swedes as disloyal used different strategies. One was the subscription of Liberty Bonds by Swedish-American organizations. Another was the co-operation of the Swedish language press in being an integral part of the American war effort and furthering a greater more long-term goal of Americanizing the Swedes into a white Anglo-American culture.\(^{955}\)

Despite the tendencies toward an increased company influence, there was, as we have seen, a class-based political opposition to the war in Two Harbors in the mid 1910s. The city’s Socialist movement, which was strongly supported by the Scandinavian workers in the community, had opposed American entry into the war ever since the summer of 1915 through anti-war rallies, public speeches and discussions about the meaning of preparedness. Local unions were also active in this work.

\(^{953}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 11/5, 1917, p.1.
\(^{954}\) Chrislock, Carl. Watchdog of Loyalty. pp.299-301. McGee later retracted his statement.
\(^{955}\) Lindmark Sture. Studies in Ethnicity with Emphasis on Illinois and Minnesota. pp.64-136. The chapter is basically a discussion on how the pre-war attitude of the bourgeois Swedish-American newspapers gradually changed to a position where they supported American participation in the war. One of his most convincing arguments concerns the promotion of Liberty Bonds through the Swedish American press.
In February 1916 the local lodge of the “Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, W.J. Stoneburner Lodge No. 339, opposed the actions of the president and the press that were “fomenting a war spirit”, claiming that American workers should not take part in the European “murderfest” and kill their European Brothers.\(^{956}\) On February 16, 1917, only weeks before the United States entered the war on Germany, parts of the union movement- the machinists, the boiler makers and the blacksmiths- at a meeting at Iron Dock Hall came out strongly against American participation, on the grounds that the “burden and hardships [of war] are always and always have been borne by the working class of which we are members, while the benefits are always reaped by the economic masters”. The resolution also stated that the organizations of Two Harbors were not willing to contribute to “the wholesale murder of our Brothers in Europe”.\(^{957}\) This standpoint, however, changed under a relentless pressure from the Anglo-American establishment on the local, the state and the federal levels.

In the beginning of 1916 a lecture on the “privileges, benefits, rights and liberties enjoyed by citizens” and “what they owe this country in return” was held for “the night school scholars” in Two Harbors. The lecture was in “plain language so that anyone possessing an average understanding of the English language [would] understand”.\(^{958}\) The night school students mainly consisted of immigrant workers, who before 1915 had been offered classes in the English language at the YMCA. In 1915, however, the superintendent of schools, a Mr. Compton, arranged for the Schools of Two Harbors to participate in a program of Americanization arranged by the Bureau of Naturalization of the US Department of Labor. The schools were started in November, as the work on the docks closed at that time, allowing the night force to participate in the classes. Given the ethnic composition of the work force, the Scandinavian-born workers were important targets of this move for Americanization. The classes focused on language skills in that reading, writing and speaking English were emphasized.\(^{959}\)

Between 1910 and 1915, 300 immigrants in Lake County became citizens, and 79 more took out final papers, declaring their intention to become citizens. Cooperation seems to have existed between the Bureau of Naturalization and the school board superintendent in Lake County from the fall of 1915. The Bureau furnished the county officials with the names and addresses of alien residents who had declared their intention or had applied for citizenship so that they could be “assisted in preparing for citizenship”. In 1916 and 1917 the number of citizens in Lake County increased as many more immigrants went through with their decision to become American citizens. Part of this new development was brought about by the increasing pressure for Americanization, as Swedish workers felt the pressures to adapt to an environment where an Anglo-American

\(^{956}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 22/2, 1916. p.8.  
\(^{957}\) The Journal News, 1/3, 1917. p.3.  
\(^{959}\) Two Harbors Socialist, 30/10, 1915. p.1.
monoculture constituted the norm and where immigrant identities were increasingly stigmatized. In a newspaper article the problem of the large number of immigrants in Lake County in 1915 is discussed, stressing that these should be naturalized. One reason given was that many immigrants did not learn English, and that illiteracy was common among them.\textsuperscript{960} In January 1916 there were a hundred night school students enrolled.\textsuperscript{961}

Figures on the number of naturalized citizens rose sharply during the following years, and between March 1 and April 30, 1917, as many as 128 residents in Lake County declared their intention of becoming American citizens. This means that during these two months more immigrants had become citizens than during an average two-year period between 1910 and 1915. The names of the 128 individuals were published in the pro-company newspaper.\textsuperscript{962} The pressure for Americanization, increasingly obvious in the more refined educational systems and a propaganda that gradually stigmatized immigrant identities, made a movement for a unified American national identity increasingly visible in Lake County during the mid-1910s. This movement for Americanization and loyalty would increase in strength during the coming years, as war loomed closer and as immigrant radicalism was increasingly regarded a threat in the region.

\textbf{The Miners’ Strike of 1916}

In the summer of 1916 the miners of the Iron Range went on strike. The strike was organized by the IWW and did not go well for the workers. It ended a couple of months later in a bitter defeat for the miners after a good deal of violence had been dished out both by the miners and the special deputies taken in to enforce order. From membership figures in Scandinavian Socialist clubs in the Range towns affected by the strike it is clear that out of four clubs only one survived in 1916.\textsuperscript{963} The response from the mining companies had been violent and the radical movement on the Range severely hampered.

In Two Harbors a strike on the ore dock erupted shortly after the strike on the Range started. Two IWW organizers from Duluth held a meeting on June 30, which was frequented by a large number of ore dock workers, and the audience was addressed in Finnish and English. A strike vote was taken and the vote fell 71 for the strike and 14 against. Later in the evening the IWW speakers addressed a meeting of more than 200 workers and yet another vote was taken, again with a large majority for a strike. It was a sympathy strike and the dockworkers, mostly Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish immigrants, evidently supported the miners. The Two Harbors Socialist seems to have supported the strike along with the overwhelming majority of the dockworkers and took a stand for the miners. A week after the strike began; the Two Harbors Socialist discussed the demands of the strikers, what was happening on the Range and the violence

\textsuperscript{960} \textit{Two Harbors Socialist}, 30/10, 1915. p.1.
\textsuperscript{961} \textit{The Journal News}, 20/1, 1916. p.1.
\textsuperscript{963} Nordahl, Per. \textit{Weaving the Ethnic Fabric}. pp.222-223, tables on membership figures.
of “citizens’ committees” in the Range towns. It also emphasized how the miners had marched through some of the mining towns under the American flag and the IWW banner. 964 On July 1, an IWW organizer that wanted to call a meeting of the ore dock workers, again with the purpose of encouraging an increase in the strike intensity, was thrown in the county jail by the county sheriff, Christensen.

The increased violence on the Range, the finding of dynamite on the railroad tracks of the D&IR and the absence of any local grievances added to the remoteness of the Range towns and made the strike on the ore dock fizzle and never really materialize. The Two Harbors Socialist seems mostly relieved that the situation in Two Harbors did not get “aggravated”. 965 The pro-company The Journal News, on the same account, wrote on its first page that the ore dock workers should not strike, and that the un-American behavior of the IWW organizers only brought about misery for the workers. 966 This connecting of immigrant radicalism and un-American behavior is, hence, visible in Two Harbors in 1916, well before the United States entered the European war.

The editor of The Journal News in Two Harbors used the term American and un-American in specific ways, while the miners on the Range sought to use the American flag to claim the right of the individual worker in the US to freedom of speech and to the freedom to organize, because one of the basic demands from the miners on the Iron Range was to be allowed to organize into unions. Thus, as early as the summer of 1916 the term American and what it was supposed to stand for was contested in the whole region, a region that was heavily influenced by immigration, as almost 50% of the population in Two Harbors in 1910 were immigrants. In some Range towns the figure was even higher. The local Socialist movement, as we have seen, used Americanism as a plank in their 1917 platform.

During the strike the workers on the railroad were not completely trustworthy in the eyes of the D&IR. According to the Two Harbors Socialist, company deputies “armed to the teeth” watched the tracks of the railroad and the bridges along the track. Through these actions and a controversy over some undetonated dynamite that had been planted on a railroad bed, a controversy arose between the Socialist newspaper editor and the D&IR. 967

During the 1916 strike the D&IR, in accordance with its mining peers on the Range, seems to have acted strongly on the Socialist presence in Two Harbors. the Two Harbors Socialist wrote that “sneaks in the employ of the company crept like curs up the stairs of Glen Hall in an attempt to get a line of the doings of the Socialist local meeting” in July of 1916. However, it stated that it had nothing to hide, and that the Socialist administration in the city would not instigate any

967 Two Harbors Socialist, 15/7, 1917. p.1.
strike among the workers but would uphold law and order in Two Harbors. It also came out for freedom of speech. *The Journal News*, on the other hand, called for gag laws directed at radical agitators in the city and the county. As we shall see, a law was passed less than one year later under a newly elected anti-Socialist city administration which criminalized Socialist agitation in Lake County.

Obviously, despite its political control of the city in 1916, the Socialist movement was something suspicious in the eyes of both the bourgeois political establishment on the state level and in the eyes of the D&IR. This is underlined during the spring of 1917 by the stationing of a company of US Army soldiers in Two Harbors, which spent the summer of that year guarding railroad property for the D&IR. The combination of radicalism and immigrant identities that emerged in Two Harbors during the 1910s hence created unrest among local and state proponents of Anglo-American bourgeois ideas.

The local Socialist movement had connections with the IWW in Duluth and on the Iron Range. This was especially true for the Finnish activists, who in some cases were members of both the Socialist Party and the IWW. Susanna Frenkel has claimed that “the Socialist locals and the IWW in Two Harbors peacefully co-existed” and that the Socialists in Two Harbors always took a strong stand against measures aimed at suppressing the IWW. In the Swedish Socialist newspaper *Svenska Socialisten* edited in Chicago a portrait of the Swedish-born Socialist mayor of Two Harbors in 1916, Ernest Strand, claimed that he was co-operating with the IWW, who had made a habit of calling him in advance before agitating in the city.969

This connection was hence established and is further underlined by the fact that many transient workers who found seasonal employment in the city were also lumberjacks who spent the winters in logging camps. These workers had no other union representation than the IWW. Thus, radical networks in the region transcended the city boundaries. Strand and a number of other activists in Two Harbors were thus interested in co-operating with these immigrant workers, most of whom were Finns, and to some degree Scandinavians.

The actions of Strand and others were probably an expression of solidarity with these workers but might also be interpreted as an important connection between settled workers in Two Harbors and the transient workers that seasonally resided in the city. The severing of this connection, during the preparedness period, with some certainty splintered the local socialist movement during the war augmented by the propaganda of employers and the work of the MCPS.

The war policy of the D&IR
The actions taken by United States Steel Corporation against the radical movement on the Range during the summer of 1916 was only the beginning of company activity in supporting loyalty and doing away with political dissenters. From the very beginning of hostilities in April 1917 the company, together with the newly elected “progressive” and anti-Socialist city administration, supported the war effort.

A couple of weeks after President Wilson’s war speech the company, participating in a larger United States Steel Program, came out for the war and actively encouraged men to enlist. The directives for the employees made clear that the D&IR was quite generous to the men in its employ that voluntarily enlisted to the armed forces. The ones going into officer’s training were getting full pay for half a month, and then half pay for the balance of the training period. Others would get half the regular wages and an additional promise of getting reinstated into the service of the company if “consistent with [its interests]”. Despite the last quite conditional promise, the company clearly wanted to adopt the image of a champion of the war. The generosity towards the workers to some extent also indicates the large profits that the steel business generally saw as one result of the war.

On this point, The Journal News commented:

Corporations as such cannot go to war but they can very materially help the country that furnishes them such abundant opportunities for business, in such times as the present by just such actions as… have now been taken by the D&IR.  

The same spring the company also started to donate land for gardens to employees for an increased degree of self sustenance during the war. The Journal News on various pages in the newspaper emphasized the duty of everyone to help their country in its time of need. In April 1917 the paper also gave its backing to the war effort, which becomes evident in a poem called “Patriotic Verse”. In the poem despite political differences, Republicans and Democrats were urged to stay together, while pacifists were disloyal and went on strike. The poem was accompanied by an appeal from the editor to every alien to recall and contemplate the “oath of Allegiance to the United States” as a remembrance of the day that “he was received in citizenship”. This was clearly directed towards the local radical movement, of which large parts opposed the war until it ended.

971 The Journal News, 19/4, 1917. p.1
972 Two Harbors Socialist, 11/5, 1917. p.5.
974 The Journal News, 19/4, 1917. p.6
The messages of patriotism during the first months of 1917 were further underlined by bills passed on the state level and extensive propaganda work. The will to imbue the people of Two Harbors with a specific Americanism also came through in a number of directives from the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety that the local administration of Two Harbors acted upon. State authorities defined the boundaries for Americanism and loyalty in specific ways which was strongly opposed by the local Socialist movement, despite the fact that the Socialist Party was generally pro naturalization of immigrants. But the local opposition sprang from the fact that the expressions of patriotic sentiments that were relayed by the MCPS during 1917 had as their goal an Americanization process that meant assimilation into an Anglo-American identity without any class distinctions.

This move from the state authorities was underlined by a number of practical measures aimed at monitoring immigrants to persecute radicals in the IWW and the Non-Partisan League and to create support for a uniform Americanism based on Anglo-American bourgeois values. Some examples of these actions made it into the local newspapers in Lake County. The signing of the Westlake Bill in early 1917 made the playing of the Star Spangled Banner as a medley or for dancing purposes illegal. The same month a federal order was issued by the sheriff of Lake County, Emil Nelson, that aliens were to surrender any firearms to the sheriff’s office in Two Harbors. In February 1918 the MCPS initiated a registration of all alien residents in the state, including Lake County. These ideological and practical steps all converged on the question of the role of immigrant identities in the state and, as we have seen, reshaped political opinions in Lake County.

The D&IR was also part of this work, as it backed the efforts of staging a patriotic parade in Two Harbors on May 4, 1917. The parade was initiated by the new political leadership, The Citizens’ Progressive Alliance, which had beaten the Socialists in the Two Harbors spring election held the same month. The new mayor, W.R. Irwin, was also assistant chief clerk in the D&IR warehouse. A committee led by Irwin himself made arrangements with F.E. Evans as secretary. After the parade the committee planned for a flag-raising arranged in conjunction with the National Guard. An invitation was extended to all organizations in Two Harbors and all bands and singing societies were encouraged to walk in the parade. The others on the committee were M.H. Brickley, the superintendent of the telephone and telegraph department of the D&IR, W.L. Fowler, W.B. Woodward, R.E. Hastings and J.A. Barton. At the request of the committee, the offic-

975 Evidence from the state level on these moves is lush and includes Hudelson, Richard, Ross, Carl. By the Ore Dock, pp.79-84. He shows how the situation in Duluth became increasingly colored by anti radicalism. See also Chrislock, Carl. Watchdog of Loyalty. pp.114-132, 157-182.
cials of the railroad company allowed the closing of all the works of Two Harbors in order to allow the employees to participate in the parade. Most of the men of the organizing committee were also company officials. The patriotic parade was mentioned in the Socialist newspaper, but the editor satisfied himself with discussing nationalism more generally and the parade as an expression of “10 cent nationalism”.

In April 1917, *The Journal News* published an article on a safety and welfare meeting for the employees of the D&IR at the YMCA. This meeting was the first arranged for all employees and was held at the end of the winter season to ensure the participation of as many workers as possible. Every employee of the company had been “requested” to come, and the company was to furnish a program with music and moving pictures. The workers would also be treated to cigars and fruit. *The Journal News* stated that the workers did not have to participate in the program, but only be entertained, since there would not be a “dull minute during the entire evening”. The meeting was well attended, drawing more than 550 workers. It was chaired by Thomas Owens, the superintendent on the railroad, who opened with a short talk on safety and the safety achievements of the year 1916. After that the new mayor, W.R. Irwin, gave a speech in which he first said he was glad to be able to speak to so many citizens and then proceeded to give a short talk on automobile safety. After that the mayor left the topic of safe driving and started talking about the planned patriotic rally. He stated that he wanted to get the sentiments of the workers present, and called on all in favor of a patriotic parade to rise to their feet. The editor of *The Journal News* commented that “all but about a dozen rose to their feet and there was quite an outburst of applause and hand clapping. It was certainly an inspiring sight”.

After this patriotic display Thomas Owens called upon one man from each department to give a short speech. It seems clear that the speeches were not first and foremost expressions of safety but a pledge of loyalty to the company and to the country. All this seems to have been planned in advance by the company officials. Frank Strand, a Swedish immigrant who represented the track department, stated that the department “could be counted on to perform its duties during the coming season”. William Platt responded for the firemen that they would perform the work “in such a manner as to promote safety and the interests of the company”. After that pledges of loyalty came from the station men, the brakemen, the yardmen, whose representative said that “switchmen [were] the most patriotic bunch of employes in Two Harbors”. The representative of the conductors “stated his position in the present national crisis”. The representative of the dock workers “assured the chairman that the dockmen would do what they could to further the interest of the company, and in that to help out the country”. The speech of the machinist was short, and the editor of *The Journal News* only

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commented that “he was equal to the occasion”. The representative of the locomotive engineers also pledged his support of the company. The “safety meeting” was opened with the singing of “America” accompanied by the band, and it was closed with the singing of “the Star Spangled Banner”. The editor of the Journal News commented that the meeting was “as much a patriotic demonstration” as one on welfare and safety.983

Despite a scarcity of flags the parade announced at the Safety First meeting was scheduled for May 4, and it should consist of three divisions. First out was the Two Harbors Drum Corps spearheading the war veterans of the G.A.R and the Spanish American war of 1898. The city and county officials followed these. Next were a marching band, school children and “All citizens”, followed by fraternal orders and labor organizations. The railroad engineers, the firemen and the trainmen spearheaded organized labor, followed by the machinists and the boilermakers, i.e. the same unions that had passed a resolution against the war before the United States entered. The fraternal lodges, including the Swedish Vasa Order and the Sons of Norway, also marched in the parade.

The parade was presented as an event where Two Harbors would “show its patriotism to Uncle Sam”.984 Next to these patriotic expressions The Journal News published the names of the 128 residents that declared their intention of becoming citizens during March and April 1917, an event which was considered “a good showing for the county, and tends to prove that regardless of creed or nationality, the people as a whole, are behind Uncle Sam”.985 The lyrics to both America and The Red, White and Blue were printed in The Journal News a day before the parade, and the newspaper itself was full of expressions of patriotic sentiment.986

After the event The Journal News estimated that there had been at least 3,000 persons in the parade, 1,200 School children, 1,700 “citizens”, two brass bands and a company of uniformed soldiers. Rabbi Maurice Lefkowitz gave a stirring speech, where he criticized the pacifist movement for not wanting to take part in the fight against autocratic government and the rule of kings.987 The newspaper editor furthermore claimed:

No one with a drop of Americanism could witness this great outpouring of patriotism and demonstration of loyalty without a feeling of pride; no one worthy of enjoying the priceless liberties secured by great sacrifices in the past and guaranteed by the willingness of the millions of today to offer their honor, their fortunes, and if need be, their lives at the altar of their country, could stand

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987 The Journal News, 10/5, 1917. p.1
unmoved while the marching hundreds passed by thus giving visible evidence of their unfla
tering adherence to the principles of Democracy for which our revolutionary forefa
thers contended during eight long, bloody years, and for which subsequent genera
tions have contended during all the succeeding years.\textsuperscript{988}

The D&IR did not only support the patriotic parade but was also involved in a na
tional Red Cross campaign to raise money. The different departments of the com
pany seem to have been quite generous contributors, including ore dock em
ployees,conductors,brakemen and yardmen etc.. One of the initiators of the Red
Cross campaign had been the superintendent of the railroad.\textsuperscript{989} On July 12, 1917
a complete list of names by company department of the employees that had do
nated money and their contributions to the campaign was published in The Jour
nal News.\textsuperscript{990}

In July 1917 the new progressive government of the city presented “ordinance
No.105” to the council. The Socialists on the council, primarily T.E. Murphy, at
tacked the ordinance, which was directed towards the radical movement in gen
eral and against the IWW activists in the vicinity in particular. \textit{The Journal News}
was positively behind the ordinance and regarded it as a way for local authorities
to nab “these industrial parasites as fast as they step into the city”. The ordinance
stated that all advocating or teaching of violence or any individuals habitually
doing this as a means of accomplishing industrial or political goals were to be
charged with vagrancy. Writing or printing any matter or giving speeches where
citizens of the state were encouraged not to support “the United States in prose
cuting or carrying on war with the public enemies of the United States” was also
to be charged with vagrancy. A person found guilty was to be fined $100 or im
prisoned in the county jail.\textsuperscript{991} The Journal News gives some testimony to the
high-strung rhetoric that characterized the local public discussion on the war. In
December 1917 the editor wrote: “For each American soldier that is stabbed in
the back by a disloyal speech in this country, a traitor should be hung”.\textsuperscript{992}

In May 1917 a Public Safety Association was formed and its first decree sent out
to protect and conserve “life and property”, emphasizing that as “the commission
has almost unlimited power for the apprehension and punishment of those who
fail to comply with its orders… it would be well for all to heed the instruc
tions”.\textsuperscript{993} The work of the local commissioner, John Dwan, a local lawyer seems
mostly to have involved sending bulletins from the MCPS to the local newspaper,
\textit{The Journal News}, and participating in the organizing of various public manifes
tations.

\textsuperscript{988} \textit{The Journal News}, 10/5, 1917. p.1
\textsuperscript{990} \textit{The Journal News}, 12/7, 1917. p.5.
\textsuperscript{991} \textit{The Journal News}, 12/7, 1917. pp1, 6
\textsuperscript{992} \textit{The Journal News}, 6/12, 1917. p.5.
\textsuperscript{993} \textit{The Journal News}, 24/5, 1917. p.1.
The MCPS also had recommendations on how the Minnesotans were to celebrate the Fourth of July, which should include at least one patriotic meeting in each county, focusing more on the present situation and patriotism than the past. The director of each county was to co-operate with the local committee in charge of the celebrations. Suggested topics for speeches were enlistment, liberty loan bonds, Red Cross work, food etc. The new city government acted on the call from the MCPS and appointed committees to arrange the celebrations.994

On May 31 that year’s Memorial Day celebration was also taken up in the newspaper as a manifestation of patriotism and loyalty. In a stirring address a speaker from Duluth talked on the subject. The program also included Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, after which the audience sang “America Triumphant” and “For Dixie and Uncle Sam”.995

The drive for patriotism and loyalty did not, however, fit everyone’s taste. In a note at the end of June 1917 fourteen slackers are said to be in the Two Harbors jail. According to The Journal News, they were

[m]en who came to this county because it possessed advantages over the land of their birth; they were glad and willing to take advantage of the liberty and freedom guaranteed to all residents of the United States, whether alien or otherwise, and now when they have an opportunity to show the kind of men they are, to show whether they are men enough to appreciate the blessings of liberty and representative government, they prove themselves to be “slackers”, not willing to do their part in maintaining the liberties they enjoy, unwilling to take their chances with the thousands of God fearing, liberty loving patriotic American citizens.

Practically all of the men, save one, were sentenced to jail, and all of them were Finnish immigrants. Only four had taken out papers. The newspaper editor comments that war “has afforded the opportunity to learn who the true Americans are”.996

The progressive city council was influenced by the MCPS to plan a new parade for September 1, 1917, as that day had been designated “Dedication Day” all over the state. The City Council agreed to the idea of planning another patriotic demonstration, and a committee headed by the director of the Safety Committee of Lake County, John Dwan, with the chief clerk of the superintendent’s office F.E. Evans to his side, Dr. E.P. Christensen, the head of the telephone and telegraph department of the D&IR, M.H. Brickley, W.P. Woodward, W.R. Irwin

996 The Journal News, 2/8, 1917. p.1
(mayor and assistant general store keeper) and a number of other men. The meet-
ing was said to have become a loyalty meeting from its start to its finish. 997 A representative of the MCPS wrote in The Journal News that the dedication meet-
ing called by the commission had practically killed disloyalty in Minnesota and that Governor Burnquist’s actions would prevent the state from being the center of a national association, which under the disguise of discussing peace promoted dissension at home. 998

On October 18 a committee was organized in the county for the sales of war bonds. The committee consisted of George W. Munford, a cashier at a local bank, C.A. Manning, P.J. Welch, trainmaster, Thomas Owens, superintendent, Martin Muth, locomotive engineer of the company, George W. Watts, head of the company ore dock, W.A. Doerr, foreman of the paint shop, A.D. Holliday, high-ranking officer of the D&IR, Dr. E.P. Christensen, company surgeon, H.O. Olson, Dennis Dwan, local postmaster, E.A. Daniels, a local clothing merchant, B.F. Fowler, G.A. Farmer, chief clerk of the mechanical department, J.A. Barton, C.A. Campton, superintendent of schools and W.R. Irwin, mayor and employee of the D&IR.

The list of people supporting the war effort in this manner comprised, as is shown by the occupational titles on some of the above men, primarily Anglo-American company officials, persons affiliated with banking or the local petty bourgeoisie. It also included one skilled worker and a foreman. This underlines that the drives for American entry into the war was concentrated to class interests with a strong connection to the D&IR and, consequently, to the idea of Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony. The strategic composition of the men on the committee, such as foremen and company officials, divided different departments of the company between them to sell bonds to the workers in those specific branches.

A fellow engineer, a Canadian immigrant with a German father, was to take care of the selling of bonds for the enginemen and firemen. The same logic was used when the superintendent of the D&IR was to sell bonds to the businessmen and the farmers, the ones being presumptive customers of the D&IR. Plans were also drawn up for a more general campaign. 999 In the editorial of the same issue as the one in which the committee work was presented The Journal News also championed the buying of Liberty Bonds by the people in Lake County. 1000 Both the Liberty Bond drive and the Red Cross campaign were huge successes, and the leadership of the company appointed to sell bonds to their own workers must be regarded as a critical element in the effort of ensuring the “loyalty” of the workers towards the war effort and the nation.

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998 The Journal News 6/9, 1917. p.8
“Imperial Wilhelm’s Workers” or Loyal Americans?

On April 19, 1918 Governor Burnquist visited Two Harbors and spoke in front of an audience of 2 000. The purpose of the Governor’s visit was to present Lake County with a banner for the county that most exceeded its quota in Liberty Bond payments in Minnesota. That was Lake County. He was met by a committee consisting of John Dwan, Lake County director of public safety, George W. Munford, chairman of the liberty loan campaign, Thomas Owens, chairman of the YMCA war fund campaign and superintendent of the railroad, and two representatives of the Red Cross. The governor’s speech was full of nationalistic rhetoric:

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\text{We have a state here in which we believe in law and order. We realize that there are some who claim certain liberties to which they are not entitled; such liberties should be given to the individual as shall result in right and justice to all, no more and no less, more would result in anarchy… If any citizen is not loyal to this country he should be deprived of the rights of citizenship and sent back to the country from which he came. There are those who criticize Great Britain… I want to say that if it were not for the Army or Navy of Great Britain the German hordes would now be on our shores, so I say that any man that talks against Great Britain talks against the United States. All of us, regardless of race, color, nationality or political affiliation should stand back of that great exponent of democracy, the chief executive of the United States, President Woodrow Wilson.}\]

The visit from the Governor signaled the state administration’s interest in loyalty, as did the strong focus on nationalism and a rhetoric aiming at countering dissent based on national affiliation, ethnicity and anti-radicalism. In the year that had passed between the American entry into the war and the visit of the Governor to Two Harbors the county had proven its loyalty through the liberty loan drives, through the YMCA war fund program, and through the Red Cross campaign.

The visit of the Governor was apparently effective, as feelings of nationality and loyalty grew among railroad officials after his speech. Under the headline “A patriotic ass’n has been formed” the “Defender Welfare League” presented its program. The League was connected with the mechanical department, the storehouse and the power plant of the D&IR. The purpose of the association was to encourage the “comrades at the front, to endeavor to make their condition less lonely by writing them a letter each month, to assist their families if necessary and to assist in promoting patriotism among [the] fellowmen left behind”. The officers of the League were B.R. Moore, superintendent of motive power,

and Mr. G.A. Farmer, secretary treasurer of the D&IR. Four committees were formed within the League including a membership committee for recruiting new members, a publicity committee whose role was to collect news items from the home front of interest to the soldiers and a printing committee that was to ensure that letters from the soldiers were published in The Journal News. The fourth was a finance committee, which was to supervise expenditures. Membership cards could be obtained, and one membership agent was appointed for each department or occupational category. The foremen of each department acted as agents to secure members. Membership cards could also be obtained through “the outside foremen”. The first bulletin ended: “It is expected to enroll all employes of the above departments on the membership list”. The bulletin then recurred with some continuity until the end of the war in Europe.

On June 13, 1918 The Journal News advertised a flag celebration the following day on the D&IR premises in Two Harbors. The meeting was “to display loyalty”, and the program included bugle calls, flag-raising, and the Marine band of Two Harbors was playing “The Star Spangled Banner”. The crowd was to salute the flag and pledge allegiance in unison and the words to patriotic songs and the American creed were published in The Journal News. The Reverend Paul C. Voris, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Two Harbors, gave a speech, and the sermon ended by the singing of “America”. A couple of weeks later the Reverend spoke again at a patriotic meeting.

On July 4, 1918 The Journal News wrote after the celebration: “The shop grounds of the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad Company were crowded with people last Monday morning when the service flag of the mechanical department of the D&IR RR was to be dedicated”. The Two Harbors Cadet Band, the Boy Scouts, the National Guard and the Home Guard “marched to the grounds in a body, and in a short time a big crowd of citizens were present awaiting the program. The D&IR employees were excused from 11 to 12 o’clock”. The program opened at 11.30 with flag-raising, followed by the uncovering of an honor tablet and music from the cadet band playing “The Star Spangled Banner”. All the mechanical department employees attended. B.R. Moore, the superintendent of motive powers and executive chairman of the “Defenders’ Welfare League” gave an introductory speech:

In looking over the assembly I am constrained to address you not as co-workers, but fellow citizens, all with one object in view, the protection of our country, with honor to the flag which floats above you, and the furtherance of this object in the care of our boys at the front, whose patriotism we are illustrating by the honor tablet just uncovered.

1004 The Journal News, 13/6, 1918. p.1
Again, Reverend Voris was the main speaker and he emphasized the war as a struggle for freedom and democracy.

*We are fighting against the enemy of all decency, liberty and democracy. We are fighting against the enemy of all laboring men… we are fighting the enemy of every man and woman, boy and girl in Two Harbors. We are fighting the enemy of those who work for the D&IRR*.\(^{1005}\)

The reverend also included attacks on the Socialist movement, and primarily its foreign activists:

*A man must be careful of the company he keeps these days. From the election returns it is evident that a good many of us vote the Socialist ticket, I have no quarrel with the Socialists. But I would sound a warning. The Socialist must realize that he is traveling in questionable company. It is up to you to prove that you are loyal. The burden of proof rests on every Socialist. It was only last week that Allen L. Benson the candidate of the party for president in 1916, resigned from the party… he withdrew because the of the party’s leadership is foreign born, because its policy is not American… He who travels in such company must prove by word and deed that he is truly loyal.*

Voris especially lashed out against people of German descent:

*We do not have to hate Germans, but pro-Germans are “low-down, good for nothing… cowards that should go back to Germany…and fight openly for their low down principles. He who sympathizes with Germany in the present struggle is not worthy of a home beneath the stars and stripes.*

In the final parts of his speech he again touched on the un-Americanism of the radical movement and questioned the loyalty of its activists:

*Promoting patriotism today means exposing to the proper authorities, every enemy of the government. This is a responsibility that rests on the shoulders of every loyal American. Promoting patriotism today means turning a deaf ear to all pro-German talk, turn a deaf ear to all I.W.Ws (do you know what that stands for, Imperial Wilhelm’s Workers). But more than that, we must see that they are brought to justice.*\(^{1006}\)

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\(^{1005}\) The Journal News, 4/7, 1918. p.12

The program also included the “young ladies” of the store house and motive power offices, who led the audience in the singing of “America”. A parade of the home guard, army personnel, the speakers as above, the superintendent of motive power, and workers from the storehouse office, the car department, the paint shop, the enginemen, the workers of the machine shop, the boiler shop, the blacksmith shop, the air brake department, the foundry, the tin and pipe shops, the power plant and the round house was arranged.1007

The parade, hence, became a well attended manifestation in support of the American policy of war and of the work carried out by Governor Burnquist and the Commission of Public Safety in Minnesota, and the platform for this support was, obviously, the D&IR and a number of higher officials devoted to the question of loyalty. Furthermore, the church communities of Two Harbors were involved in the work for patriotism, its primary expression being heard in Voris’ speech at the manifestation in 1918, but other priests, too, took an active interest in the cause of American patriotism.1008

Analysis

The preparedness and the war periods in Lake County were turbulent. In Two Harbors, 1915 was a high-water mark for the Socialist movement, but parallel to the success of this multi-ethnic radical alternative strong forces worked for a mono-cultural Anglo-American identity and the assimilation of the workers into American society through increasingly efficient work for the Americanization of immigrants and the de-radicalization of the workers. The support for these forces grew after the failed strike on the Iron Range in the summer of 1916. The perspective on what was regarded as American shrunk considerably among the Anglo-American population and the strike became a focal point for these sentiments. This was in part due to the anti-radical propaganda after the IWW-led strike, when ‘foreign’ was connected with violence and upheaval, as the miners rose against the anti-union policy of the Steel Corporation during a few months in 1916. The Finnish in particular were connected with this movement, but as we have seen, the Scandinavian Socialist clubs were all but destroyed by their connection with the IWW and the strike. Indications are that the strike and its aftermath also hampered the locals in Two Harbors, as they, too, were connected with the IWW.

In 1917 the Americanization process picked up momentum and the political activities to turn Lake County from political radicalism, ethnic diversity and an anti-war standpoint were promoted by the coming to power of a progressive league and by the actions of the railroad company. These elements together with the pro-company newspaper successfully managed to reshape the public sphere

1007 *The Journal News*, 4/7, 1918 pp. 1, 5, 12
1008 40th Anniversary record of the “Holy Ghost Catholic Church of Two Harbors”. Two Harbors, 1938. p.23
by focusing on loyalty and Americanism, which were contrasted against radicalism and immigrant identities. This becomes evident in newspaper articles, in speeches given at patriotic rallies, and in the work of the D&IR to promote and ensure the loyalty of the workers through a program that used established company structures such as the YMCA and the Safety First meetings. These were the vehicles used to reshape the public sphere of Two Harbors during the war. Especially the speeches held at local rallies underlines the way that an alliance between “middle class” reformers and the D&IR formed and tried to downplay class tensions and emphasize a common identity as Two Harborites, American citizens and workers on the D&IR, especially evident in reverend Voris’ speech in 1918. These identities were emphasized and contrasted against radical dissent and foreignism that was, in the speeches and newspaper article, connected to disloyalty and lawlessness. Company institutions familiar to the workers were hence used in the work as platforms for creating loyalty and workers’ consent. Thus the pressure from the state authorities, i.e. the MCPS, from local politicians and from the railroad company, which in turn used the local pro-company newspaper as their mouthpiece, together with a wide range of committees orchestrated by railroad officials and whose results were printed in the paper, created a strong pressure for loyalty and, in effect, also Americanization during the war years. The most obvious case where the company pushed for loyalty, patriotism and support of the war effort occurred at a well-directed safety meeting where workers publicly had to show their loyalty to the company and the country in the coming conflict.

The fact that most of the men engaged in the work of reshaping the public sphere of Two Harbors were also local politicians in the progressive alliance or company officials makes the connections between politics, the company and the push for loyalty evident. Taking into account the different types of war work carried out in the county, its connections to company officials and the way that the railroad company was used as a platform to promote this work and to create support for the war, the role of the company and the interests embedded in it become clear. The ideological work of the local pro-company newspaper The Journal News that printed the names of both supporters and “slackers” and provided its specific definition of what Americanism was supposed to stand for also seemed to have played an important role in the process of creating support for the war and promoting the idea of Anglo-American bourgeois leadership.

The D&IR and its officials also orchestrated the push for Americanization and loyalty through parades and other manifestations through the war years. It is also obvious how strong pressure was brought to bear on the Socialist movement and the portions of the labor movement that manifested their opposition to the war. At one of the most notable of these company-led demonstrations both “IW-Wism” and Socialism in general were deemed as dangerous and un-American enterprises. These manifestations centered on Americanism and loyalty and, in essence, offered the workers the choice of becoming stigmatized as radicals or being included in a national identity where there was no room for radical ideas.
During a parade orchestrated in 1918, the service flag of the machine shop workers, including the blacksmiths, the boiler makers and the machinists, were dedicated. Many of the machine shop workers belonged to trade unions which had opposed the war merely months before American entry. The dedication of the service flag, hence, became a manifestation of how the Anglo-American establishment had managed to turn the largely immigrant work force towards supporting the American war effort. A number of these unions were organizing workers that, to some extent, were Scandinavians, and at least one of the leaders that came out against the war was a Swedish immigrant active in the Socialist movement.

The impact of the law against agitation and the structures in which the workers acted are difficult to assess, but it is probable that some workers simply were absent from the celebration or went along with it in order to avoid being connected with lawlessness and even running the risk of discharge from the service.

The other attack against ethnicity and radicalism, hence, came during the war, but by that time the Socialist movement had already been damaged by the pre-war propaganda of preparedness and its connection with the IWW on the Range. Therefore the war merely accentuated a regional development that was already playing out, but which gave the conservative pro-war elements in Minnesota and in Two Harbors new institutional and practical means of carrying out a transformation of class identities and of re-defining a relationship between the immigrant work force and the Anglo-American bourgeois leadership. In these activities the company efforts to tie in the work force via its YMCA work and the United States Steel schemes had a special position, as it offered class peace for a movement on the defensive.

The anti-radical ideas and the work of the company, which intensified during the war years, must hence be regarded as a response to the radical transformation at the local level brought about by the Socialist movement whose supporter base lay among the Scandinavian immigrant communities, the Norwegian and the Swedish, and among the Finns. The work of the company might in this respect be interpreted as an effort at putting up boundaries to radical identity formation.

The war and the preparedness phase that preceded it constituted a period when anti-radical forces in the community could, through a changing political and cultural climate, re-define Americanism in that it was perceived as excluding certain ideas and certain cultural traits associated with radicalism. The railroad company, the pro-company local newspaper, The Journal News, and the political leadership in the form of the citizens’ alliance were all important in carrying out this transformation, but they were in turn dependent on the state and federal levels and the impulses constantly came from these directions. Hence, nationalistic sentiments were needed to be stirred up to challenge the Socialist movement.

Hence, due to the defensive position of the radical movement in the region after the miner’s strike in 1916 and an increasingly intense movement for Americani-
zation and citizenship, the interests embodied in the D&IR, could directly challenge the radical movement. A prerequisite for that challenge was the overarching change in the political and cultural climate that occurred between 1915 and 1918, as the radical movement went from being an established political power supported by many on the local level to a security risk championing un-American, indeed even criminal ideas. The war also provided the Anglo-American bourgeoisie with the institutional arrangements to again define the political and cultural local arena. The MCPS could then via already established distinctly Anglo-American institutions such as the local school system, the YMCA, the railroad company and the political arena reshape group relations by invoking “red scare tactics” and the fear of things foreign and un-American. The connection of these two ideas seems to have taken hold on parts of the population in Lake County during the First World War. A prerequisite for the company and the interests surrounding it was, however, an outside enemy in the form of Germany and the Industrial Workers of the World. Through the connections between the IWWs and the local Socialist Party Socialism was severely undermined on the local level, as both its class component and its ethnic content during the war years gradually became increasingly impossible to use for the political mobilization of the working class against the Anglo-American bourgeois leadership.

From Class Conflict to Municipal Co-operation

The efforts from the Anglo-American establishment that had become obvious during the war, was clearly an attempt at reshaping ethnic identities and relations and class relations. This section aims at exploring the role of class and ethnicity in the post-war debate in the public sphere of Two Harbors and the results of the war on ethnic identity formation and class consciousness.

The “America First” movement in Lake County did not disappear with the end of the war. In February 1919 John Dwan was re-elected vice president of the organization in Lake County, which indicates that the work was to be carried on after the war. The meeting defined the role of “America First” to “provide genuine Americanization and to forestall all foreignism”. In this work “every school, church society or class, that permits or causes young Americans to grow up in ignorance or half ignorance, of our language, literature and national ideals, is an enemy of free government”.  

The Movement for Americanization continued well into the 1920s, and the editor of the Lake County Chronicle discussed the question of loyalty on many occasions in these years. The local bourgeois leadership was still quite interested in maintaining a drive for citizenship and “American values”, made evident by various programs given at the YMCA in Two Harbors. On one such occasion a minister from one of the local churches gave an address on citizenship, and the forum, a YMCA-initiated activity to enhance the participation of local people in

the development of Two Harbors, on many occasions dealt with aspects of American history and American culture.\textsuperscript{1010}

In May 1921 there was still some evidence that the war cast its shadow over the community, as the American Legion had presented the Lake County Chronicle with lists of "slackers", i.e. draft dodgers in the community, who would get their names printed in the local newspaper, the Lake County Chronicle. The editor asserts that many conservative newspapers refused to publish the names because of the many "100%ers" on the list. The editor further comments on the whole phenomenon: "This slacker business is nothing but a skeleton upon which to dress up the perpetuation of the war spirit and give some an opportunity to set themselves up in the 'holier than thou' attitude of patriotism".\textsuperscript{1011} The week after the editor needed to make a clarification of the editorial, due to complaints. The editor then made an example of how elements that had been painted as unpatriotic and who were in fact members of the IWW had been called in during an ore dock workers’ strike during the preceding year:

\textit{The ore dock union is composed of men most of whom are residents and property owners of the city. Some of them are ex-service men, and it is doubtful if there are any of them who are without citizenship papers. When the ore dock workers’ union refused to accept a lower rate than the workers at...other points...a peculiar thing happened. There is a group of IWW in this locality, who are denounced as unpatriotic, disloyal and undesirable (whether they are or not), and many of them have not taken out their citizenship papers... Yet the officials of the railroad company sent for these men to take the places of the ore dock workers. And while they have been continually denounced, they were good enough to be set to work when it meant a saving of dollars and the breaking up of the spirit of solidarity among the workers. Let the ex-serviceman who is affronted get in a position where he demands living wages and conditions and be confronted with the same situation, and the average 100 per-center will show that his revulsion for the alien slacker totally disappears when it means dollars in the pocket of the employer, which is another proof that the slacker question is...a skeleton upon which to drape a pretense to patriotism.}\textsuperscript{1012}

The editor went on to say that he held no brief for the alien slacker or the person who refused to become a citizen, but that the bigotry of the company and the 100% movement would not be supported by the newspaper.\textsuperscript{1013} The quote is illustrative of developments after the war and of how the war time had changed the perception of class solidarity and class relations. Despite the editor’s analysis

\textsuperscript{1010} \textit{Lake County Chronicle}, 21/4, 1921. p.1,3
\textsuperscript{1011} \textit{Lake County Chronicle}, 26/5, 1921.p.2.
\textsuperscript{1012} \textit{Lake County Chronicle}, 2/6, 1921. p.2. My underlining.
\textsuperscript{1013} \textit{Lake County Chronicle}, 2/6, 1921. p.2.
of the actions of the company and 100% Americans, he seems to side primarily with the settled and organized workers in the community against the immigrant IWW-workers without citizenship.

In 1921 in the post-war context of class reconciliation in the local community and a continually strong opposition from a well-organized local labor movement, the editor’s criticism should be seen in the context of continued class conflict and the changing conditions for ethnic identity formation after the war. But in this context, workers with and without citizenship were placed in opposition to each other, both by the labor-friendly newspaper and by the D&IR. It seems as if the class dimension had become more difficult to negotiate for workers. This was, as I have shown previously in this chapter, a result of the war propaganda and the drives for loyalty. As we have seen, this work was to some extent connected with the company welfare schemes. The standpoint of both the opposition and the company had hence changed dramatically.

In this post-war context the company seemed to have held a more instrumental view on loyalty, citizenship and common interests than had been the case during the war, as it chose to use non-citizens and IWW members as strike breakers and had turned away demands from the settled immigrant workers, primarily Scandi-navians, on the ore dock that summer.

Given the context where both workers and the D&IR were trying to find means of bridging class conflict in Two Harbors, the labor movement trying to find a common ground with other local interests, a discussion emerged where immigrant identity per se no longer has salience. Instead, the battle lines were drawn, by the labor movement and the labor-friendly newspaper, between citizens and non-citizens, who are pitted against each other and where the class conflict had taken the back seat. It also underlines the difficulty of creating a class alliance among workers in a context where hegemonic Anglo-American bourgeois values had led to workers’ identification with an Anglo-American bourgeois society to the degree that the class consciousness and class solidarity that had previously linked the established workers in Two Harbors and the transient workers were severed.

On June 2, 1921 it was announced that the American Legion was to host the Fourth of July celebration for that year, that the legion “is planning the biggest celebration in the history of the city”, including a 40-piece marching band from Duluth, an aeroplane show and fireworks. The legion asked for the cooperation of all citizens. In a comment editor Clarence Hillman capitalized on the legion’s promise to assist in the hosting of Labor Day the same year claiming that this “gives an opportunity to try out their sincerity and at the same time foster a spirit of community co-operation rather than one of loggerheads”. The 1921

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1014 Lake County Chronicle, 2/6 1921, p.1
1015 Lake County Chronicle, 2/6, 1921, p.2
Fourth of July celebration is interesting since organized labor or Socialism was not represented. Instead, an organization with strong connection to Anglo-Americanism and the war had taken charge of it. The comment by Hillman is also interesting in that it reveals a certain degree of distrust for the sincerity in the claims from the company and its minions in supporting a true co-operative spirit.

After the celebration the local paper the *Lake County Chronicle* called it a “brilliant success”. Music, competitions, a baseball game and a picnic lunch were followed by a speech by Dr. Preston Bradley of Chicago, who talked to an audience of 2,500. He talked on the war question, calling war barbaric and uncivilized. He declared for the “freest expression of public opinion as a means of solution of the wrongs” which he recognized existed and said that there was enough red in “our stars and stripes” for him. The speaker also commented on the labor question claiming that “the place for the crooked labor leader as well as for the crooked capitalist is in jail”.

The editor called the speech the “most able and pleasing speech to every color of political faith which has ever been heard from a Two Harbors platform.”1016 He also expressed relief after the speech, which was not as he expected but had “failed to contain the hero worship of a day, long past, and the usual platitudinous patriot piffle”.1017 In the same commentary the editor also discussed that year’s Memorial Day speech, which had been full of “Anglomania”.1018 Anglo-Americanism and loyalty were hence questioned by the Swedish-born editor and former locomotive engineer. The way that the editor discussed these matters underlines the fact that the public sphere and what was possible to express in public had changed dramatically during a few short years. It seems as if the editor had conceded that the path to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance had been established, and that for him, the only question was how to negotiate this new situation and find working strategies in a new context.

In 1921 the *Lake County Chronicle* was the only newspaper left in Lake County, as the *Journal News* had folded in late 1920. The New Year’s resolution of the editor was that the newspaper should be “fair to every interest in the community and to the welfare of every individual” and also “measure up to the standard for the advancement and well being of the community that a good, progressive newspapers owes to that community”.1019 This was a program that was not only promoted by the newspaper, but by large parts of the community, including organized labor and labor leaders.

At the end of January 1921 a meeting was held at the local YMCA, where representatives of a range of local interests met to discuss community service. The in-

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1016 *Lake County Chronicle*, 7/7, 1921. p.1
1017 *Lake County Chronicle*, 7/7, 1921. p.2
1018 *Lake County Chronicle*, 7/7, 1921. p.2
1019 *Lake County Chronicle*, 6/1, 1921. p.1
terests represented were connected with organized labor, the farmers of the region, local industry, local merchandising, education, government and, finally, a group that represented interests in the improvement of the home, people’s health, civic beauty and recreation. A lecturer from the University of Minnesota, who discussed broader goals for community service, instigated the movement. The meeting was chaired by Thomas Owens, still the superintendent of the D&IR, who, according to the reports in the newspaper, tried to steamroll the meeting by dominating the naming of the board of directors and being criticized by some “labor boys” present. The newspaper opined: “For twenty-five years, Mr. Owens has run the town, and it seems impossible for him to get the fact out of his system that that day is over”. The newspaper, however, also gives Owens credit for being involved in and having worked so hard for various municipal projects and also for his “public-spirited inclinations”. Hillman calls the community service the best project ever contemplated for the community. The community service was arranged by the extension division of the University of Minnesota. 

The goals formulated for the community service were published in the same issue, and the program presented in twenty-two points a new vision for local class unity. Some of the goals were aimed at promoting individual virtues such as more friendliness in the community and less slander. These individually-based codes of conduct co-existed in the program with points that stated important goals for the reshaping of group relations on the local level. One such point stated that the project should enhance the community spirit and make people less inclined to identify with group or class interests. Another point took up better shop methods “with closer relationship between employer and employe”, while yet another discussed more efficient labor with increased production and higher wages.

This “new deal” of co-operation also seems to have spilled over to the political arena, as the Lake County Chronicle published an article taken from another newspaper dealing with the fall county election of the preceding year. It stated: “We do believe the extensive publicity given co-operation has awakened the minds for the common good”. However, the writer went on to say that “we know it is impossible to secure just and proper legislation through co-operation so long as there is an all powerful dominating class which will give little and take much.” Here the newspaper editor is trying to balance between a class analysis and a co-operative spirit aiming at fusing bonds between classes “for the common good”.

In another article the editor of the Lake County Chronicle, Clarence Hillman summarized his first two years of editing the newspaper, which he took over from L.D. Rose in the winter of 1919. Under his management the newspaper

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1020 Lake County Chronicle, 20/1, 1921. p.2.
1021 Lake County Chronicle, 20/1, 1921. p.2.
1022 Lake County Chronicle, 27/1, 1921. p.2.
changed its name to the *Lake County Chronicle*, stopped taking donations, and had, from the outset, as its goal to survive on a strict business basis by serving the community. It is also stated that advertising is fairly easy to attract by the newspaper due to its good standing with working class subscribers, which the merchants of the city need to reach. Through the ownership of the newspaper by the co-operative enterprise “The People’s Publishing Company” the workers as a collective body in effect owned the newspaper.

The community spirit was also discussed in other articles. Another part of the promotion of a sense of community, which must be regarded a much more prominent characteristic in the *Lake County Chronicle* during the year 1921 than it had been in 1919, was the slogan “buy, but buy at home”, where the editor encourages the people in the city to support local merchants rather than going to Duluth. This community focus seems in part to be connected with the decline of business in the area after the war. Apparently Two Harbors was quite well off, however, despite the drop-off in the steel industry, editor Hillman: “we have sailed along better than any other place in the vicinity, and maybe we can keep it up by sticking by each other right now… if you take care of the merchant, he will be able to take care of you when you will want him”.

Another aspect of the buy-at-home campaign was the union drive for a “wider use of the union label”. This was a nationwide campaign where union men would purchase union-made goods only. The Two Harbors Federated Trades Assembly was part of this movement, and in March 1921 it appointed a committee to list union goods carried by the local merchants. The editor commented that this would be a good thing not only for the union movement, but would also urge the rank and file to patronize Two Harbors firms instead of people going to Duluth to patronize stores there. The union, hence, was regarded not only as seeing to union interest, but its interests also overlapped with those of the community in general.

During the winter of 1921 another effort was made to strengthen the sense of community when a “Development Association” was organized to better coordinate the interests in the community and its respective organizations. This was the reorganized “Commercial Club”, which had brought together the interests of local businessmen and the railroad company. This new organization had, however, representatives not only from business, but also from farmers’ clubs and organized labor.

During the tougher economic times in 1921, Hillman often praised local labor and local officials for having found common and workable solutions without labor strife and big wage cuts, writing that “local union men can congratulate

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1023 *Lake County Chronicle*. 17/2, 1921. p.2.
1024 *Lake County Chronicle*. 31/3, 1921. p.1,2.
1025 *Lake County Chronicle*. 15/12, 1921. p.2.
themselves on the fact that the curtailment in the industry here was in the nature of a cut in time instead of in wages. Resumption of normal business will bring back full time, but a cut in wages would necessitate a fight and perhaps a loss of part of the ground that has been gained in bringing wages up to their present standard”. He also commended the local officials for their ruling. 1026 Hence, the co-operative perspective on the relation between labor and the company was again emphasized by Hillman. The editor of the newspaper, despite the general orientation away from class rhetoric and the will to serve the community, published clippings from the labor press and often commented on labor issues on the federal and state levels. The paper consequently seems to have had a will to, at least to some extent, preserve its class perspective.

On May 19, 1921 the editor of the Lake County Chronicle wrote that the current situation for labor seemed tough. The D&IR had only been allotted about half of the tonnage usually shipped by the railroad, which meant that they would hire fewer than half of the railroad men usually employed through the season. There had also been some importation of labor into Two Harbors for the work of unloading pulpwood, a work generally carried out by local workers. These developments were connected with the fight carried on between the union movement and the employers over the open shop. 1027 One week later, the railroad announced wage cuts for all workers. 1028

A month later the situation in Two Harbors “in all its history has never faced a situation such as it faces today, and unless something is done to try to keep more of our money in the city, there is bound to be a curtailment in the number of employees kept in our stores. Surely there is no one who wants our home boys to be laid off to the advantage of the Duluth clerks”. 1029 The problem with unemployment led the railroad to start clearing company land adjacent to Two Harbors to lend a helping hand to employees: “the work is done solely with a view to extending some relief for the unemployment situation”. The people who participated in this work were allowed to keep the salvaged timber from the clearing work. 1030

The Federated Trades Assembly was also concerned with the unemployment situation during the winter of 1921, and at the last meeting of the year it presented a number of resolutions. One was of a more principled character, urging employers and politicians to open trade with the new Russian Government. Others were connected with the local economic situation, encouraging the D&IR and other employers to hire people half time to enable as many as possible to support themselves. In another resolution the Trades Assembly encouraged private employers and public officers to refrain from hiring married women whose hus-

1026 Lake County Chronicle, 10/3, 1921, p.2.
1027 Lake County Chronicle, 19/5, 1921, p.1
1028 Lake County Chronicle, 26/5, 1921, p.1.
1029 Lake County Chronicle, 16/6, 1921, p.2.
1030 Lake County Chronicle, 15/12, 1921, p.1.
bands were able to support them. One final resolution passed was directed at aliens, as local employers were to be encouraged not to employ non-citizens. The resolution was directed at aliens in general but held a passage connecting the discussion with the war debate, since some aliens were “first paper slackers or men who renounced their intention of ever becoming citizens of the United States during the years 1917-1918”. The resolution read:

\[\text{We the federated trades assembly of Two Harbors, call upon the officers of the city and other employers of aliens to replace them with married men with dependent families who are citizens of the United States.}\]

In the following issue there was a follow-up letter to the editor written by a long-time union man who demanded that a committee should be organized to apply pressure on employers who hired married women and aliens. The discussion had a clear gender dimension, especially since the Trades Assembly was practically an all male forum dominated by unions organizing primarily male workers in all departments on the D&IR. The question of gender was connected with people’s chances of earning their livelihood.

It was hence clearly a case of a patriarchal structure keeping women out of the work place, but the discussion also had one dimension of community solidarity, where work was to be shared so that all, both families and individual households could support themselves during the crisis. An indication of this community orientation was that the many jobs held by young unmarried female clerks and daughters of railroad workers were never discussed. But the masculine railroad workers’ identities as family providers prevailed in the discussion. On the other hand, the resolutions passed by the council stated that not only women would share the burden of the cutbacks, but male workers, too. So, despite the strong patriarchal dimension in the discussion, community solidarity and co-operation between the classes also seem to be a recurring theme in the discussion on the economic crisis and the actions of the D&IR and organized labor.

Another group that was to be kept out of the work place consisted of the aliens, particularly those who had not become citizens during the war and were consequently not part of the draft process. The case made against these aliens illustrates that they, probably mostly Finnish, Scandinavian and Eastern European workers, were perceived as an outside threat to the established workers in Two Harbors who had gradually been socialized into company welfare capitalist systems and subordinated under Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony.

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1031 Lake County Chronicle. 15/12, 1921, p.1.
1033 For a discussion on changing gender roles within the American labor movement, see: Faue, Elisabeth. Community of Suffering and Struggle. pp.66-68. For a more general discussion on gender roles and men as family providers see: Frangeur, Renée. Yrkesvinna eller makens tjänarinna.
The workers on the council who were citizens and had families indicate this division between on one hand an established, settled working class whose common identity was tied in to local allegiances and, on the other, a worker migrating between jobs, who had not been able to establish himself and who was a potential threat to the gains of the post-war period in terms of both unionization and class co-operation. Furthermore, these workers were not Americans, and as the war period had established an American identity with a base in hegemonic Anglo-American culture and anti-radicalism, these transient immigrant workers no longer had a place in Two Harbors. Hence the economic hardships spawned a situation where war time rhetoric on Americanism had an impact in that the labor movement, now thoroughly American in character in Two Harbors, regarded solidarity with these immigrant workers as difficult. At the same time, the company management strengthened its bond to the settled workers by offering work to counter unemployment. The policy of the D&IR and the trade union council therefore illustrates a community of interest that cut across class lines and was built on a local community identity where citizenship and settlement was contrasted to the outside threat posed by transient workers. One illustration to this threat was the hiring of the IWWs on the ore dock that same year. The working class solidarity, hence, no longer included the transient workers, and this, clearly had an ethnic edge and was, in important ways connected to the changes in the public sphere and the meliorist language of reform that did not readily include all ethnic and racial groups.

Radicalism transformed

The Socialist locals seem to have survived the hardships of the war years, even though they had been attacked by political forces in the community centered around the D&IR, primarily during 1917 and 1918. Their newspaper was reorganized and from the beginning of 1918 it was not published directly by the Socialist party but by the “People’s Publishing Company”, which became incorporated in December 1917. In 1918 the newspaper changed its name to the Lake County Chronicle with the subheading “Formerly the Two Harbors Socialist”. This change indicates two things. First there seems to have been some continuity in the Socialist presence in the city, a fact that is underlined by the maintenance of the tie to the Socialist newspaper. The newspaper continued to show an interest in Debs and the general development of the Socialist Party and also to closely support Socialist candidates in the county elections in 1918 and the city elections in 1919. The political change towards non-partisanship signaled by the 1918 state elections was further strengthened by the name change of the newspaper. As we shall see, the political situation had made it strongly ill-advised to maintain an outspoken Socialist newspaper, despite the strong Socialist presence in the community.

1034 Two Harbors Socialist. 1/2, 1918. p.6. The Articles of the company were published in the newspaper on this date. The board of the company further underlines the connection with the Socialist movement.
In 1918 the weekly meetings of the Socialist clubs were still in existence, as is evidenced by a change of meeting time for the Scandinavian local because of Christmas celebrations. To this can be added a number of other activities such as dances, basket socials and debating forums during both 1918 and 1919. In February 1919 the Scandinavian local arranged a dance that was “a decided success from a social as well as a pecuniary standpoint.” The receipts were donated to the “Scandinavian Socialist paper”. In March the same year a lecture “in Scandinavian” by a Socialist speaker, Nels R. Swenson from Chicago, the speaker being announced with the words “come and see him, he is one of the best lecturers on behalf of the working class. The “everyday” presence of socialist activities was judging by the character of the public sphere and a diminished Socialist presence, despite a rather extensive program, lost during these years.

The Scandinavian Socialist local remained quite active into 1921, but the Socialist bid for control of the public sphere with a continuation in the presence of Socialist activities seems to have died during the aftermath of the elections in 1917. In 1919 a meeting of a local Verdandi lodge with the Swedish name “Frihetskämpen” (the Freedom Fighter) was announced. The leadership of this lodge was drawn from the Scandinavian local. The Verdandi movement was part of the Scandinavian radical movement and, in essence, both a labor organization and temperance lodge. The Verdandi lodge in Two Harbors functioned for a time as the headquarters of the organization in the United States and had a program based on Swedish labor movement traditions, as lectures and study circles were part of the work. Co-operation seems to have existed between the temperance lodge and the Scandinavian Socialist local, since the leader of the Verdandi was also an active member of the Socialist local. Furthermore, the connections are visible by the fact that the two organizations arranged joint social events, one such event occurring in April 1921. An entertainment program, dance and dinner were furnished to the members. In the summer of 1921 the Scandinavian Socialist local and the Verdandi lodge again co-operated. This time they arranged a picnic on “Victor Swanson’s farm.” Another note displays the meeting of the Verdandi lodge called by the Recording Secretary, Albert Peterson.

Yet another indicator of the actions of the Socialists is the founding of a cooperative company called the “Farmers’ and Workers’ Co-op”. The idea of a cooperative movement sprung out of a meeting held by the Scandinavian local in 1917. At the meeting the Scandinavians discussed the problem of the high costs

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1035 Lake County Chronicle, 20/12, 1918. p.4.
1036 Lake County Chronicle, 28/2, 1919. p.4.
1037 Two Harbors Socialist, 8/3, 1918. p.4.
1038 Lake County Chronicle, 24/1, 1919. p.4.
1039 Svenska Socialisten, 10/5, 1917. p.5.
1041 Lake County Chronicle, 14/7, 1921. p.4.
1042 Lake County Chronicle, 14/7, 1921. p.10.
of living in Two Harbors, and a number of different paths were proposed to improve the conditions of the working class. One person suggested boycotting merchants who did not support labor and force them out of business; another wanted to form a co-operative movement. The initiative for a cooperative “for the workers’ protection” and against local merchants came from the “older” members. According to the minutes of the meeting, many merchants, even though dependent on workers’ support to stay in business, often aligned themselves with the “master class”. This organization met with success, and by 1921 it had acquired three hundred members.

The Socialist movement thus appears to have maintained some of its work within the Socialist locals and the Socialist party through the war, but radical activity found new channels, as the co-operative movement, the founding of a publishing company and the ethnic temperance movement formed new hubs for worker resistance against company dominance. The new orientation also aimed at catching the vote of the small farmers in the area.

In 1921 the Socialists sought new ways of countering company and Republican Party dominance. In a note it was stated that “the social Democrats of Two Harbors have organized a club with L.D. Rose as President. This organization was in line with similar clubs being formed in the Northwestern states, with a view to consolidating all the anti-Republican forces before the next election”. There obviously existed a Socialist group that wanted to oppose Republican politics both on the local and state levels. The name L.D. Rose also indicates that the local Socialist movement of the 1920s had partly the same leadership as in the early period of Socialist presence before 1910.

The same year, however, the limits of the Socialist movement more generally and especially when paired with ethnic activism, acquired an outspoken expression in Two Harbors. Mr. J.O. Bentall, a man who had a previous connection with the Scandinavian Socialist movement in Chicago and had been the editor of the labor paper Truth in Duluth as well as candidate for governor on the Socialist ticket in 1918, spoke in Two Harbors. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Scandinavian Socialist local.

The meeting was presented in the local newspaper under the headline “Near Riot is Caused by Hecklers”, and the article outlined how the meeting with Bentall was disturbed when a pastor of the city, backed by parts of his congregation bombarded Bentall with questions and heckled him publicly, in effect, trying to break up the meeting. While Bentall was talking, parts of the audience whose “Americanism was quite outraged” reacted, and the crowd seems to have been engaged in a “verbal battle, which ensued from all parts of the audience”. The

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1044 Lake County Chronicle, 17/2, 1921. p.1.
1045 Lake County Chronicle, 31/3, 1921. p.8.
1046 Lake County Chronicle, 28/7, 1921. p.1.
meeting ended, and the outraged pastor was threatened with arrest. Obviously, no major acts of violence took place, but one man tried to “trim” Alex Halliday, the Socialist mayor, who attended the meeting. 1047

In a letter to the editor published in the Lake County Chronicle, Bentall’s speech was called “frenzied agitation”. 1048 The incident and its aftermath illustrate how the war and its aftermath had changed the politics and culture to the extent that it was impossible to employ the language of class in public in the Two Harbors of 1921. Bentall’s speech had been firmly connected to the language and the politics of class which a few years earlier had been part and parcel of the politics and culture of the community. Now it instead aroused strong reactions which emphasized that it was un-American and an expression of frenzied agitation and “bol-shevism”. So, despite the political power of the Socialists after a Socialist administration was elected in the spring of 1919, it was not enough, since the public cultural and political climate had changed so strongly that a class-based argument was not acceptable in the eyes of many citizens of Two Harbors. This was an expression of the hegemonic aspirations of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie, as its prerogative of political interpretation prevailed after the stigmatization of the Socialist movement in Two Harbors following on the war years.

As is evidenced by the decline in activity of the Socialists of Two Harbors, the local movement was strongly marked by the general decline of Socialism during the preparedness period and war years. However, radical ideas did not simply die off with the decline in the work of the Socialist clubs. Instead, the movement was in some respect transformed and found new outlets in the establishing of trade unions and a trade union council. Judging by the meetings held by some of the trade unions in Two Harbors, it is possible to see how they maintained a radical class-consciousness in their work into the 1920s. In October 1921 a union meeting out of the ordinary was held at Glen Hall, which attracted a fair audience. Head speaker was Timothy Healy Grand, president of the “Stationery Firemen and Oilers’ Union”. C.M. Hillman, editor of the local newspaper, also gave a short talk. In his speech he talked of the Russian workers and claimed that American tradition should have compelled recognition of the Russian government and trade resumption. He also deplored the necessity of a railroad strike at the time. 1049 Radicalism, hence, did not die with the changes, but was instead transformed into other institutional arrangements. But radicalism was transformed as the class partisanship of the Socialists did not, as it had in the 1910s, mobilize large parts of the community anymore, so despite some radical union meetings, and a portion of the working class who was still class conscious, the editor of the labor friendly newspaper tries to balance between class analysis and a language that primarily aimed at downplaying class conflict to attract workers. The development gives an indication that large groups of workers had, indeed,

1048 Lake County Chronicle, 15/9, 1921. p.4. Letter to the editor.
1049 Lake County Chronicle, 20/10, 1921. p.1.
been affected by the war propaganda and the re-alignment of ethnicity and class that was a result of the war years.

The evidence regarding the development of working class identity seems, hence, contradictory, as the public sphere, to some extent, still was characterized by radicalism. However, there also seems to be a tendency, as we have seen in the sections on the crafting of class unity after the war, that the language of reform and a stronger connection to the interests of the D&IR had taken a stronger hold on the workers. Despite this duality, Lake County cast strong votes for the quite radical program of the Minnesota Farmer and Labor Party during the 1920s, a fact that is established in Table 20 below.

Table 20. Changes in the Radical Voting Pattern in the Gubernatorial Elections in Lake County, 1912-1922.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year, total vote</th>
<th>Socialist Party</th>
<th>Farmer-Labor Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912(1669)</td>
<td>433</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914(1785)</td>
<td>392</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916(1476) only males</td>
<td>520</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918(1344) only males</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920(2633)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1525*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922(2636)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1512</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- This vote was for an independent candidate, Henrik Shipstead, who was endorsed by the Non-Partisan League.

Judging by the voting returns from the gubernatorial elections in Lake County, the Socialist vote culminated in 1916 when the Socialist candidate for Governor was narrowly beaten by 54 votes by the Republican candidate Burnquist, a man of Swedish heritage that would later instigate the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. In 1918 there seems to have been a shift, as the radical vote was split in half between the Farmer-Labor Candidate and the Socialist. Lake County increasingly supported Farmer Labor Party candidates during the early 1920s and hence abandoned the Socialists for another third party, one that became even more successful in the gubernatorial elections.

The shift towards farmer labor politics meant that Socialism had played out its role, but also that the radical vote had been transferred into a thoroughly American movement, which appealed not only to workers, but in an equal degree to small Midwestern farmers. The county was deeply embedded in the Farmer-Labor movement throughout the 1920s, and candidates such as Floyd B Olson of Norwegian and Swedish descent polled more than a thousand votes and as a rule
beat the Republican candidates in the county. The tradition of farmer-labor politics, to some extent, built on the same radical tradition as had been the case with the Socialists and other third parties during the 1890s. So despite the differences between the Farmer-Labor movement and the non-partisan league there was also strong similarities in that the class perspective had, at least to some extent, been carried over to these movements. But the changing “formula” for labor politics in Lake County has something to tell us about how class and ethnicity was reshaped during the late 1910s.

This transformation into farmer labor politics seems to be connected with the general ideological shifts in the local community but also with a structural process where the children of Scandinavian immigrant workers gradually entered the local labor market during the 1910s, and carried along new perspectives as they became eligible to vote. This generation of Swedish-Americans, the children of Swedish immigrants, was the largest single group of children of immigrants in Lake County. As I have tried to show in this thesis, their experience of American society, company policies and the American labor market was distinctly different than the experiences made by their parents. They had acquired the new language and had, on the whole, a quite different perspective both on their country and on their ethnic identity. This shift encompassed both a class dimension and a specific relationship to the ethnic heritage between generations of workers and between ethnic generations. Hence, the work of the MCPS and the company should have held a vastly larger appeal to these children of immigrants than to their parents.

Also, the Socialist clubs, which had based their work on a combination of ethnic identity and class solidarity, held little meaning to the children of immigrants, which had experienced the push for Americanization and the emergence of a context of allegiance to the American people and to the company in place of ethnic solidarity and class struggle. The gradual disappearance of the Socialist public sphere at the end of the 1910s seems, in this perspective, to carry a distinct generational character. As the Scandinavian Socialist club sought new ways of carrying on their activities, either in temperance lodges or in cooperative enterprises where farmers and workers came together on the local level it also contributed to the shift to farmer labor politics for the children of immigrants.

Analysis
The common interest of the local merchants and the newly established broad-based Trade Union movement, which had gone into politics in the 1921 city election and formed an umbrella organization the year before that, seems to have been emphasized in the public debate - a public debate that, despite some efforts at maintaining a class perspective on current events, put forward a perspective where class harmony and co-operation became increasingly visible in the contents of the Lake County Chronicle.

The emphasis on the commonality of interest between classes and cultural groupings attained its most outspoken expression in the launching of a community service, the reorganization of the Commercial Club and the marriage between the union-label program and the “buy-at-home” campaign. All these efforts were launched in 1921 and were seemingly aimed at bridging the gap between the societal interests based on class and, to some extent, on ethnicity, which had been adversarial in the 1910s, and whose conflict had been a visible part of the political and cultural life of the city in the 1910s. This program of class co-operation, which I think can indeed be described as a coherent program, echoed, as I have shown in Chapter 8, many of the opinions on class relations expressed during the same period in the company paper. The program of co-operation as expressed in the new forums presented in the local public debate and in the program of the local trade union movement had a strong air of the War Debate with Americanism, community orientation and class co-operation as important cornerstones. Simultaneously, hard economic times offered labor little room to maneuver on the local level and labor-management cooperation seems to have been but one part of the ideas of the local labor movement as portions of it still seem to have held distinctly class conscious views. One result of the ideological changes, where ethnicity and class rhetoric were no longer usable for the political mobilization of the working class and where the dividing line between workers was increasingly defined as a split between settled workers with citizenship and transient immigrant workers without, made it impossible to maintain a Socialist public.

The continuity between the labor movement of the early 1920s and the preceding Socialist period in politics is underlined by the resolution adopted by the Federated Trades Assembly in 1921, which apparently supports the Soviet Government and wants the US to open for trade with the Socialist Country. This again illustrates that the shift away from Socialist voting and the adoption of a trade union organization did not mean that radicalism died off after the war, but instead that it sought new forms of organization that better suited the post-war environment in which the radicals of Two Harbors found themselves.

The gubernatorial elections from 1918 to 1922 illustrate this convincingly, as the Socialist vote was still strong in the 1918 election, but then gradually shifts to new forms of organization with, to begin with, a massive support for a candidate endorsed by the non-Partisan League, Henrik Shipstead, after which the vote drifted into the third party MFLP. There are a number of possible explanations for this shift, one being that these parties had obtained the respectability among both farmers and workers which the Socialist party lacked after the War. Another was that the ethnic component was not as strong as had been the case with the Socialist clubs in the 1910s, neither in Two Harbors, nor in cities like Milwaukee. This offered the opposition a number of advantages over the previous forms of organization. One was that the children of immigrants felt that their loyalty as Americans was not in jeopardy, while another was that the farmers were also invited on more equal terms in fighting big business. In short, the MFLP movement was a historical bloc, to use a concept of Gramsci, which was not stigma-
tized with the language of class to the same degree as had the Socialists. Ethnic identity, which had been one of the strengths of the Socialist movement in Two Harbors during the 1910s, had become a liability by war’s end and was also less prominent than in the Socialist project.

There was also a drift towards increased union activity in politics on the local arena, as the Federated Trades Assembly became an important political player in 1921, when it dominated the election. Practically no opposition was put up. Here it is possible to perceive a connection back in time, since both the labor newspapers emphasize the many Socialist activists in the local trade unions and the names of the candidates that can many times be traced back to Socialist tickets from the 1917 and 1919 city elections. Hence local allegiance, loyalty and cooperation did not replace radicalism during the period from 1919 to 1921 in Two Harbors, but rather transformed it into a more solidly American entity, which in itself offered new possibilities for the working class and for smaller farmers, but also limited it in that it discarded its multi-ethnic character and aligned itself in important ways with the Anglo-American establishment, as it was no longer possible to uphold the ethnic radicalism in its traditional guise. The transformation also illustrates a continuity and adaptiveness in the working class opposition to the D&IR and the ways that the workers managed to negotiate the outright domination of the railroad. In light of this, the duality in the use of both a language of class and a language of reform that shows up in the labor friendly Lake County Chronicle in the beginning of the 1920s must be regarded one way of negotiating a new political, social-cultural and economic situation.

Another factor in this discussion on ethnicity and ethnic identity connected with radicalism is the fact that the 1910s meant, as I have shown quantitatively in my background chapter on Two Harbors, that a large number of children of immigrant parents, primarily of Swedish ancestry, entered the labor market at the end of the 1910s and also became eligible to vote during these years. The transformation away from Socialism thus also mirrors a generational split in the immigrant community, where the children of immigrants, judging by their position in the labor market, and their weak connection to the Socialist locals had other experiences.

The solidarity that had existed and that had been based on ethnic networks and the language of class held little meaning to a new generation that had come of age during the war years with its heavily politicized language of Americanism. Added to this development were the labor policies from the mid-1910s with company interests investing increasing sums to attain the good will of the local working class, sponsoring athletics and a large community program. The generational split also contributed to the decline of the Socialist movement under the relentless pressure from the state administration during the war years, stigmatizing both immigrant identities and class-based organizations. The choice given to these children of immigrants was to enter a political movement in its death throes, based on principles that held little meaning to them, given their experiences in the labor market, of the development of the community and the creation
of new forms of activism. Judging by the electoral returns from the elections during the 1920s, they chose the latter. One example of this type of transformation between generations is the Finnish Socialist Ida Pasanen, whose daughter became an important activist in the MFLP.\footnote{Frenkel, Susanna. *An Experiment in American Socialism*. p.13.}

Hence class, ethnicity and generation came into play in the historical process that changed political allegiances, cultural perspectives and the views on the relationship between employer and employee. The consequences of World War I and its aftermath meant that new pressures from the Anglo-American bourgeoisie limited the possibility of using ethnicity and the language of class as tools to mobilize the working class in Two Harbors. To this can be added different experiences of the workplace by different generations of Swedish workers, which also played a part in the transformation away from the language of class, and from multiculturalism.

**Ethnicity Transformed**

The multi-ethnic Americanism program of the Socialist locals, which was constructed during the mid 1910s through public events and through the everyday program of the ethnic Socialist locals, seems, judging by a number of subtle indications from the local press and the way parades and official celebrations were organized, to have changed in marked ways in Two Harbors during the period after the war. It had apparently been transformed into a situation where *Lake County Chronicle* and organized labor, under increasing economic and social pressure, accepted a cleavage between citizens and non-citizens and between women and men, and came to apply pressure on the employers to only hire male citizens in their establishments. This polarization might be interpreted as a result of the 100% American movement and the transformation of the local arena during World War I. Radicalism in Two Harbors, as has been shown above, did not die, but was transformed and adapted to new forms. This, however, meant discarding much of the language of class that had been so prominent in the mid-1910s. It also meant a shift in ethnic identification, as Scandinavian identity had been connected with disloyalty and was to a degree suppressed during the war and into the post-war period.

This development characterized by a shift towards class-harmony and cooperation was a message that middle class progressives had championed for decades. At the beginning of the 1920s, the language of reform hence had an important impact in the community, both through community service, company programs and a number of other cross class arrangements. This shift in turn illustrates some important pieces in the puzzle of how the Scandinavian worker became an American during the period. The shift away from Socialism, the language of class and ethnicity also carried with it other changes and one important indicator is the celebration of Labor Day and the Fourth of July. In 1918 Roth-
fus, the laundry owner of German descent who became the first Socialist mayor of Two Harbors, complained about the Socialists of the city not supporting a fellow American comrade, but instead choosing to frequent his Chinese competitor in the laundry business.\textsuperscript{1052} The will to exclude the Chinese is evident, and the laundry owner clearly appeals to the fellow Socialists by using their common identity as white Americans and the fact that they are all socialists. This indicates that the multi-cultural program of the socialists in Two Harbors had a clear racial limit, something that previous research has emphasized when studying the socialist movement. The American Socialist was not primarily an African American worker but socialism was intimately connected to whiteness.\textsuperscript{1053} The example is also a bridge from the multi-cultural program of the socialist locals in the pre-war period and through the war years’ stigma on radicalism and ethnicity that transformed processes of class formation and perceptions of ethnicity.

An unknown white railroad worker blackened up and dressed as a porter during the celebration of Labor Day in Two Harbors under the auspices of organized labor in 1919. The man dressed as a woman in the picture also sports blackface and clothing that connects to an African American female stereotype. Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{1052} Two Harbors Socialist, 19/4, 1918. p.6.
Other evidence of an introduction of the idea of whiteness and an emerging culture based on white identity is the celebration of Labor Day in 1919. In the period 1915 to 1917, celebrations of holidays in Two Harbors were generally characterized by a socialist component where the language of class and ethnic groups had had central positions. Evidences from 1919 and 1921 illustrates that both of these aspects were downplayed in the celebrations of Labor Day and the Fourth of July in those years. In some sense, a self confident local socialist movement largely based in Swedish and Norwegian ethnic identities and workers’ experience of American capitalism, had been replaced by new momentum toward class reconciliation and ethnic unity under Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony.

This is in some sense illustrated by two different cultural symbols and their usage which were worlds apart but only four years removed from one another. The Scandinavian ethnic joke sported in the 1915 parade by the younger generation of Two Harborites, had in a Labor Day parade in 1919 been replaced by another cultural symbol, where one of the railroad workers in the parade blackened up and dressed as a porter. Another railroad worker dressed and blackened up as a black stereotype accompanied him. This shift towards the celebration of national holidays in Two Harbors is further underlined by the trade union arrangement of Labor Day in 1921, when the most celebrated event, “the hit of the afternoon” was a minstrel show staged by the local YMCA, and where blackface again was a notable feature. The cast for the minstrel performance were all women, and it was largely wives and daughters of Scandinavian immigrant workers who participated, but a number of American born women were also in the show.1054

In the Two Harbors of 1920 there were merely a handful of African-American citizens present, so they were not a threat to the immigrant working class on the labor market. Neither were there any indications during any period that the local newspapers perceived the African-American population as a social threat or as a force that could disrupt class unity. What then is the broader meaning of the black stereotypes showing up in Two Harbors at the same time that the war and the attack on Scandinavian immigrant identities and the local radical movement increased during the war years?

The work on minstrelsy and white workers’ relationship to African-Americans has been documented in the work on whiteness by David Roediger. In Roediger’s account the minstrel show and the character of blackface became important aspects of the socialization of many immigrant workers into a white American culture which constituted itself as a contrast to African Americans as “the other”. The best-documented group in this respect is the Irish immigrants. The point that Roediger and others, like Noel Ignatiev have made was that the Irish were not

1054 Lake County Chronicle, 1/9, 1921, p.1.; 8/9, 1921, p.1. There were also other occasional minstrel performances advertised in the local newspapers see e.g. the Journal News 12/7, 1917, p.1. That particular show included a minstrel act and a “patriotic finale”.

regarded as inconclusively white and that their ethnic identity as well as their
status in the American labor market, to some extent put the same stigma on the
ey early Irish immigrants as white America had put on African Americans since the
colonial period. Roediger and others have focused on the pressures brought to
bear on immigrant ethnic groups and the interaction between immigrant culture
and an Anglo-American core culture which led to a racial identity formation.\textsuperscript{1055}

This pressure generated specific responses from a wide range of European immi-
grant groups as has been shown by Matthew Frye Jacobson and in the study of
“in-between people” carried out by David Roediger in his work on the “New
Immigrants”.\textsuperscript{1056} Evidence shows, generally speaking, that the European immi-
grants became not only Americans but white Americans in the new country, and
they became white as a response to stigma put on their own cultural heritage and
social position. The process of Americanization was therefore in part structured
by the racial component. This process was more or less explicit during different
periods and regarding various ethnic groups who were judged more or less suited
to become Americanized. The Swedish ethnic group has been described as a
group close to the Anglo-American core culture, and to a large extent, avoided
the stigma put on the Irish or the new immigrants. However, there is evidence,
both from Canada and from the United States whereby Anglo-Americans and na-
tive born Canadians question the whiteness of Swedish immigrants even though
it was not particularly common.

There is evidence from the region around Two Harbors of an increased focus on
race prejudice during the late 1910s. The lynchings in Duluth, where three Afri-
can American circus performers were hanged by a white mob in 1920 is but one
example of how race became an infected issue in the northern part of Minnesota.
Another is that the Ku Klux Klan established a presence in Duluth in 1921 when
more than 700 members were recruited at one single meeting. The Klan directed
much of its attention towards the Catholic immigrant group in the city and evid-
ences found by Richard Hudelson supports the fact that Scandinavians were
important supporters of the organization. Hudelson has, in an elegant exercise in
source criticism, disposed of the notion that the lynchings was a response from
the Duluth workers to increased labor market competition from African Ameri-
cans in the local steel mills and has claimed that the lynchings is probably best
explained by the post-war sentiments and the increased focus on militarism and
violence in this environment. There were according to Hudelson ideological is-
sues at play in the lynching of the black men.\textsuperscript{1057} But an aura of more general
violent behavior does not fully take into account the impact of the war and the
work of the Minnesota Commission for Public Safety in realigning and reshaping
class relations and ethnic relations in Minnesota.

\textsuperscript{1055} Roediger, David. The Wages of Whiteness. pp.133-156. see also: Ignatiev, Noel. \textit{How the Irish
Became White.}

\textsuperscript{1056} Jacobson, Matthew Frye. \textit{Whiteness of a Different Color.;} Roediger, David. \textit{Working Towards
Whiteness.}

\textsuperscript{1057} Hudelson, Richard/ Ross, Carl. \textit{By the Ore Dock.} pp.119-127.
Given the context of Two Harbors in 1919 and 1921 with a steady push for Americanization and the attack on immigrant identities and radicalism, I think that the emergence of the racial stereotypes in public parades and minstrel performances is best explained by the transformation of perceptions of ethnic identities, and I agree with Hudelson that the lynchings were primarily ideological in character. My interpretation of the increased focus on minstrelsy within the large Scandinavian population in Two Harbors is that it was a response to increased pressure from the Anglo-American core culture to include specific groups in the project of nation building. That connection is to some extent strengthened when considering the 1921 minstrel performance under the auspices of the YMCA that included both the children of Scandinavian immigrants and Anglo-American women who came together during the show physically illustrating the identity connection which was the underlying purpose of the show: to build on the idea of a white racial identity without ethnic distinctions.

In Two Harbors, when comparing two images of ethnicity and race, it seems as if ethnic confidence, as displayed by the Scandinavian workers in 1915 was replaced with uncertainty about their status. This uncertainty about the cultural status of the Swedish and other immigrant identities appeared in the wake of the Herculean nationalist propaganda that emphasized loyalty and a particular brand of Americanism based on one cultural expression. The ethnic component had thus transformed into a racial identity formation in Two Harbors where white settled workers displayed their Americanness and whiteness as a unity and without any ethnic distinctions.

Another connected and important issue is how the opposition in the 1910s had relied so strongly on the language of class during the Socialist period. This language came increasingly to be seen as standing in opposition to Americanism, justice and loyalty as a result of the ways the Anglo American establishment on the state and federal levels had defined it. This, the Socialist locals of Two Harbors could not counter, and as pro-war ideological ammunition made an imprint on local politics, the limited reach of the Socialist public sphere became obvious. The nationalist sentiment hence forced the ethnic working class into making a decision as to where they belonged. Either they were to be continuously stigmatized as ethnic radicals, the very basis for the opposition to company dominance during the 1910s in the labor market and in the community, or they must choose to adopt an Anglo-American identity based on the idea of whiteness.

The scant sources on the subject of minstrelsy and race from Two Harbors cannot present a coherent image of this developing process of identity formation, but the timing of the adoption of minstrelsy and black stereotypes among the workers in Two Harbors coincides with the disappearance of a strong coherent Socialist presence in the community, where the language of class was linked in important ways to Swedishness and other ethnic identities in the local community. The strategic and very visible display of minstrel shows and blackface during specific labor sponsored events hence illustrates the workings of the process by which
class relations and ethnic relations were re-aligned in important and dramatic ways.

The development in Two Harbors furthermore reinforces the claim made by Roediger and others that pressure on immigrant ethnic identities created specific patterns of responses as one part of the assimilation process. The stigmatizing of radicalism and ethnic identities in Minnesota during and after World War I is hence the largest explanatory factor in the emergence of the racial stereotypes and the path through which the local immigrant working class chose to display its allegiance to the Anglo-American project of white nation building and, connected to this process, the full integration of the region and the workers into American capitalism. This was, hence, one part of the local post-war program to create class peace and ethnic unity under Anglo-American bourgeois leadership. One must, in this perspective, regard the emergence of the African-American stereotypes and the slurring of the Chinese laundry owner as aspects of the Scandinavian working class becoming American and, consequently, as one aspect of the nation-building process in the United States.
10. Class and ethnicity in the political economy of Northern Minnesota

In this thesis I have analyzed the changing social position of Swedish immigrants and have presented evidence on the crucial role played by relations between groups based on class and ethnicity in the United States and in a specific local context have focused on the relationship between an American company and the immigrant workers it employed between the 1880s and the 1920s. The results show how the Swedish experience and Swedish identity formation was structured in important ways by relations with groups and ideological forces outside the cultural area called Swedish America. This thesis therefore relates the Swedish ethnic group and especially its working class component, to other class- and ethnicity-based groups, overarching ideological discourses and material conditions in the new host society.

The study contributes to increased knowledge of the position of the Swedish immigrants and their children in the process of capitalist expansion across the American continent. It also contributes to our knowledge on the relationship between Swedish immigrants, their children and Anglo-Americans. By focusing on class, ethnicity and generation the study also contributes to our knowledge of Swedish immigrant identity formation, and efforts by different segments of American society to integrate the Swedish worker in specific ways and, connected to this, the question on how and when Swedish immigrants became Americanized and the role of an American company in this process. One final contribution made, is in the connection between Swedish-American identity and radicalism and the role of a Swedish-American working class community in the local politics of a railroad town and in the reshaping of its public sphere.

I have used the process whereby the spreading of industrial capitalism intersected with the arrival of non-Anglo immigrants to the American Midwest as a framework to better understand the position of Swedish immigrants and the conditions under which Swedish workers negotiated their status under the capitalist social order in the United States.

The study is a micro history of one railroad and the railroad town that sprang out of its establishment. It aims to contribute both to our knowledge of the Swedish
experience in the United States, and to contribute to American labor history, class relations and their development during the period of the establishment of industrial capitalism and the integration of a region into a national economy. The American research to which I tie my study lies within the tradition of studies focused on immigrant community action and applies that tradition in a new context to clashes with the policy of a railroad company in an American Midwestern railroad town. This town, Two Harbors, Minnesota offers insight into the struggle between immigrant workers and an Anglo-American employer in the public sphere. Two Harbors, Minnesota has offered me insight into “ordinary people” as historical actors connected to overarching social and cultural processes during the time period between the early 1880s and the 1920s.

I am analyzing relations based on class and ethnicity in a railroad company, The Duluth and Iron Range Railroad, and the railroad town of Two Harbors which was established by eastern capitalist interests in the vicinity of the Minnesota iron ore fields in the early 1880s. The railroad company was formed by Charlemagne Tower who made his son, Charlemagne Tower Jr., President of the railroad. In the late 1880s, the railroad passed into the ownership of large steel companies, and was, from 1901, a part of the United States Steel Corporation. I regard the railroad company as representative of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. Two Harbors was initially established by the railroad company and had many traits similar to a company town in the 1880s and the 1890s.

The book analyzes three aspects of power expressed through ethnic and class relations and, connected to these power relations, processes of hegemony and the construction of societal norms as a way of resolving conflicts between ethnic groups and between classes while maintaining a capitalist mode of production.

The main questions of the study are:

What was the position of immigrant workers, especially the Swedes, working on the D&IR in 1885 and 1920, respectively?
How did the relationship, in the workplace and during leisure time, between the management and officials of the D&IR and the (immigrant) workers change between the first half of the 1880s and the 1920s?
What role did class and ethnicity play in the development of an opposition to company dominance during the period and how did the opposition negotiate with the Anglo-American bourgeois leadership? What role did the war play in the changing relationship between labor and capital in Two Harbors?

In line with the questions, I deal with both structural perspectives on class as expressed in the emergence and development of a social hierarchy under capitalist forms of exploitation. I also deal with the process of class formation in response to these same conditions on the D&IR. Ethnicity has been explored, in an analogy to the perspectives on class, as both a passive category and basis for exclusion by the Anglo-American normative establishment and as an active conscious process of identity formation among immigrants.
The Expansion of Capitalism and the Political Economy of Minnesota

Between roughly 1860 and 1900, Minnesota was gradually integrated into the American national economy. This process of integration involved the spreading of industrial capitalism and the incorporation of new regions into an economic system that demanded raw materials, farm land and expanding markets for the selling and buying of industrially produced goods. The railroad was an important vehicle for this process of expansion. The expansion, however, also meant the destruction of older economic systems and social relations established decades earlier.

This capitalist expansion was intimately connected to a leading group of Anglo-American eastern capitalists that acquired land and secured resources in the state. These larger processes where the expansion of capitalism integrated new geographic areas in the United States is illustrated by the history of the Duluth & Iron Range Railroad. The railroad was established by Charlemagne Tower, a Philadelphia capitalist who, with the help of other Philadelphia investors funded a project that aimed to exploit the Minnesota iron ore assets. The purpose of the railroad was to transport iron ore from the so called Iron Range of Minnesota almost seventy miles down to harbor facilities on Lake Superior where the ore was loaded into boats and transported to steel mills in eastern industrial centers such as Cleveland and Pittsburgh. The railroad was constructed primarily by Swedish, Norwegian and Anglo-American workers. The establishment of the D&IR also meant the gradual establishment of a community of railroad workers in the railroad town of Two Harbors.

My results show how the establishment of capitalism was the primary force in moving the American frontier westward. After a couple of years of company presence democratic self-governing institutions were established by the railroad management in the frontier railroad town. The argument given by the railroad President was to increase control over the workers and the local context by establishing a judiciary system and a justice of the peace. The establishment of political institutions and representative democracy were clearly secondary to the social control required by capitalist expansion.

The establishment of the D&IR and the role of Charlemagne Tower as a representative for Anglo-American capital created specific power structures in the political economy of Minnesota and particularly its Northern region from the 1880s on. The fact that the D&IR in the late 1880s was sold to a larger steel company in the East, and that it became a subsidiary of the United States Steel Corporation in 1901 further reinforced the basic power relations in this political economy.

Apart from transportation, the economy of Minnesota was primarily based on the exploitation of natural resources and farm production with some processing in-
dustry during the 1800s. The emerging political economy resulted in distinct power relations between social groups in Minnesota. These power relations were primarily expressed as class and ethnic terms. Economic power was concentrated to the east as investors and stock holders seldom resided in the Midwest. The owners and stock holders of the D&IR were largely concentrated to eastern industrial centers far from Minnesota. Political power, as I have shown in my background chapter, was intimately connected to regional business interests and concentrated to a group of Anglo-Americans in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The position of power held by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie in Minnesota between the 1850s and the 1920s was, hence, expressed primarily through state politics and through eastern Anglo-American bourgeois control of the economy. The economic and political dominance of this ethnic and class based group re-shaped not only economic and social relations but also made distinct cultural imprints. The result was a racial coding of the political arena and a transition to a dominant white English-speaking culture. This switch came late in the state, only decades before the arrival of a mass of non-English-speaking people from Europe. These non-English speakers were primarily Scandinavians and Germans who were an increasingly large part of the region’s labor market, especially from the 1880s. As indicated by my examination of the D&IR, the labor market dynamics also tended to connect specific sending societies in Northwestern Europe with specific locations in the Midwest. The example in my introduction to this book, Emil Andersson is but one of many examples.

The hegemony of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie meant an effort to establish and preserve a culture based on the cultural values of one group, a policy which tended to have an impact in turn on the Swedes and other immigrant groups that came to the state. But, immigrants were needed, and a number of arrangements were made, where capitalists and politicians in Minnesota cooperated to secure a work force and a cadre of farmers that would take up land. Swedish immigration was hence a prerequisite for the Anglo-American expansion of capitalism.

The Anglo-American bourgeoisie, however, faced an increasingly dire situation as the exploitative conditions created increasing tensions between labor and capital and, thereby also, inherently, between ethnic groups. The problem for the Anglo-American bourgeoisie was how to create class peace, to shape the formation of identities of the largely immigrant working class in Minnesota under capitalism, and to create consent for its cultural, political, social and economic leadership from Anglo-American farmers and workers, and the immigrant groups.

The response, as I have shown, was an Anglo-American cross-class alliance, connected to the American process of nation-building that, based on the idea of the American “people”, integrated certain immigrants in this circle while excluding others. In this project, the Swedish working class immigrants were initially allowed to play only a very marginal role, as witnessed by their powerless and marginalized position on the D&IR and in local politics before the 1910s. The
role of the Swedish immigrants, however, changed as the political economy and power relations changed.

**The Workers of the D&IR in the 1880s**

In May, 1885, ten months after the D&IR had completed construction, about 320 names can be found on the railroad company’s payroll. Many of these men, had a very loose relation to the company, and labor turnover seems to have been high. Most of the unskilled workers boarded with the company. The payrolls and census records from the mid 1880s show a distinct ethnic and gender division of labor and my results document the fact that the Swedish group made up a large part of the unskilled work force on the D&IR. Most of the Swedish workers were employed as track or maintenance workers; very few had access to more skilled occupations in the running trades.

Together with Norwegians and some Anglo-Americans, the Swedish born workers made up the blue-collar work force. The group that held the best paid, and the most secure jobs were the American-born of American-born parents, the Anglo-Americans, and, to some extent Canadian, Irish or British immigrants. These groups dominated occupations with high job security and high wages on the payroll, generally the occupations of locomotive engineer, conductor, fireman and brakeman. The career possibilities for the less skilled occupations in train and engine service seem to have been good for the Anglo immigrants and the Anglo-Americans, evidenced by a number of firemen and track foremen that were promoted to more skilled positions. Ethnic groups other than Scandinavians, English or Irish immigrants and Anglo-Americans were generally very small, even though there was a contingent of French Canadians that held all the carpenter jobs on the payroll.

Hiring practices on the D&IR during the 1880s seemed somewhat random when it came to immigrant laborers, and company management did not seem to have separated between immigrant groups. There is nothing to reveal that company management regarded the Swedish group as particularly good railroad men or especially well fit for carrying out blue-collar work. The Swedes were sought after as low-wage immigrant workers, but not as Swedes. The fact that other accounts lumps Swedish immigrants together with other non-Anglo group again illustrates the role of Swedes as cheap, non-English speaking immigrant labor, whereas the same accounts confirm the “special” relationship that existed between Anglo immigrants and Anglo-Americans.

There are indications that the Swedish and other Scandinavian workers were employed last, after the Anglo-American supply of labor had been tapped, and that the Scandinavian group made up a work force that was complementary to the Anglo-Americans. Choosing Anglo-American, and preferably eastern men before British, Irish and Canadian, and then Swedes, Norwegians and other immigrants seems to have been the method for management. The Swedes on the D&IR were indeed limited in their choices, forming a socially rather homoge-
 nous group of unskilled workers concentrated in certain departments on the D&IR between 1884 and 1885, the years which I have studied.

Another point to support this lack of interest in attracting particular immigrant groups was the “harsh treatment” in the camps, which was mentioned by Tower Jr. Harsh company treatment, with some certainty, did not enhance the loyalty of the Swedish workers that were in effect hirelings. The Swedish laborers on Charlemagne Tower’s railroad were part of a pool of labor in the Minnesota cities, and were an easily replaceable group of workers. The seemingly high turnover rates in some departments of the company during the 1880s and the lack of a company policy for maintaining relations with the work force are also indications of this pattern of thought. In 1885, the immigrant groups tended to position themselves in accordance with their language skills and their proximity to American culture. The Scandinavians, together with some Anglo workers, made up the portion of the work force that had the lowest paying jobs, with the least job security and, many times, the worst working conditions.

Why then the lack of interest in ethnic identification among the immigrant groups? One answer might be that ethnic identity was overshadowed by economic motives, and that these were placed above the perceived cultural differences. Another explanation might be the ethnic composition of the immigrants in the 1880s. Minnesota was at this time dominated by only a few ethnic groups, and the large-scale immigration of Scandinavians, particularly Swedes, but also Germans, made these groups the mainstay of immigration from non-Anglo countries during the 1880s. The immigrants at the time, if not English-speaking, may thus have been assumed to be German or Scandinavian and the difference between Germans and Scandinavians might have been thought of as too small to consider when hiring workers. On this score, the sources remain silent, however.

The Workers of the D&IR in 1920

In 1920, more than 1,000 workers were employed on the D&IR, and the company illustrated the emerging class structure that capitalism had established. An ethnic division of labor is evident in most departments on the payroll. Anglo-Americans, and immigrants from Canada, Ireland and Great Britain, were concentrated in office work, supervisory white-collar positions, skilled occupations such as locomotive engineer and conductor, and yardmen. These ethnic groups were also in complete control of the upper echelon of the company, as the president, the superintendent, and practically all other supervisory occupations were held by Anglo-Americans or immigrants from the British Isles, Ireland or Canada, and by the children of these immigrants. All these occupational categories carried out work that either held a high degree of authority over other workers or were part of the collective bargaining between company officials and the workers in yard, train and engine work.

To the heavily Scandinavian, English and Canadian population in the area of the railroad during the 1880s had been added a large number of Eastern Europeans,
Finns and Italians. These groups first and foremost complemented Swedish and Norwegian workers in blue-collar positions on the station roll, on the ore dock, and on the track force.

Thus, the patterns of the ethnic division of labor had become more complex than had been the case in the 1880s. Whereas the American-born were still holding most positions of authority and status, new ethnic groups had made inroads into the departments of the company that had so far been dominated almost solely by the American-born. The ethnic division of labor was also made more complex by the fact that the children of immigrants had entered the labor market. We find children of Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish workers employed in white-collar work, whereas few immigrants were found in the offices of the D&IR. In this way, the children of the non-Anglo immigrants tend to stand for much of the social mobility of immigrant groups on the railroad who previously were found in subordinate positions with regard to authority. Some of these children of immigrants were female, and many were quite young and had recently entered the labor market in 1920. The offices in which they worked were in general supervised by Anglo-American men. The hierarchy between different categories of office workers was, hence, largely made between women and men with immigrant backgrounds who were employed as clerks, whereas the occupations holding more authority were generally held by male Anglo-Americans. The same ethnic and gender division of labor existed in the station department, where immigrant women were working as station agents at smaller stations along the line, while the large stations were managed by Anglo-American men. In the ore dock offices the situation was similar. Many of the office workers were sons and daughters of the Swedish-born population in Two Harbors, whereas most leading functions in the offices were still held by Anglo-Americans.

Ethnic groups other than Anglo-Americans were represented on the locomotive roll, The Swedish workers had established themselves in the running trades on the road, and some Swedish workers were employed as locomotive engineers or firemen. Anglo-Americans still made up a large share of these workers and were still overrepresented as locomotive engineers in 1920. The occupational groups in yard, train and engine service belonged to what might be described as a primary segment of the American labor market. This shows that the theory of the segmented labor market as presented by Hirsch was valid on the D&IR into the 1920s.

This segment, characterized by higher wages, higher skills and more secure conditions was still, in many cases, dominated by Anglo-American workers, while immigrants were still overrepresented as common laborers. The most important groups of laborers on the D&IR continued to be the Finnish and Swedish workers, particularly the immigrant generation, as they showed a high presence both on the ore dock and on the track force in 1920. A very small portion of the workforce in these departments was American-born, or Anglo immigrants, especially those of American-born parents. The foremen were also generally foreign-born.
The ethnic division of labor not only structured the work force vertically, but also horizontally. This can be illustrated by the Swedish dominance on the ore dock and in the ore dock offices, whereas eastern and southern European workers were more likely to be found on the station roll. Two explanations might be given for this. First, in many of the communities closer to the mines, the eastern and southern European population was in relative terms larger, whereas the large Scandinavian population in Two Harbors ensured that a great number of workers of Swedish descent found work there. Second, the hiring practices of the company were based on knowledge of the work force and the importance of recommendations. The hiring practices of the company therefore also played a role in creating this segmentation as ethnic networks and the hiring practices that developed a few years into the 1900s ensured that Swedish foremen could hire, and occasionally also board, their countrymen during ore seasons. The hiring practices were one way for the company to avoid “trouble makers” and radicals in the company as recommendations from loyal and trusted workers were used as a basis for hiring decisions. The ethnic networks and worker agency, in line with the writings of Joshua Rosenbloom, were important factors in connecting Anglo-Americans and Anglo immigrants to skilled work on the one hand and (Swedish) immigrants to unskilled work on the other.

The ethnic networks thus seem to have played a part in the company hiring procedures in order to secure a work force. But this did not only keep radicalism and troublemakers out, but the practice also tended to cement certain ethnic groups in certain departments and to maintain relative stability in the roles of different ethnic groups on the D&IR. This holds especially true when considering the important role played by foremen in the hiring procedure for unskilled workers. In 1910, the ethnic networks in Two Harbors were important both for how workers secured housing, but also with regard to the character of the work they carried out on the railroad.

The Swedish workers in 1920 were, however, in many ways different compared to those employed in 1885. First, in 1920, the Swedish group on the D&IR was more complex from a class perspective with regard to skill, authority and types of work carried out. Swedes worked in all departments of the company. The distinction between different generations of Swedes is, however, important to make in this respect. Children of Swedish immigrants were the most successful group among the Swedes on the D&IR, while the Swedish-born tended to be found as unskilled workers on the ore dock or on the track force. If Swedish-born persons did advance to office work, they had, in all cases I have found, been brought up in America and immigrated to that country as children. When looking at the class pattern for the Swedish immigrants, we find that the situation was fairly similar to that of the 1880s. However, some of the Swedish immigrants had advanced, with a large number of the foremen on the track force being Swedes, as were a great many track workers.

Another change that had occurred was in the living conditions. Housing patterns changed between 1885 and 1920, and many Swedish workers owned or rented
their own homes in 1920. Still, there seems to have been a portion of the Swedish work force that had to move between different jobs and take temporary employment to sustain themselves during different parts of the year. This is indicated in the study by a portion of Swedes residing as lodgers in boarding houses. The unmarried Swedish workers were more likely to be unskilled, while the skilled workers were more prone to be married. The Swedes in the running trades shared their work place to a large degree with English-speaking groups and groups of older immigrants, while the dock and track workers toiled together with Finns, many of whom were new arrivals. A larger number of the dock-workers belonged to a casual work force than was the case with the workers in the running trades. The Swedish workers on the ore dock did however own their own house to a rather high extent compared to the unskilled workers employed during the 1880s, who were almost exclusively boarders and roomers.

There were also some Swedish immigrants who held supervisory positions on the ore dock and some employees on the locomotive roll that were Swedish-born. When adding the second generation, however, the Swedes were represented in a wide range of different occupations in the ore offices, sometimes in a supervisory position, making an image of a more complex occupational structure among the Swedes visible. This illustrates the fact that the identity of different generations of Swedish workers differed substantially given their respective experiences in the American labor market and with the D&IR. The difference between the Swedish immigrants’ and their childrens’ opportunities on the local labor market was, hence, obvious in 1920.

Social mobility among the Swedes on a general level can be described as a function of generation. The American-born generation experienced much of the social mobility, while many of the immigrant workers, both the newly arrived and those with a long history on the railroad were more likely to hold positions as common laborers.

The children of immigrants had a double advantage compared to many of the newly arrived immigrants in that they often had a father or older brother employed with the company, which was some assurance of their loyalty towards the employer. In this way the strategy for recruitment created generational patterns where workers from an early age tended to be connected with the company, by far the largest employer in the area, and then had the opportunity to advance through the ranks.

The generational aspect of the ethnic division of labor is relevant as regards the Finnish group, too. Only one Finnish-born worker was employed as a locomotive engineer, and this man spoke Swedish, so he was probably a Swede Finn. On the other hand, the ore dock roll was full of Finnish immigrant workers, while a small number of the identified firemen and office work employees on the station roll were children of Finnish immigrants. The Finnish population does not seem to have reached the same stability in 1920 as the Swedes had, and it had not
made inroads into skilled occupations and occupations of authority to the same extent.

The Swedes’ position in this mix of ethnic groups and changes in the ethnic composition of the work force seems complex. We can argue that a number of different ethnic groups now in turn functioned as a force capable of replacing the Swedes in less skilled positions at the stations and on the ore dock. However, this image must be adjusted, since the development did not lead to social mobility and access to more skilled work for all Swedes.

An ethnic division of labor was, hence, also present in the 1920s, but a shift had started to occur. Immigrant groups had made it into occupations that had previously been practically monopolized by Anglo-Americans and, to some extent, immigrants from Canada, Ireland or the British Isles. A change to a new generation of workers in the running trades, under the influence of the system for hiring based on ethnic and kinship networks, personal relations between company and employer, and internal recruitment would in the next generation make the Anglo-American group and Anglo immigrants lose their dominant role in occupations with a high status and a high authority.

These changes are part of the structural and material background to the integrative project that led the company to pursue a policy that reached far beyond the confines of the work place. The changes in ethnic composition and the changing company policy must be seen in relation to the Minnesota context and to the overarching political and economic power structure. Overall, the situation for the Swedish group seems to have changed in important ways, and the group, with immigrants and their children, seems stable compared to the work force employed by the D&IR in the 1880s. The Anglo-American group, still dominating occupations of high status, high wages, and high levels of authority, was a much smaller group than had been the case in the 1880s. Then almost half of the workers in track service were Anglo, judging by the names on the payroll, but in 1920 the immigrant element was even more prominent, as hardly any American workers can be found in Lake County. So, the process of stratification in Minnesota seems to have had the result that the differences between ethnic groups in portions of the D&IR labor force actually increased between 1885 and 1920.

The Swedish role in the overall political economy of Minnesota had changed significantly by 1920 as indicated by changes in the class base among the Swedish immigrants and their children, even though indications are that many Swedish immigrants were still transient seasonal workers on the D&IR. One point in relation to my results regarding the ethnic division of labor is that the process of social mobility for immigrant groups was not particularly streamlined on the D&IR, and the case made by much of the earlier research that new immigrant groups tended to move in and take over as day laborers seems only to some extent correct. This is illustrated by the complexity in the class structure within the Swedish working class. Some lines are however possible to draw between groups of immigrants. One reason for this might be that immigration to the area
served by the railroad was still of a heavily Scandinavian character in 1920, and that other immigrant groups were too small to replace the Scandinavians as blue-collar workers.

Judging from what I have found on the structuring of the labor market, the Anglo-American bourgeoisie dominated it through control of the means of production, while Anglo-American workers controlled the skilled portions of the labor market with more secure jobs. The analysis of the ethnic division of labor on the D&IR gives an indication of the type of power relations that existed between immigrants and the American-born as manifested in the structure of class and ethnicity.

Welfare Capitalism and a changing political economy

The Swedish immigrants encountered increasing economic diversification and swift structural changes. These transformations of the political economy, where immigrants tended to make up a larger and larger part of the population, and where social stratification increased steadily, had an impact on how the relations between labor and capital played out. The overarching demographic development is illustrated by the increasingly large proportion of children of immigrants from non-English-speaking countries in Europe, since the work force on the railroad was largely made up of these immigrant workers and their children by 1920. From the end of the 1890s and during the first two decades of the 1900s, management ideas about labor relations underwent a distinct change on the D&IR.

The changes meant, in essence, an integrative company policy where employers tried to shape workers’ lives both on and off work. The era between the 1890s and 1920, approximately, has been called the “Progressive era” signifying a time when a broad political coalition with a reform agenda had a large impact on politics nationwide. Due to the strong influence of progressive thinking on the political arena, which rallied many immigrant voters, capitalists could not control politics as efficiently as they had been able to do during the long and consistent reign of the Republican Party in Minnesota between the 1860s and the early 1890s. Therefore, the Anglo-American bourgeoisie had to make new policy decisions. One result was a more general move towards progressivism as the established parties responded to the political challenge put up by populists and other third party movements. Another strategy was expressed in the work of the Citizens’ Alliance and its program of keeping an open shop and crushing union activity. Both these responses were triggered by the changing ideological climate and were answers to demands from the working class and the progressive reform forces.

On the D&IR, the integrative policy where the workers were supposed to be imbued with an American corporate identity was a third response to the political and social changes in Minnesota during the progressive era. It was also a response to the high turnover of workers that had characterized the early period in
the history of the D&IR. At the same time that tensions rose between groups and workers were, as David Brody has expressed it, cut down in size to fit the productive system, management teachings and bourgeois strategies to counter the unrest emerged. Welfare capitalism was part and parcel of bourgeois rhetoric during the Progressive Era, but the welfare systems were also in many instances a very real and often positive force in the everyday life of workers during the period from the turn of the century to the Great Depression.

The polarization between labor and capital was partly expressed as an ethnic division between immigrant workers and Anglo-American employers that became increasingly difficult to overcome. This created a number of incentives for employers to create systems that would make the immigrant workers loyal to Anglo-American capital. In Minnesota these incentives became strong since the progressive era was a time when immigrants became an important group in the politics of the state and in the labor market. As Shelton Stromquist has emphasized, the language of reform had a profound impact on progressive thinking, and the term “the people” became a platform for reformers that aimed at playing down class tensions and creating social harmony across class boundaries. However, the term “the people” was also highly connected to culture as many immigrants and “non-white” racial groups were excluded. For immigrant workers, the company that hired them often constituted their most intense relationship with American society, and the role of integrating immigrants into the “people”, hence, became an important task for American company managers who also had a self interest in playing down class conflicts. The D&IR and its welfare program therefore became an important vehicle for the Americanization of Swedish and other immigrant workers, but also a means for the integration of the Swedes into the “people”.

**The D&IR workplace**

The company emphasized two factors in the hiring and promoting of workers: high moral standards and knowledge of English. It became clear from the work rules issued in 1907 that the company regarded moral character outside of the work place as very important. This illustrates a will on the part of the company to control, not only the labor process, but also the space outside the work place. These work rules and the agreements between the D&IR and the employees in train, yard and engine service present an image of a regulated, hierarchical environment with built-in mechanisms to secure a reliable long-term work force. It was also, in some sense, a codifying of the social and ethnic structures that had emerged in Two Harbors and Lake County as a result of the establishment of the D&IR. One can therefore argue that the D&IR and the men in charge of the railroad chose an “integrative tactic” in their relation to the work force and the community as the reliability and loyalty of the employed workers was to be guaranteed by lower-echelon officers’ and foremen’s knowledge of the local community, internal recruitment, and recommendations of respectable trade union men.
Apart from the company documents regulating wages, authority and working conditions, one of the most prominent aspects of the development of a company policy for labor relations in the work place was the launching of a safety first program in the mid 1910s and a more general US Steel welfare program launched previously in 1901. The US Steel program included a number of pecunary welfare arrangements, primarily a stock program and a pension fund. The latter seldom applied to workers, and officials and management were highly overrepresented in the pension plans. My analysis shows how support for the stock program was weak among immigrant workers on the D&IR and that the ones partaking in the subscriptions were skilled Anglo-Americans to a very large extent. Swedish workers were practically absent from the subscription lists in the beginning of the 1900s, while ten years later in 1911, the number of Swedish subscribers had increased. Still, the Anglo-American skilled portion of the work force dominated. In this respect Swedish immigrant support for welfare capitalist schemes does not diverge from other immigrant workers in the steel industry during the period. Again, the material dimension of ethnicity should not be overlooked since most Swedes were largely unskilled workers at the beginning of the 1900s.

The formalization of relations to the Anglo-American workers in the running trades and the informal networks and hiring practices that emerged around 1900 in unskilled work, hence illustrate a distinct difference in the relationship between the D&IR management, the Anglo-American skilled workers and the unskilled non Anglo immigrants.

The occupations held by Anglo-Americans had, in general, a completely different relation to the management of the company, while the Swedish workers, both in the 1880s and in 1920, largely belonged to the blue-collar work force. Wright discusses in his work the difference between skilled and unskilled workers in a capitalist economy. This seems important in this respect, since the immigrant workers on the railroad functioned as a complement to the Anglo-American workers, when these were too few to cover employer demands. The ethnic division of labor, hence, seems to have drawn a distinct line between different cultural groups among the workers which correlated to the social hierarchy within the working class. This created different material conditions for workers from different ethnic groups in Two Harbors illustrating how ethnicity was not merely a question of culture, but had very real material consequences. As the ethnic composition of the work force gradually changed, the role of the Swedish immigrants and their children changed. These changes, however, occurred within the structural limits of the political economy which, despite changes in the economic structures and the demand put on the laborers, still to some extent demanded a “floating” labor force of low-wage transient workers.

Given the weak connection between many Swedish immigrant workers and the company during the 1910s, there arose a problem within a societal context that was increasingly characterized by social tensions between classes and between ethnic groups. The codifying of the class structure in the company documents
from the turn of the century was one result of the increasing polarization of society and of an industrial capitalist order of production, an order that also affected the transport industry.

In short, the formalization of labor relations on the D&IR involved an emphasis on control- on and off work- the efforts at trying to secure a work force of skilled labor, a codified hierarchical system of employment and, finally, formalized hiring procedures which in turn created ethnic hiring patterns in different departments. The work rules and other documents regulating labor relations give the impression that the company tried to strengthen the bond to its workers, or rather, its influence over its workers between 1900 and 1918 and the will to control and discipline the workers is evident as intricate webs of social relations emerged in the capitalist order. In part, the hiring practices and the regulations became an integrative project as the ethnic networks, through the hiring procedures, became, at least to some extent, integrated into the company sphere, whereby loyal Swedish foremen played an important role both as recruiters for the company and as providers of job opportunities for Swedish workers. These new company policies, hence, had a profound impact on class, as well as ethnic relations in the company.

The efforts at regulating the relationship between labor and capital were complemented by a strong drive for safety both on and off work during the 1910s. The safety work was to play an important role in the company policy as it became a focal point for the whole welfare capitalist program. This shared interest between workers and management was used to legitimize the welfare programs. In reality, however, the management of the D&IR made a virtue out of necessity as employers had been saddled, through both federal and state legislation, with increased economic responsibility for accidents that occurred on their railroads. The Safety First program became an important part of the integrative project, and the scope of company ambitions to structure the lives of the workers, immigrants and American-born, became its most evident expression. This work in part aimed at disciplining the work force, and in part creating consent around a capitalist order and the worker’s roles in a society where class and ethnicity defined power relations. Management’s ideas on how to discipline the work force on the D&IR, were perhaps best described by President Horace Johnson:

[A]long with the training of our employees to a safety consciousness in connection with our operation we must go beyond the line of our railroad into the community and the home, thus bringing about a fuller realization of the true safety spirit.1058

The scope of this movement on the D&IR was very far-reaching and had the goal of changing the mentality of the work force. This integrative work both had

1058 The Safety Spirit. Printed Speech held by Horace Johnson before the National Safety Council, Wednesday September 28, 1927. p.4
a dimension of countering class-consciousness, and of emphasizing American “behavior” of individualism and temperance. In essence the safety work connected the workplace with the community in important ways. It also offered platforms where management could gain the confidence of the workers and strengthen their relationship to the immigrant workers on the railroad with whom they could meet and discuss issues without giving them official union representation. In this way they could tie all categories of workers, even unskilled workers, closer to the company.

The question for management in essence was how to uphold the newly established hierarchy based on class and ethnicity in Two Harbors. These hierarchies were prerequisites for not disturbing “the order of things” in the labor process as one of the company presidents expressed it during the 1920s. In short, the Anglo-American bourgeoisie needed the consent of other groups in order to uphold its leadership and the hierarchies created as industrial capitalism was established in Lake County and Two Harbors during the 1880s. The most important arena for this work was, according to Gramsci’s theories on hegemony, the sphere outside the workplace, a fact that indeed was emphasized by company management. And the local arena in the railroad town of Two Harbors was indeed the target for company efforts.

**Molding American workers**

One aspect of the welfare program of the D&IR that stands out is the strengthening of the bond between worker and employer. Feelings of loyalty and the strengthening of the connection between labor and capital was to be realized on the D&IR through a broad company welfare program launched around the turn of the century that was increasingly directed towards the community. In Two Harbors, the role of the ethnic networks and the local churches were replaced by various company sponsored activities; first by a YMCA program and then, during the 1920s, by a welfare program directly controlled by the company. The establishment of a Railroad YMCA organization in Two Harbors in 1897 was initiated by company officials, local clergymen and “middle class” reformers.

The YMCA provided the company with a platform for the strengthening of the bond between labor and capital and, in effect, became a bridge between the ethnic communities of Two Harbors and the railroad company, a bridge that the company used to secure the loyalty of the workers. The YMCA program rested firmly on Christian ground, but it became increasingly secularized with a diversified program directed not only, as it had been initially, to transient railroad workers, but to the whole railroad community, including wives and children of workers. This was especially true for the 1910s. The YMCA was, in essence, a representative of “middle class”, meliorist progressivism, but as I have tried to show in this thesis, the movement was ideologically far closer to the Anglo-American bourgeoisie than to the immigrant workers they were supposed to serve and among whom they gathered significant support. Best supported by the workers in Two Harbors and from other parts of Lake County were community
activities such as movie nights and sports events, but visits to shops and a range of other assignments were also carried out by the local secretary. With more than 1,000 members in 1910, the YMCA must be considered to have been strongly supported by a large working class following.

The Safety First program that was launched in the mid 1910s connected the YMCA with the company and the work place with the community as safety first meetings were regularly held in the YMCA building. The fact that the YMCA was increasingly regarded as a community center used for a wide range of activities towards the end of the 1910s indicates the success in rallying support for this company welfare program, not only from the workers, but from the whole community. The company magazine was another effort at disciplining workers, and it also had a strong safety profile with featured articles on safety at home, in the work place and during leisure activities. The company magazine also included pieces directed at housewives and its regular work force, both men and women, and was used to conjure up worker loyalty well into the 1920s.

In this effort of molding loyal workers and a community loyal to the interests of the D&IR, good work ethics, loyalty and temperance were put forth as virtues for the workers on the railroad. But the overarching message was the mutual relationship between employer and employee. The safety first movement, the YMCA and the company magazine can hence be regarded different parts of an effort from the side of the employer to discipline the workers and imbue them with a moral framework connected to the demands of the railroad and a process whose goal was workers’ consent to the conditions imposed by industrial capitalism that had been established with the building of the D&IR and the exploitation of iron ore in Minnesota. In this company system of morals and ethics every worker had his or her place in a hierarchy and skilled Anglo-American workers and officials were presented during work and leisure time as good examples and role models.

The company magazine, The Employes Safety Magazine also aimed to create a sense of familiarity and unity on the railroad and in effect tried to construct a corporate working class identity aiming to connect people across social boundaries. From this perspective, the work of the company to create consent for “the order of things” can be connected to the thoughts on hegemony and power relations presented by Gramsci. The establishment of the YMCA in Two Harbors and the company program should be connected to a larger ideological context of class and ethnic relations where the railroad company established an intrusive everyday influence over workers’ lives via welfare capitalism in order to create consent for a society where Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony dictated the development of the political economy of Minnesota.

Furthermore, the institutions established by the company and the aspirations of using the shop sermons, the lecture halls, the library and the sports facilities of the YMCA were triggered by the gradual emergence of an opposition to Anglo-American bourgeois dominance, a dominance that had been established as Char
lemagne Tower established the railroad and his son arranged the first village elections in Two Harbors in 1885.

The welfare capitalist program that was increasingly directed to the whole community and that was expressed in the language of reform, must hence be regarded as a defense for a newly established structure of power. The welfare capitalist program must also be considered an important part of a bourgeois public sphere, including some members of the petty bourgeoisie which, together with the railroad officials made up the Commercial Club of Two Harbors. The churches and a pro-company newspaper also played important roles in this bourgeois Öffentlichkeit that emerged after the establishment of the railroad. The role of the individuals in the process often dictated to what extent they supported this bourgeois sphere.

But the emergence of welfare capitalism and other bourgeois institutions must be related to the attempts to organize made by workers and allied parts of the petty bourgeoisie in Two Harbors, and their persistent challenge to corporate hegemony which was never entrenched once and for all but was always under negotiation.

**An American multi-ethnic, class conscious working class identity**

Class and ethnicity and their relation to power and hegemony became contested territory from the beginning of the 1890s as the local working class and parts of the petty bourgeoisie organized informal and an increasingly formal political opposition to the established company system based on dominance of the political arena and control of the local community through the respective ethnic churches and strong railroad superintendents in the early 1890s. So, the emerging company program for labor relations should primarily be connected to class and ethnic relations and the struggle over power in the local community. Despite some outbursts of violence against immigrants and a handful of strikes, primarily on the ore dock among the immigrant workers, the relationship between groups became one of non-violence and their different interest found primary expression in the hegemonic processes and the struggle over the everyday culture and everyday life of the community and in the struggle over cultural symbols.

During the 1890s, the opposition became firmly based in the railroad community as evidence shows both strong support for populism among Scandinavian voters and support among the railroad workers for the broad-based organization of railroad workers in the American Railway Union in 1894. The political development in Two Harbors during the 1890s and the early 1900s indicate that the relationship between the D&IR and the workers, many of whom were Swedish immigrants, was, like other places of Minnesota and the United States, increasingly polarized. Voting patterns show increasing support for Socialism and a class based opposition that grew increasingly strong.
Part of the explanation for the strength of the Socialist movement is the dynamics created by the exploitative conditions on the D&IR, the establishment of a railroad town, and the ethnic and social composition of Two Harbors in the 1910s. The community of Two Harbors was divided along ethnic and social lines judging by the composition of the four wards in the city in 1910. The third and to some extent the fourth ward were heavily Scandinavian in character, and the occupations represented in these wards were primarily connected to unskilled manual work. On the other hand, a large proportion of the Anglo-Americans and Anglo immigrants resided in the second ward and, to some extent, the first. The census also convincingly illustrates the role of the ethnic networks that emerged in Two Harbors after a big wave of settlement had occurred in the early 1900s.

The ethnic groups in Two Harbors all created communities with their own churches and close kinship and ethnic networks which played an important part in the ethnic division of labor on the D&IR. There was one Swedish, one Norwegian, one French Canadian and one Finnish community in Two Harbors. The Scandinavian communities seem to have overlapped, while the Finnish community was tightly knit and limited to a number of boarding houses owned by Finns primarily in the second ward. The final network was based on Anglo-Americans and Anglo immigrants and was made up largely of skilled and white collar workers on the D&IR, the Anglo-American petty bourgeoisie and railroad officials. The ethnic component in the community hence seems to have grown more significant.

The Swedish immigrants were an important part of the opposition to company dominance that emerged from the early 1890s and that got an outspoken expression through immigrants entering politics in that decade. During the early 1900s, this opposition had a considerable ethnic component as Swedes and Anglo-American railroad workers opposed company dominance and the many officials and foremen connected to company interests who ran in local elections and who were supported by the pro-company newspaper, *The Iron News*. In 1907 the first Socialist mayor was elected, and four years later, the Socialists won a majority of the seats on city council. The political dominance of the Socialists spanned the 1910s with the exception of a loss to a Citizen’s Progressive League in 1917. The league was a fusion between Republicans and Democrats that emerged in other cities too as a bourgeois effort to counter the success of the Socialist movement.

Socialism in Two Harbors was based on three locals, which were connected to the ethnic communities in the city, the Finnish, the Scandinavian and the Anglo. It was hence an inter-ethnic undertaking that with a base in the language of class was supported by a wide range of social and cultural groups in the community. The political success of this ethnic and class based opposition to Anglo-American bourgeoise hegemony was expressed in a socialist public sphere in the city of Two Harbors. This Socialist Öffentlichkeit was based on weekly meetings of the Socialist locals, a Socialist newspaper that was started in 1913, an everyday cultural program launched in early 1915 that included entertainment as well
as lectures and speeches and where the language of class was an important ingredient. The Socialists also arranged other cultural events like theater and movie nights, dances and music events. This everyday opposition became exceptionally strong in Two Harbors as the cooperation between the ethnic groups grew more profound and because of the success in acquiring the support of sympathetic members of the petty bourgeoisie. The Socialists also built a labor hall in 1917, initiated by the Finnish local.

The Scandinavian local was the strongest during the mid 1910s, and the editorship of the Socialist newspaper was held by a Swedish immigrant for almost two years. The cultural events arranged and the many Swedish and Norwegian Socialist agitators that visited plus the large audiences they attracted gives an impression of the Swedish socialists as the most important part of the class based and ethnic opposition during the decade. The Scandinavian Socialist local, dominated by Swedish immigrants, was also the most outspoken expression of Swedes in local politics. However, during an earlier period the Anglo Socialist club was even more important building on the third party movement and following the move of a former railroad man, Eugene Debs, from the American Railway Union into the American Socialist Party. Many of the men put up for election by the Socialists in the early 1900s were American born and almost all of them had, at some point, worked for the D&IR.

So, despite the important role of the Swedish Socialists and the cultural baggage that is in evidence both in the early Socialist presence, and in the establishment of distinctly Swedish associations such as the Verdandi, Swedish popular movement traditions alone cannot explain the success of Socialism in Two Harbors. Distinctly Swedish traits in the radical identity that emerged in Two Harbors, and although having much in common with the radical Swedes in Chicago, the Swedish Socialist identity formation was distinctly different in this setting. The defensive attitude in Chicago did not exist in Two Harbors, and the Swedish radicals actively sought the necessary cooperation with Anglo-American skilled workers, the petty bourgeoisie and of the many unskilled immigrant workers of the Finnish local. The radical ethnic groups in Duluth described by Richard Hudelson seem more similar in character, and the Scandinavian local in Two Harbors appears to have had intimate contacts with the Duluth local.

The success of Socialism in Two Harbors grew in effect from a strong alliance between the working class and select portions of the petty bourgeoisie of the various ethnic groups. A multi-ethnic language of class held the distinct ethnic communities together in Two Harbors, making it the most Socialist city in the country according to one source. This cooperation between the locals got its most outspoken public expression in the celebration of the Fourth of July, Labor Day and May Day in the period between 1915 and 1917 which illustrates the strength of the process of class formation, and the cultural and social character of the ethnic and class alliance that was forged during the 1910s to oppose Anglo-American bourgeois leadership. Both in civic parades and in local political platforms, the Socialists displayed a distinct multi-ethnic radical working class
Americanism that came to stand as a counterpoint to the increasingly narrow definitions of Americanism displayed by proponents of Anglo-American bourgeois hegemony during the preparedness period in the early years of the Great War. The struggle over symbols such as the American flag and identity labels such as Americanism was evident during this period. The celebration of 1917, however, also illustrates the limits of these efforts and this year marks the beginning of the end for the use of the language of class in public. The ethnic groups that were part of the opposition were distinctly different in social composition and skill level, but were in important ways connected to the D&IR as workers or former workers.

The class formation process as described by Eric Olin Wright, can hence be regarded as strong from the initial success of the Socialists in the early 1900s, and the joint program of the Socialists reinforced the process of class formation, at least for some segments of the working class in Two Harbors. On the other hand, the success of the Socialist locals lay in the cooperation between groups that had similar experiences with the spreading of industrial capitalism, including the petty bourgeoisie engaged in service occupations, especially its immigrant component. In this respect the perception of Eric Olin Wright that cross class alliances are not a form of class formation seems flawed since the process is clearly relational and the boundaries between self employed service workers and railroad wage workers were so permeable. Instead, the understanding of class put forth by Thompson seems more fruitful as the experience of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie in the local community emerged in a context where Anglo-American capital held a position of dominance over politics, the economy and through the establishment of churches in the local community, over the leisure time of the workers too.

Parallel to these bourgeois efforts at controlling the working class, the working class itself established an oppositional culture similar to that described by Roy Rosenzweig in Worcester, Mass., based in everyday experience and claims to control over leisure time. In essence, an embryo of working class culture emerged around the saloons many of which had a distinct Swedish character. The connection between workers and the service-oriented petty bourgeoisie many of whom were former railroad workers strengthened this oppositional culture.

These cross class relations seemed a prerequisite for the strength of class formation of the working class in Two Harbors around 1910. Antonio Gramsci’s perception of the key role of the petty bourgeoisie and the necessity of forming historical blocs is more fruitful than Wright’s in this perspective. The working class and the petty bourgeoisie opposed company dominance, by constructing a distinct language based on class experience and a rhetoric underlining the connection between the “people” of the community, the common experience as working class on the D&IR, and the corporate enemy.

1059 Rosenzweig, Roy. *Eight Hours for What we Will.*
This way, the role of the Swedes was not primarily structured by the cultural baggage from Sweden, even if that mattered too, but from the experiences of American capitalism and the language of class as a way of negotiating exploitative conditions under which immigrants toiled on the D&IR. The strength of this opposition and its ethnic components ultimately sprang from the fact that the language of class held appeal to a broad coalition that transcended both class boundaries and ethnic boundaries. The role of the social and cultural dimensions of the class formation as presented by Thompson, where class consciousness gradually emerges from common experiences of material circumstances seems valid as the Socialist public sphere clearly changed the conditions for the kind of identity formation possible for immigrants during a number of years, and in effect, transformed the cultural and social character of the local community. The most outspoken expression for this is the parade arranged by the socialists in 1915.

A prerequisite for this broad coalition can also be found in the earlier resistance to company dominance as third parties and various reform alternatives were launched during the 1890s, and that, to use Shelton Stromquist’s words “reinvented the people” in response to a capitalist development and a polarization of the American society. The broad coalition in Two Harbors, did also draw from this tradition as there are indications that there was a continuity between the 1890s and the early 1900s in terms of activism and ideas. Not least, this is demonstrated by the fact that the local Socialists chose the term “Public Ownership Party” rather than the Socialist Party label for almost a decade illustrating the connections to the broader third party tradition in Minnesota and the Midwest.

Operating within an inclusive framework that allowed for the petty bourgeoisie to participate in the anti-corporate coalition, the opposition also allowed for the participation of transient Finns who were firmly based in the working class. By their status as recently arrived immigrants and their historic connection to radicalism, they fell outside the Anglo American progressive definition of “the people”. Again the key role of the Scandinavians and particularly the Swedish workers come to the forefront. When scrutinizing the D&IR payrolls in 1920, the Swedish group is much more complex from a class and skill perspective than both the Finnish and the Anglo groups. The class structure illustrates the role of the Swedes as mediators and in-between group bridging the social distance between the Finns, of whom a large majority held unskilled occupations, and the Anglos, among whom large majorities were skilled workers or belonged to the petty bourgeoisie. The Swedish workers on the other hand, can be found both as transient unskilled workers and, albeit only as a small minority, as skilled workers in the running trades.

The example of the opposition in Two Harbors underlines the complexity of Progressive Era politics in Minnesota as the language of class, the language of reform and the demands of big business contended in a struggle for political and cultural power. The Progressive Era did not only mean, to use James Weinstein’s
analysis of the period, the establishing of a corporate ideal neither in the United States as a whole nor in Two Harbors Minnesota. Weinstein’s thesis is relevant since strong and vocal groups pushed for this ideal. On the other hand, the hegemony of these interests was challenged as witnessed both by a national regional, and for this study, local political developments convincingly illustrates. In essence, the development in Two Harbors during the preparedness period and the war shows how corporate America swallowed the meliorist tradition of progressivism and integrated it into company welfare schemes that provided workers with cautious reforms, but that also came to constitute a firm bulwark against any thorough changes within American capitalist structures. This meant that the language of reform became integrated into company structures, something that is evident when reading the company magazine during the early 1920s.

Anglo-American capitalism, war and the integration of Swedish immigrants

Between 1915 and 1921 the local public sphere in Two Harbors was contested social and cultural space as a bourgeois sphere based in company interests and an oppositional sphere based on the activities of the Socialist locals contested for dominance. Through 1916, the Socialist public sphere seems to have been the strongest, but during 1917, both before and after the American entrance into the war, the public sphere of Two Harbors underwent changes as Socialism was increasingly on the defensive and marginalized in relation to the bourgeois sphere reinvigorated by events surrounding the war.

The loss of political power and the strong pressure on Socialists throughout the country during the period contributed to this development. So, despite the surge in activity from the Scandinavian local in Two Harbors, the general tendency from early 1917 was clear. Support for radicalism was on the decline and the support for the idea of the people, as a unifying, cross-class identity, buttressed by a monocultural American identity, grew increasingly strong during the war in Two Harbors. The railroad company became, together with the local press, the most important vehicle for the process of ensuring the loyalty of the immigrant workers towards the company and the country by providing pecuniary, ideological and organizational support to the war effort and the drives for Americanism carried out by the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. This was a Herculean effort where both immigrant identities and radicalism were questioned in Two Harbors as in other parts of Minnesota during 1917 and 1918 and my evidence shows that middle class reformers, company officials and local people connected to the company by business interests were key persons in this work of putting pressure on the local working class to adapt to the new ideas on Americanism and class relations that emerged during the war.

Local Finnish "slackers" became arguments for an anti-radical Anglo-Americanism, and both the IWW and the local Socialist movement, whose Scandinavian and Finnish sections also had strong ties with the IWW were questioned. The criminalization of agitation under vagrancy statutes scared many Socialists away from the movement, and the ones that were repelled seem to have been primarily the Anglo-American workers, as their involvement in Socialist activities decreased after 1917. This is illustrated by the 1917 Socialist celebration of the Fourth of July when not a single word was written about the activities of the English speaking local. Instead, the arrangement was hosted solely by the Scandinavian Socialists. The ethnic component in radicalism hence seem to have changed during the war as the Anglo-American workers found more appealing alternatives than an increasingly stigmatized Socialism.

During the war, the public space of Two Harbors became contested, and a concerted effort from US Steel in crushing the radical movement on the range after the miner’s strike mirrored the reaction against radicalism in northeastern Minnesota. The anti radicalism of the war years created incentives for new radical strategies. A number of these strategies had a base in the weekly meetings of the Scandinavian local. The most prominent idea was to start cooperatives as a response to the high costs of living. Another was the establishing of a Verdandi lodge which was a Swedish temperance organization with strong ties to the labor movement. Radicalism, hence, seem to have found new vitality, but also lost its local mass appeal as the language of class lost its everyday representation.

Another strategy of the local radicals was to use American trade unions as an alternative vehicle for organizing the working class vote and a trade union ticket indeed won the 1921 elections against practically no opposition.

In the post-war period, the program for class reconciliation became evident in the same way that the role of various ethnic groups gradually changed in the project of Americanization. The name change of the local labor-friendly newspaper from the Two Harbors Socialist to the Lake County Chronicle in 1918 mirrors a more general tendency away from Socialism and from ethnic diversity. In its place, both the labor movement, increasingly Americanized with the establishing of a large number of trade unions in Two Harbors in 1919 and the railroad management pushed for a local identity based in citizenship and loyal to the community and to the nation.

The transformation towards an identity based on the idea of the people and in a common community undifferentiated by class interests hence seems obvious, a fact that is further underlined by the events in 1921 when the Scandinavian Socialist local arranged for a speech on a street corner in Two Harbors after which anti-socialist violence almost erupted and where respectable American citizens heckled the speaker. The dominance of the language of class that had been so prominent in the community during much of the 1910s had after the war been replaced by a push for a common identity without class distinctions and based on a single cultural expression, Anglo-Americanism.
changes it brought about in the community of Two Harbors were hence profound in that it reshaped the ideological context for identity formation. This did, however, not occur by chance or by magic, but by local historical actors with a distinct connection to the capitalist project and to the railroad company.

This move for a unified identity based on local alliances, by identification with the American people and on the corporate identity that was promoted through the welfare capitalist program on the D&IR appealed to the new generation of Two Harborites, the children of the Scandinavian immigrants. This new generation of Americans had a distinctly different relationship to the railroad company than their parents as they had generally better working conditions, connected as they were to more skilled or white collar work. They were, hence, included in the company family in a distinctly different way than had the Swedish immigrant generation been on their arrival to Two Harbors. Furthermore, this younger generation had entered the labor market during a period when the company had taken an increased responsibility to decrease accidents and to enrich the leisure time of the workers on the railroad.

These changes seem to have had an impact since only a small minority of the members of the Scandinavian Socialist local, were children of immigrants. Socialism did not appeal to the children of immigrants as it had to their immigrant parents. The decrease in class consciousness hence is also connected to generation as the children of immigrants had distinctly different experiences of the American labor market and of company policies. The stigma put on Socialism during the Great War also unquestionably contributed to the generational decision of not supporting the movement.

One result of the efforts to ensure the loyalty of immigrant communities in Minnesota and to push for an Anglo-American mono culture was the deprivation of immigrant identities. As the language of reform and the language of the war propaganda based on the idea of the American people undistinguished by class interests became increasingly visible in the public debate in Two Harbors, both radicalism and Scandinavian ethnic identity came under attack.

In fact, they were spent forces as the radicals had been deprived their two most important tools in mobilizing the Minnesota working class. The new conditions under which identities could be constructed created new battle lines between groups based on class and ethnicity, and the “citizenship” of Two Harbors turned on the transient immigrant workers and non-citizens who came to be labelled un-American, disloyal and regarded as a threat to their own settled situation and their own employment opportunities. The solidarity between unskilled and skilled workers on the D&IR that had transcended ethnic boundaries in the 1910s had been severed after the war. One aspect of this development has, in all probability also to do with generational differences as the children of Scandinavian immigrants had little connection to unskilled work and had a distinctly different relationship to and perception of newly arrived immigrant laborers who toiled for shorter periods in Two Harbors or on section gangs.
Women who could be supported by relatives or husbands were also excluded from the labor market during the economic recession after the war. This new and quite distinct process of class amalgamation evident in Two Harbors, had one additional aspect: race. At the same time that the radical public sphere folded, it was replaced by other cultural symbols. During the preparedness period, as the process of class formation was checked in Two Harbors, minstrelsy became popular with the workers. And in 1919 and 1921, the minstrel show and blackface became part and parcel of public celebrations in the city.

Despite the fact that most Two Harborites never encountered African Americans and there had never been any labor market competition between white immigrant workers and African Americans either in Duluth or in Two Harbors, this stereotype saw widespread use at the same time that the Scandinavian radical identity and the language of class that came under attack from the Anglo-American bourgeoisie got marginalized.

This black stereotype is best explained as an aspect of a racial identity formation among the immigrants in Two Harbors. David Roediger claims that European working class immigrants generally became not only Americans but white Americans with a racial identity emphasizing the common whiteness of the many European immigrants. This racialized identity created a common cultural and ideological base for the American project of nation building. White racial identity subsumed ethnic immigrant identities more generally, but also played a role for the post World War I project of bridging class and ethnic conflicts as workers adopted and displayed the stereotype in public. The Swedish worker in Two Harbors, hence, became a white American by contrasting his whiteness towards the excluded African American stereotypes displayed in the 1919 celebration of Labor Day.

The post war focus on a mono-cultural Anglo-American “people” without class distinctions seems to have changed the role of the Swedish community from being an in-between group in the radical project based in the language of class to become increasingly Americanized and one part of the American people that adopted the language of reform and transformed the local radicalism. This process also triggered the demand to put up boundaries against other ethnic groups and racial categories. Indications are that the most receptive group for the company efforts and for the broad coalition of patriots during the war were the children of Swedish immigrants.

The gradual defeat of the Socialist movement and the victory of the Anglo-American “alliance” between “meliorist” reform and “big business” that emerged during the war years got forceful expression in a large company program for class reconciliation during the 1920s. The Swedish workers, or rather some Swedish workers, were Americanized through this program, but the program held important social and cultural meaning as not only was the process of class formation reversed, but it transformed the conditions for identity formation.
through the fusion of a corporate, a community and a white racial identity in place of the radical class based oppositional identity that had prevailed during the 1910s. All these separate currents of identity formation were in turn included in the idea of a non-radical national identity and in the idea of a solidarity embracing “the American people”.

The Anglo-American bourgeois project in essence aimed at realigning ethnic and class identities through these new currents of identity formation and made an effort to transmit an American working class identity based on the progressive idea of the American people undistinguished by class differences to its workers. This identity also held a corporate component as loyalty to the employer was emphasized. The identity was also based in community allegiances aiming to downplay the importance of the ethnic communities and networks in Two Harbors illustrated by the community service program of the early 1920s. Finally, this American working class identity was also based on the idea of a white racial identification aiming at strengthening a racialized American identity that gained considerable force during the 1920s. common American identity across cultural and social boundaries. In this process class-based and ethnic hegemony played crucial roles, but what Gramsci has called Dominio, i.e. direct exercise of power, was also an aspect of the development.

The role and results of the welfare capitalist program were perhaps best expressed by the president of the DM&N in a letter published in the company magazine in 1930. President McGonagle discussed the safety work, but his letter also uncovers the role of disciplining the workers inherent in the company welfare programs.

*It is the policy of this company to promote the safety of ourselves, our fellow employees, and of the travelling public, and for this purpose we spend each year large sums of money and much time and labor in trying to secure better and better results in each department of our service. We have had the loyal and faithful cooperation of a large majority of our employees and naturally expect that the remaining small minority will fall into line when they fully understand our purpose and will do everything possible to secure a full and complete cooperation and an enthusiastic support of all the plans we have made to prevent loss of life and limb and to provide recreational advantages for our employees and the members of their families amid pleasant and healthful surroundings... we must be watchful and alert to see that no backward step is permitted and that we move forward to higher and higher attainments in safety and welfare that will set a bright example to those railroad companies who have not yet seen the light and encourage them to follow the pattern set by our men which means so much in promoting the health, happiness and prosperity of all. Let us then try a little harder to banish sorrow and suffering forever... and put us in the forefront of those railways who are making an honest and per-*
sistent effort to surround their employes and their families with safeguards that tend to prolong their lives, increase their earning power and enable them to obtain happiness for themselves by giving happiness to others. In this work we at all times welcome suggestions from our men and these suggestions will be given full consideration and favourable action wherever it is possible to do so. ¹⁰⁶¹

McGonagle’s letter confirms that the safety work was part of a larger program, and that by the time he wrote the letter, in 1930, most of the workers had been socialized into the company system based on a welfare program with an insurance system, good company hospitals, a leisure time program at the YMCA and the company employees’ associations that was established in the mid 1920s. But even though workers more generally profited from what was achieved in the safety work and the offering of athletics within the confines of the YMCA movement, it also becomes clear that labor and capital had distinctly different perspectives on the role of the programs.

What was generally a goal for the workers became means for the employer to secure a long term, reliable and disciplined work force adapted to capitalism. Furthermore, together with a wide range of other forces, the company dominance had, partly as a result of the welfare schemes initiated by the company, also been re-established in the local community evidenced by the election of the future railroad superintendent, Michael Brickley, as mayor of Two Harbors in 1923, a position he would hold for more than 20 years. Despite this strong company dominance, large numbers of the Americanized Scandinavians, many of whom were children of Swedish immigrants, continued to vote independently, giving strong support to the Minnesota Farmer and Labor Party in Two Harbors during the 1920s.

The language of class that had been so successful in mobilizing the working class in the 1910s was, however, not possible to use in the post-war context. As the Socialist public sphere faded under outside pressures and internal strife and the war accelerated the Americanization process of the Scandinavians of Two Harbors the opposition was left with little choice but to adopt a language of reform that was increasingly prominent in the columns of both the labor newspaper published in Two Harbors and the company magazine. The company sought to downplay class conflict while the labor newspaper tried to find new solidarities with which to negotiate their relationship to capitalist institutions.

Because I have analyzed class and ethnicity, primarily Swedish ethnicity, as part of a developing capitalist economy in a local Midwestern context and on one railroad, the question on how representative my study is for larger patterns of

¹⁰⁶¹ Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway, Duluth & Iron Range Railroad, Employes Safety Magazine, June 1930, p.17.
historical development is practically inescapable. Is the development in Two Harbors unique or is it representative of how capitalism spread across the American continent? Is Two Harbors representative of the role of immigrant networks, radicalism and labor activism in the United States? Two Harbors was not representative of the United States as a whole because of the uniquely strong process of class formation in the 1910s. But aspects of the processes described above do have more general explanatory power.

Furthermore, Two Harbors is, after all, one aspect of American history, and it has something to tell us of general tendencies, even though they diverged in strength when compared to the nation. In fact, these strong tendencies and polarizations can teach us something of the relationship between competing paradigms, hegemony and dominance as the battle lines between groups were so sharp and the activities were based in everyday culture rather than expressed through strikes and open conflict between labor and capital. On the other hand, Two Harbors was not unique in having a strong Socialist movement in the early 1900s when discussing communities in the Midwest of its size. In fact, a number of studies on Socialism have established towns and cities such as Two Harbors as places where socialism gained strength during these years.

Neither is the identity formation in Two Harbors typical for the Swedes in Minnesota or the United States more generally for that matter. Large numbers of Swedish workers in the state were influenced by an ethnic leadership with a base in religious and bourgeois values. These interests, in general, worked very hard to align the ethnic group in accordance with the will of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety during the war, and in most contexts, the Swedish-American petty bourgeoisie were considerably stronger and more intimately associated with the Anglo-American bourgeoisie than was the case in Two Harbors.

The Swedish American press generally supported the war once the US joined and, judging by the role that the ethnic press generally played, it also seems to have supported a capitalist order dominated by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. Furthermore, elements of the Swedish church community strongly opposed Socialism. On the other hand, radicalism has been connected to Swedish immigrants in the Midwest in a number of studies, and previous research on Swedish-America has, in light of the radicalism displayed by Swedish immigrants in places such as Two Harbors and Duluth and in the support that the MFLP later received in Swedish counties in Minnesota, probably underestimated the strength of radicalism among Swedish-Americans in the Midwestern states.

But the Swedish working class was clearly divided, and even in Two Harbors which was a city with an exceptionally strong Socialist movement, a strong Swedish community supported the ethnic church and chose to formulate their Swedishness in non-radical terms. These Swedish immigrants seem to have been more drawn to the language of reform, and hence became less difficult to integrate in the company welfare schemes than the Socialists who in reality, never
fully integrated. The role played by the generational split within the Swedish ethnic community is crucial and raises the more general question on immigrants and assimilation: Did the Swedish immigrants ever become Americans or were their children the first Americans of Swedish descent? In some sense, my results support the view that some of the Swedish immigrants never became integrated cogs in the D&IR corporate machinery. On the other hand, many Swedish immigrants seem to have supported the corporate American working class identity that emerged as dominant after the war in Two Harbors. Clearly further research is necessary in this matter.

The Swedish immigrant Socialists were probably part of the small minority discussed by McGonagle as not taking part in the company welfare schemes. The relationship between the distinct working class groups within the ethnic group would provide important clues as to the character of identity formation in relation to ethnic identity among the Swedish immigrants. This, however, falls somewhat outside the scope of this study, but a hypothesis is that the strength of the ethnic petty bourgeoisie, old world values and the ethnic environment encountered by workers played crucial roles in the choices made by Swedish immigrants. The relationship between Swedish American radicalism and the ethnic bourgeois leadership is hence an interesting point of study for future projects.

The hegemonic processes discussed in this work did not fully play out their role in the early 1920s, and there are still some questions to explore in relation to the failure of the local labor movement to take charge of the political development connected to the adopted language of reform in the early 1920s. What seems clear is that radicalism in Two Harbors, despite the identity construction emanating from the Anglo-American bourgeoisie and the D&IR did not die with the Swedish immigrant generation. Instead, it was transformed and the long and persistent tradition of opposition in Two Harbors found new ways of expressing itself. One primary expression of radicalism was the support of the Farmer-Labor movement during the 1920s and 1930s and the children of immigrants, hence, in some sense expressed the tradition of working-class radicalism in a new way as the MFLP depended heavily on working class cities such as Two Harbors whose population continued to voice protest and oppose company dominance.
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