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AN AMERICAN FANTASY -
THE CRUCIBLE OF THE FRONTIER:
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, IOWA, 1870-1920

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS

by
Charles Emery Richards

November, 1971

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PREFACE

Throughout the Midwest there are literally hundreds of small towns, some of them quite cosmopolitan in character because of their urban neighbors, and others seemingly more than a hundred years behind the times. These villages were, at one time, all vanguards of the great frontier movement in American history. In spite of their differences today, during their formative years they displayed a commonality that allows historians to speculate on the nature of the frontier process. This study is an effort to test Frederick Jackson Turner's theory of individualism and social mobility in a particular Iowa frontier community in the period 1870 - 1920. This quantitative examination will supplement the case studies now in existence or in progress to the point at which a larger, more encompassing picture of the social mobility factor can be drawn. By testing certain factors and familiar assumptions in a specific situation "fresh light may be thrown upon old problems and so give rise to further investi-

gation."¹

Two main considerations guided the author in his selection of a location for the study. First, Montgomery County and the town of Red Oak exemplify the frontier of the Middle West which Turner felt was the most "frontier-like" area of the United States. Second, the author's knowledge of the area, coupled with his access to information, proved to be a great asset to the study. For instance, much of the information used in this study was gained indirectly through personal interviews with second or even third-generation inhabitants. It is presented here not because it is a source of precise historical information, but because it offers us indispensable insight into the moods and habits of thought that existed at the time in question. So often one finds in the history of any locale that the inhabitants' perceptions of reality were in effect an entirely different phenomenon from what historians call objective truth.

If a stranger unfamiliar with the mores of the Red Oak area suddenly appeared in the County attempting a field

¹ Robert Lynd, Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture (New York, 1929), 6.

study of local attitudes, he would be at considerable disadvantage. As Albert Blumenthal discovered in his own study of Mineville, small towns are characterized by "close acquaintanceship of everyone with everyone else; the dominance of personal relations, and the subjection of the individual to continuous observation and control by the community."² I might add, a severe distrust of curious prying strangers! As Blumenthal discovered, it is desirable if not necessary to be a resident in order to undertake an intimate inquiry into the inner life of a small community and to make method of the madness that seems to exist in the myriad number of social relationships and events. It was also important for the writer to be sufficiently detached from the community and its life in order to view the scene with some degree of objectivity. With six years of undergraduate and graduate training, I bring to this study something of the detachment and perspective of an outsider. I have acquired some familiarity with the methods of historical research to guide me in the "unusual adventure of studying one's own community."³

2 Albert Blumenthal, Small-Town Stuff (Chicago, 1932), xiii.

3 Ibid., ix-x.

The year 1870 was selected as the base line against which to project the culture of the 1920's because of the greater availability of data from that year onward. Furthermore, the County itself was then organized legally in much the same way it is today, and the ethnic group concentrations solidified in the early 1870's. The year 1920 was selected as the end point not because the dominant settlement characteristics of the foreign and native populations disappeared after that date, but because of the restrictions on immigration which followed soon after the census of that year. In addition, the expansion of the Model T, radio, news media and increased farm centralization was bringing an end to rural isolation at the same time. The local records of the Montgomery County Courthouse at Red Oak provided the basis for much of the socio-economic mobility data. I am assuming that there is a close relationship between economic mobility (non-landed and spatial varieties) and social mobility.

I would like to take this time to thank the many generous residents of Red Oak and the surrounding hinterland who gave of their time and energy to complete this study. Particularly, I would like to thank the personnel of the Montgomery County Courthouse who tolerated this

scholar's ceaseless inquiry. Specifically, I would like to acknowledge my debt to my typist, Marilyn Hanson Nelson. A life-long resident of Montgomery County, she offered both suggestions and creative criticism of certain points in this thesis. Credit is also due to my wife Debra, and my sister Kathleen, who both aided me in this research by providing encouragement when the task indeed seemed gargantuan. Last, but not least, I would like to acknowledge my debt to Dr. Jo Ann Carrigan, my thesis advisor. Without her wise counsel and advice this study would never have been completed.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Located in southwestern Iowa, Montgomery County covers approximately 424 square miles. It is bounded on the north by Pottawattamie and Cass Counties, on the east by Adams, on the south by Page, and on the west by Mills County. Elevations above sea level range from 1350 feet on the northwest to a low of 960 feet on the East Nishnabotna River near the southern border of the County.¹ From the county seat of Red Oak, it is an easy trip over modern highways to either the Omaha or the Des Moines areas. A motorist who passes through Montgomery County on U. S. 34 would hardly notice it, except perhaps as one of any number of Iowa counties primarily recognized for their agricultural contribution. A closer look at the county seat itself quickly provides the image of the typical mid-western pioneer town in maturity: a well-kept, clean, neat place; a small-town square with large old trees and a fountain (where on summer evenings the local high school

¹ Works Progress Administration, Inventory of the County Archives of Iowa (Des Moines, 1941), LXIX, 7.

band plays on the green in Sousian manner); old Victorian homes interspersed with houses of each architectural era up to the present split-level type.²

To see the substance of the community itself, one has to leave the highway and travel through the streets. There the sandstone courthouse dominates the scene. Around the square old store-fronts with their facades of a different age recall another time when the hustle and turmoil of American life was in its infancy. The religious basis of middlewestern agrarian life is symbolized by well-filled church parking lots of every faith on Sunday morning. Saturday is a day of high commercial activity. Even on rainy Saturdays the farmers come in to buy their goods, now from national chain stores instead of the local general stores of the past. One would almost assume at a glance that Red Oak itself still maintains the values by which it lived in 1870---the chief additions being a new high school, a new water tower, and paved streets. But attractive as the visitor may find this scene, he will be at a loss to explain the strong Welsh settlement north of the town, the

² Arthur J. Vidick, Small Town in Mass Society (New York, 1960), 3.

Swedish domination of nearby Stanton, or the evidence of social stratification inherent in the housing quarters of the different communities in the County. All of these require the careful eye of the social historian.

Before beginning such a study, however, one must have a framework of hypotheses and assumptions to be tested. Without this basic framework, even the best observer who approaches the thousands of scattered papers and volumes piled one upon another is likely to feel "like an archaeologist surveying the mounds of Syria or Egypt without a spade, knowing that within the debris will be found temples, workshops and homes"---or in our case, the ethos of a frontier society.³ Without the tools, however, the excavations of population and land records by the historian can be as fruitless as the excavations of insignificant sites by the trained archaeologist. For that reason, it would be wise to begin with an analysis of the whole Turnerian scheme of things in the hope of acquiring some firm guidelines.

3 Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (New York, 1940), 28.

CHAPTER I

THE FRONTIER THESIS IN PERSPECTIVE

The Theory and Its Base

On July 12, 1893, at a meeting of the American Historical Association at the Columbian World's Fair in Chicago, a young professor of history, not yet thirty-two years of age and barely out of graduate school, presented his paper entitled, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." This man was Frederick Jackson Turner, who was to influence American historiography essentially undisputed for the next half century. According to the Wisconsin professor, "up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West." And in this Great West, Turner concluded, "the existence of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development." Defining the frontier as "the line of most rapid and effective Americanization," Turner traced this frontier line from east to west through

the evolution of social institutions. As Turner saw it, "this perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life . . . furnish the forces dominating American character." The frontier itself "promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people." This process of assimilation occurred "in the crucible of the frontier where the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race." Frontier democracy, "born of free land, strong in selfishness and individualism, intolerant of administrative experience and education," according to Turner, rose in a land which furnished "a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past."¹

In viewing the rise of a "new order of American" as the west lost touch with the east, Turner saw it was this democratizing influence which "promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people." The American intellect itself owed its distinctive character to the frontier's emphasis on "a practical, inventive turn of mind . . . dominant in individualism" which was full of

1 Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in The Turner Thesis Regarding the Role of the Frontier in American History, edited by George R. Taylor (Boston, 1956), 1-2, 10, 15, 18.

scorn for the established societies' restraints, ideas and lessons.²

Basically, all of Frederick Jackson Turner's theories can be condensed into two assumptions and approximately five hypotheses, for in spite of his influence in the field of history, he strayed very little from his original statements of 1893.³ The first of his assumptions concerned the role of the frontier environment in transforming the institutions, ideas and psyches of the men in the new communities on that frontier. Assumption number two, according to Harry Scheiber, can be summed up in the notion that "human societies evolve by stages." Thus, the frontier was a "social laboratory" in which "one may observe the more universal process of social development." From these two basic assumptions, Turner went on to postulate five basic hypothesis: (1) over a long period of time, the frontier had a transforming influence because of the existence of free land; (2) there is and was a distinctive American

2 Ibid., 10, 18.

3 The reader is referred to Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Old West" in Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, October 15, 1908, as a perfect example of this characteristic.

character which has influenced the basic American psychology, both politically and socially; (3) the frontier produced the lion's share of the distinguishing features of the American character; (4) this influence on national character was "directly attributable to a process by which the frontier experience was transmitted to the society as a whole;" (5) this process of social change was essentially the same on all frontiers in all successive stages of movement.⁴

Why did Turner attempt to attribute to the frontier so many of the elements of American life? Why did he make this assertion in the first place; and, having made it, why did he not proceed to prove it with definitive case studies? The answer to the first question demands an examination of Frederick Jackson Turner's world. From discussions with Ray Allen Billington, who is himself currently writing a biography of Turner, and from an examination of the existing biographical data, it appears that Turner was basically rebelling against American historiography of the

⁴ Harry N. Scheiber, "Turner's Legacy and the Search for a Reorientation of Western History," New Mexico Historical Review, XLIV (July, 1969), 233-34. In reference to hypothesis five, Scheiber observes Turner felt local variations were outweighed by basic similarities in all frontier locations.

nineteenth century. As Richard Hofstadter noted in his study, The Progressive Historians, the histories of Turner's era were written from the view of the eastern seaboard. Emphasizing European influences and colonial origins, American historians of the Gilded Age, such as Herbert Baxter Adams at Johns Hopkins University with his "germ theory," were inclined to emphasize this continuity of European influence at the expense of a distinctive American force.⁵ In short, perhaps in revolt against his instructor at Johns Hopkins, Turner wanted to show, as he did, that historians "consistently underestimated the role of the West."⁶ To Turner, these "Old World" germs were not the really significant factors in our national evolution. The wilderness had "mastered the European germs by forcing the pioneer to abandon civilized ways entirely and start completely over."⁷

Turner's first attempts at historical scholarship reflected his narrow approach. As James C. Malin noted,

5 Merle Curti, "The Section and the Frontier in American History," in Methods in Social Science, edited by Stuart A. Rice (Chicago, 1931), 353.

6 Richard Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians (New York, 1968), 29.

7 George W. Pierson, "The Frontier and American Institutions," New England Quarterly, XVI (June, 1942), 225.

Turner's first research paper as a junior in undergraduate school at Wisconsin centered on the history of the 648-acre Grignon tract near his boyhood home of Portage, Wisconsin. His M.A. thesis in 1887 and his PhD. dissertation in 1890 ("The Character and Influence of the Indian Trade in Wisconsin") also indicate his regional-western-sectional bias.⁸ As Turner himself said of his frontier thesis, "this paper will make no attempt to treat the subject exhaustively; its aim is simply to call attention to the frontier as a fertile field for investigation, and to suggest some of the problems which arise in connection with it."⁹ In reaction to the contemporary emphasis on European origins, Turner wished to question that assumption and advocate a new avenue of study.

When popular clamor demanded more explanation, Turner published a second paper in 1903 entitled "The Contributions of the West to American Democracy." Once again, he voiced his belief in the frontier as a formative influence on the American character. Turner again asserted that

8 James C. Malin, Essays on Historiography (Ann Arbor, 1946), 39.

9 Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 2.

"free land served to reinforce the democratic influence in the United States." It was "in the West; as it was in the period before the Declaration of Independence, that the struggle for democratic development first revealed itself." From such "prophets of American frontier democracy" as Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, Turner found evidence of the westerners' traditional emphasis on individualism and his resentment of governmental restriction. Indeed, "the unchecked development of the individual was the significant product of this frontier democracy." The existence of great quantities of free land "promoted individualism, economic equality, the freedom to rise and democracy." Turner found "a belief in liberty, freedom of opportunity and a resistance to the domination of class" the distinct results of the frontier experience. He concluded that "This, at least, is clear: American democracy is fundamentally the outcome of the experience of the American people in dealing with the west."¹⁰

Later, in 1914 in a defense of his original hypothesis, Turner declared, "American democracy was born of no

10 Ibid., 19, 22, 25, 28, 30, 31.

theorist's dream; it was not carried in the Susan Constant to Virginia nor in the Mayflower to Plymouth. It came out of the American forest."¹¹ Thus it was that Frederick Jackson Turner, preoccupied with the environment and its forceful if not determinative influence, saw the American democratic character as a crystalization of the frontier experience. Turner's later explanations and developments of this basic theme, as Ray Billington observed, continued to stress the effect of the frontier on American democracy, individualism, and a variety of traits associated with the national character. Time and time again, Turner would underline and reiterate his assertion that "American democracy is fundamentally the outcome of the experiences of the American people in dealing with the West."¹² As John Hawgood makes plain, Turner was anything but a prolific writer; "in over forty years of history teaching and research, he produced only twenty-six short, seminal essays

¹¹ Frederick Jackson Turner as quoted by Benjamin Wright, "Political Institutions and the Frontier," Yale Review, XX (March, 1930), 349. This essay may also be found in Dixon Ryan Fox (ed.), Sources of Culture in the Middle West (New York, 1934), 35.

¹² Ray Allen Billington, The Frontier in American History (New York, 1966), 21, 26.

and one book."¹³ With that one paper in 1893 Frederick Jackson Turner opened a new door to the study of American history. As Dixon R. Fox observed less than a year after Turner's death (1934), "no other academic statement, indeed, has had comparable effect on this side of the Atlantic."¹⁴

Turner's Critics and Defenders

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, the core of Turner's hypothesis was accepted and not challenged by most American historians. Although such critics as Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford attacked Turner, they incorporated the frontier idea "only to take issue with frontier values."¹⁵ At bottom, they agreed with Turner that the frontier was of vital importance in the shaping of the American character. Propagated through the influence of his students, Turner's hypothesis remained

13 John A. Hawgood, America's Western Frontiers (New York, 1967), 388.

14 Fox (ed.), Sources of Culture in the Middle West, 3.

15 Richard Hofstadter, Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier (New York, 1968), 5.

unchallenged until the mid-thirties.¹⁶ Then, as a result of the Great Depression "when many of the basic values of American Civilization were searchingly examined," the frontier hypothesis, according to Ray Billington, was also open to attack because it "embodied too many of those concepts." The depression "made suspect a theory that emphasized geographical rather than class forces." Almost overnight in a sense, historians suddenly awakened to the importance of intellectual history and "looked askance at a theory which stressed the West rather than the Eastern origins of civilization."¹⁷ Anti-Turnerian scholars considered the frontier hypothesis too one-sided an account, since it failed to note the debt of American culture to northern Europe.

In the spirit of this reaction, Benjamin F. Wright, Jr., a professor at Harvard, revolted against the Turnerian concept of a democratic frontier. In his "Political Institutions and the Frontier," Wright demonstrated that

16 Samuel Flagg Bemis, Frederick Merk, Avery O. Craven, Herbert E. Bolton, and other former students maintained the master's thesis basically as it was presented in 1893.

17 Ray Allen Billington, The American Frontier (Washington, 1965), 2.

the Northwestern states had adapted Eastern guides for their laws and constitutions. Thus, a case was made for the Eastern influence. In his study of colonial and post-colonial constitutions in the Northwest, Wright concluded the "men of this section were imitative not creative. They were not interested in making experiments." There was no evolution of institutions in the Turnerian sense. "Democracy did not come out of the American forest unless it was first carried there." The frontier, argued Wright and those who echoed his views, was imitative rather than creative in the realm of government, as it tended to follow the lead of its Eastern counterparts.¹⁸

Other historians revolted against the rural past in an effort to find solutions to the dilemmas of their urban present. As George Wilson Pierson stated, "our problem concerns the present applicability and future usefulness of these frontier essays . . . and certain assumptions and definitions cannot be allowed to pass."¹⁹ Revolting against the concept of frontier individualism when, accord-

18 Wright, "Political Institutions and the Frontier," 354.

19 Pierson, "The Frontier and American Institutions," 232.

ing to Ray Allen Billington, "collectivism seemed to be the answer," Louis M. Hacker at Columbia University condemned Turner for his neglect of urbanization, the industrial revolution, and the rise of class antagonisms as well as other economic aspects of the urban environment.²⁰ As Hacker noted, "Turner and his followers were the fabricators of a tradition which is not only fictitious but also to a very large extent positively harmful." Turner's perverted view of the West and his insistence upon the uniqueness of the American experience (through his emphasis on sectional development) was a "sort of flywheel to balance all political, social, and economic disparities."²¹ In agreement with his colleague at Columbia, Carlton J.H. Hayes, blamed Turner's frontier hypothesis for American intellectual isolation.²² Benjamin Wright concurred; in his judgment, "the greatest shortcoming of this frontier hypothesis of our national development is its tendency

20 Billington, The Frontier Thesis, 3.

21 Louis M. Hacker, "Sections or Classes?" Nation, CXXXVII (July, 1933), 108.

22 Carlton J. H. Hayes, "The American Frontier," American Historical Review, LI (January, 1946), 210.

isolate the growth of American democracy from the general course of Western civilization."²³

At Yale, George Wilson Pierson began to formulate his attacks on the Turnerian camp. Writing in the New England Quarterly (1942), Pierson asked, "How shall we account for the industrial revolution by the frontier?" Pointing out America's musical, architectural, and religious debts to the European continent, Pierson attacked Turner's neglect of the "germ theory." Turner had postulated "a kind of geographic and environmental determinism," making man the passive object acted upon by the frontier environment. Claiming that Turner was "more interested in discovering than in proving anything," Pierson concluded that the frontier hypothesis "disqualifies itself as an adequate guide to American development . . . by what it fails to mention."²⁴

23 Wright, "Political Institutions and the Frontier," 349.

24 Pierson, "The Frontier and American Institutions," 226, 255. Pierson later also indicted Turner for faulty method, loose generalization, and a paucity of exact definitions. See Pierson's "Turner and the Frontier," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXIV (October, 1940), 454-478.

In support of his former instructor, one of Turner's devoted students at the University of Chicago, Avery Craven, began to defend his mentor. As Craven noted in his reply to Wright ("The Advancement of Civilization into the Middle West in the Period of Settlement"), "western man, ever a bit provincial, believed their accomplishments were original and different," whether they were in reality or not. Defending Turner from Piersonian and Wrightian opponents, Craven observed, "Turner certainly realized the contribution to American democracy by the Reformation and by the Puritan revolt at the very moment he was insisting that it was not carried in the Susan Constant to Virginia."²⁵

At the same time, other Turner students such as Carl Becker, Robert E. Riegal, and others, were defending Turner through research work. Almost quoting verbatim from his teacher's notes, in 1928 Arthur M. Schlesinger asserted that "in the crucible of the frontier, men of all races were melted down and fused into a new race, English in speech, but American in nationality."²⁶ According to Merle

²⁵ Avery Craven, "The Advancement of Civilization Into the Middle West in the Period of Settlement," in Fox (ed.), Sources of Culture in the Middle West, 66, 79.

²⁶ Arthur M. Schlesinger, New Viewpoints in American History (New York, 1928), 44.

Curti, another of Turner's students at Harvard, "any conclusion was extremely tentative" to the master of the frontier.²⁷ Walter Prescott Webb at the University of Texas began to widen the applicability of the Turnerian concept to the whole western hemisphere. In place of Turner's sectional, western, American orientation, Webb offered the "Age of the Frontier." Emphasizing the entire western world as the region for his new frontier concept, Webb maintained the core of Turner's hypothesis in his study, The Great Frontier.²⁸

While Pierson, Wright and their schools attacked Turner from the angle of Eastern and European influences, another school began to "level their shafts against the concept of the 'direct' and 'indirect' safety-valves that they found in his writings."²⁹ To quote Turner, "the sanative influences of the free spaces of the West were destined to ameliorate labor's condition, to afford new hopes and new faith to pioneer democracy, and to postpone the

27 Curti, "The Section and the Frontier in American History," in Rice (ed.), Methods in Social Science, 356.

28 See Walter Prescott Webb, The Great Frontier (Boston, 1952); The Great Plains (Boston, 1931); and Webb's "Ended: Four Hundred Year Boom," Harpers Magazine, CCIII (October, 1951), 26-33.

23 Billington, The American Frontier, 14.

problem."³⁰ Beginning in the late 1930's, Turner's critics attacked this safety-valve concept. Turner was charged with holding the belief that in periods of depression the frontier drained displaced workers westward. Fred A. Shannon, Murray Kane, and Arnold Zellner clearly demonstrated that there was little validity in this concept.³¹

Other historians of a geographical bent began to note Turner's preoccupation with space as "an important element . . . with movement always implied as a function of space." Noting Turner's extensive use of maps, James C. Malin declared that Turner had really discovered nothing novel at all; "the fact should be stressed that he was not the originator of either aspect of the frontier concept, the open frontier or the closed frontier, the passing of the frontier or of the application of these concepts to American history." Suggesting that Alfred Mahan and Sir William Crooks, among others, had previously developed the base of Turner's theory, Malin concluded that Turner was

30 Pierson, "The Frontier and American Institutions," 226.

31 To give the master credit, Richard Hofstadter recently pointed out that this idea had "a surprisingly small place in his essays." See Richard Hofstadter, Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier, 6.

essentially "baffled by his contemporary world and had no satisfying answer to the closed-frontier formula in which he found himself involved." Thus, to Malin, Frederick Jackson Turner had borrowed from MacKinder and had developed his own space-concept of history to explain the frontier environment.³²

As the critics of Turner focused their attacks on minute elements of Turner's formulation of the thesis, his proponents quite honestly charged the opposition with losing sight of the basic truths inherent in the argument. Stanley Elkins, for instance, while demonstrating that the basic elements of western political institutions were derived from the Eastern seaboard, did not deny the obvious shaping of those concepts in the western environment. In fact, he expanded the frontier concept into a Webbian sort of universal frontier process.³³ The Turner thesis of the frontier experience was far from dead.

32 Malin, Essays in Historiography, 39.

33 See particularly Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, "A Meaning for Turner's Frontier, Part I: Democracy in the Old Northwest," Political Science Quarterly, LXIX (September, 1954), 323-339.

Contemporary Historical Research
Concerning Turner's Frontier

With the realization that Turner's basic hypotheses and assumptions were subject to question by definitive, objective contrary proofs, third-generation Turnerians suddenly realized Turner's statement of the thesis was relatively unimportant.³⁴ As Billington says, "what is important . . . is whether the thesis itself has validity. This can be determined only by extensive testing---using the variety of tools available to social scientists, with emphasis at the grass-roots level where statistical evidence can be employed." The third-generation group often charges the critics of the 30's and 40's with being as loose and extravagant as they often charged that Turner was. In response to George Pierson's attacks, Billington queried, "was Turner more guilty of inexact definitions and imprecise semantics than other historians of his day---or of today?"³⁵

34 In this neo-Turnerian study of the frontier process, empirical research has become the usual method for testing the validity of Turner's conception as a hypothesis rather than the former method of picking holes in a definitive theory.

35 Billington, The Frontier Thesis, 4.

With the availability of "new" Turnerian material in the master's hand (37 boxes of correspondence and 19 file drawers of 3x5 chronologically arranged Turner notes on the growth and expansion of American civilization) at the Henry E. Huntington Library at San Marino, California, in 1960 Wilbur R. Jacobs and others began to recover "face" for the Wisconsin professor's early efforts.³⁶ Examining the early studies of the Italian economist Achille Loria, Lee Benson found Loria's Analisi Della Proprieta Capitalista to be the precursor of Turner's thesis.³⁷ Hence, Turner's thesis was not a theory strictly "out of the blue," but a careful distillation of contemporary thought. Examination of Turner's unpublished correspondence revealed (circa 1928, letters to Merle Curti and Carl Becker) that he was an early advocate of multiple causation. As Jacobs concluded, Turner refused "to be bound by any narrow, traditional

36 Wilbur R. Jacobs, Frederick Jackson Turner's Legacy (San Marino, 1965), 3.

37 Lee Benson, Turner and Beard: American Historical Writing Reconsidered (Glencoe, 1960), 17. Turner had been aware of Loria's work through his instructor Richard T. Ely at Johns Hopkins. See Ely's remarks in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, II (September, 1891), 27.

description of the historians' domain."³⁸ Through his examination of Turner's seminar notes, Jacobs discovered his inclination toward an interdisciplinary approach.³⁹

Writing to Merle Curti after his retirement from the lectern in 1924, Turner remarked, "as you know, the 'West' with which I dealt was a process rather than a fixed geographical region: it began with the Atlantic Coast; and it emphasized the way in which the East colonized the West, and how the 'West', as it stood at any period, affected the development and ideas of the older areas of the East." In a letter to Schlesinger, Turner wrote, "of course, the Frontier and the West are not identical."⁴⁰ Perhaps, then, historians wondered, Turner was not such a regionalized and provincial observer after all? Perhaps there was more to this nineteenth century hypothesis than met the eye at first glance? In response to this new reassessment of the thesis, William Lilley and Lewis L. Gould's study of "The Western

38 Jacobs, Frederick Jackson Turner's Legacy, 40, 45.

39 Ibid., 83. See particularly Turner's 1923-24 Harvard "American History" lecture notes.

40 Jacobs, Turner, Bolton and Webb: Three Historians of the American Frontier (Seattle, 1965), 8.

Irrigation Movement in Nevada: A Reappraisal" found, contrary to Turner's assertions, "traditionalism, drift, and lack of inventiveness marked the West's own response to the water problem."⁴¹ Other regional studies inaugurated at the same time indicated further the basic weakness of the Turner hypothesis.

As Jacobs noted in 1969, "it is not easy to grasp the essence of Turner's interpretation of American history because there are modifications of his views in both his published and unpublished writings." After his examination of the Huntington files, Jacobs concluded that Turner "appears more and more to have tempered the early generalizations, giving evidence of judiciousness and integrity of mind." His lecture notes for the 1923-24 Harvard class stated: "I have always been interested in the relation between geography and population historically considered"; and in opening remarks for a U.S. History course in 1924, Turner observed, "By proceeding from the study of the frontier and the section I have approached the history of the United States from somewhat different angles than my

41 Scheiber, "Turner's Legacy and the Search for a Re-orientation of Western History," 242.

predecessors, but I have found it necessary to consider the history as a whole, not as the history of the West by itself."⁴²

Perhaps, then, Turner's theory is not as dead as some would wish it to be? To test the validity of the hypothesis, the third generation has encouraged in-depth studies and case histories of developments on particular frontiers. In response to this neo-Turnerian attempt to rebuild the Turner thesis, such studies as the aforementioned Lilley-Gould analysis typify the reexamination. Marcus L. Hansen as early as 1934 wrote, "only when we have comparative social histories can we fully appraise the historical theories of Frederick Jackson Turner."⁴³ Picking up where Turner "left off" in a sense, Billington noted in 1965, "the principal error of his critics was their refusal to recognize that Turner was advancing a hypothesis rather than attempting to prove a theory."⁴⁴ In his readjusted view, Billington admitted that Turner

42 Jacobs (ed.), America's Great Frontiers and Sections (Lincoln, 1969), 38, 41, 83.

43 Marcus L. Hansen, "Remarks," Fox (ed.), Sources of Culture in the Middle West, 110.

44 Billington, The American Frontier, 5.

neglected the frontier of the town promoter; and he recommended further case studies in this area to supplement Merle Curti's earlier (1959) study of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin.⁴⁵ Efforts to test Turner's theory have led to a number of attempts to apply the hypothesis to other frontiers, such as Canada, Latin America, and Australia.⁴⁶

Henry Nash Smith in his Virgin Land as early as 1950 sought to show how the rural frontier settlements reflected the "assumptions and aspirations of a whole society," and were not distinctly of western origin.⁴⁷ Following his example, other historians began comparative studies to determine if the frontier process was a distinctive western phenomenon. John J. Murray has concluded that "the forces which influenced the growth and development of the Middle West are not unique---they are the same forces which shaped the course of civilization in other parts of the United States and the world---but the effects of their

45 See Merle Curti, The Making of an American Community (Stanford, 1959).

46 Wyman and Kroeber both have attempted to apply Turnerian concepts to Europe. See Hofstadter's Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier, 9.

47 Henry Nash Smith, Virgin Land (New York, 1950), 12.

combination at the right time and the right place are unique."⁴⁸ Thus to many, the democratic character that Turner said was "born of the frontier" was only unique in its particular combination. As the late Richard Hofstadter observed, "what Turner was trying to account for was not the evolution of modern democracy in general, but only the distinctive features of its American origin."⁴⁹ In an attempt to save Turner's thesis, Ray Allen Billington and Earl Pomeroy have both suggested an integration of themes compatible with the core of the original thesis. In the light of contemporary findings, Billington redefines the basic thesis as "the process through which the socioeconomic-political experiences and standards of individualism were altered by an environment where a low man-land ratio and the presence of untapped natural resources provided an unusual opportunity for individual self-advancement." Affirming Turner's contention of the opportunity of the frontier, Billington has resurrected a dead maxim. Pomeroy, on the other hand, discovered "lines of cultural influence running

48 John J. Murray, Heritage of the Middle West (Norman, 1958), viii.

49 Richard Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians, 135.

both west to east and east to west." As he said (1955), "the problem of the West can be understood best by historians who disregard arbitrary boundaries in time and space, among other boundaries."⁵⁰

The reexamination of Turnerian thought characteristic of this third generation of disciples is best seen in several recent case studies. Mody C. Boatright in his study, "The Myth of Frontier Individualism" (1968), is typical of this new awareness of the frontier as a process. Unlike Turner, however, Boatright found the frontier to be more conducive to cooperative ventures than to individualistic pioneer exploits. As Boatright discovered of the pioneers of Nebraska, "they came to communities where they could enjoy a corporate life . . . recreating on the frontier the simple agrarian and handicraft economy that industrialism was soon to destroy." Allen S. Bogue, in his "Social Theory and the Pioneers" has found social isolation characteristic of the early frontier settlements. In Iowa, for instance, Bogue noted the existence of "cultural schisms" between Nobscotter settlers and farmers of the

⁵⁰ Scheiber, "Turner's Legacy and the Search for a Reorientation of Western History," 239, 240.

southern stock which "retarded the formation of new group ties." In opposition to Turner's allegation of small individualistic land owners on the frontier, Paul Gates has found great estate builders in many counties of Iowa.⁵¹ Yet, in spite of all of this criticism striking the core of the Turner thesis, as Richard Hofstadter observed, "even Turner's sharpest critics have rarely failed to concede the core of merit to his thesis."⁵²

Frederick Jackson Turner was probably one of the first American historians to see history in terms of repetitive sociological processes. In his reference to American democracy, he did not question its beginnings elsewhere than on his frontier, but he assumed the elements of American uniqueness were shaped by the particular American environment. As Billington observed, "The mature social order that eventually evolved from each pioneer community differed noticeably from those of the eastern regions" from which its settlers came. According to Billington, Turner

51 See Paul W. Gates, "Frontier Estate Builders and Farm Laborers," in The Frontier in Perspective, edited by Clifton B. Kroeber (Madison, 1957), 144-163. In Gates' study it is worth noting that he included the Wearin family as one of his estate building examples.

52 Hofstadter, The Progressive Historians, 119.

felt "these alterations resulted from a variety of forces peculiar to the frontier environment."⁵³ In a sense, Turner did encourage a perverted, regional view of American history since he insisted upon the uniqueness of the American experience---and this aspect was stressed by his sectional-minded followers who failed to grasp Turner's breadth and depth. As Ray Allen Billington pointed out, Turner was concerned with one explanation; not the explanation of the distinctive features of the civilization of the United States.⁵⁴ As Boatright and others have followed Turner down the road, they have taken a wrong turn along the way somewhere.

The Turner thesis itself, in the hands of the third generation, is likely to remain controversial for a long time yet to come. As Hofstadter concluded in 1968, "Today it is easy to believe that historians will still be arguing over and pursuing the implications of his ideas at their one-hundredth anniversary in 1993."⁵⁵ Today, most students

53 Billington, The Frontier Thesis, 1.

54 Billington, The American Frontier, 9.

55 Hofstadter, Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier, 8.

of history see Turner's thesis as a tool essential to the understanding of American character---but only one of such tools available. This is a judgment to which Frederick Jackson Turner would have subscribed, "for he, unlike some of his disciples, realized that man's behavior is too complex to be ascribed to any one influence."⁵⁶ As Gene M. Gressley has recently written, the former preoccupation with the environmental-radical theories of Frederick Jackson Turner "straight-jacketed the conceptual outlook of Western historians for two generations."⁵⁷ The third generation seems to be going in the right direction in their search for a new synthesis and meaning for Turner's ideas. As Billington himself has written of Turner's praxis, "far more research remains to be done; far more frontiers studied in depth; far more theories critically tested, before historians can assume that the validity of the frontier thesis has been proved or disproved."⁵⁸

56 Billington, The Frontier Thesis, 8.

57 Gene M. Gressley, The American West: A Reorientation (Laramie, 1966), v.

58 Billington, The Frontier Thesis, 7.

Frederick Jackson Turner
and Montgomery County, Iowa

Pointing up this need for in-depth research, John D. Barnhart in his study of the Ohio Valley stated that "the Turner interpretation with its emphasis on America and frontier influences needs to be tested by the history of a definite time and place."⁵⁹ Pioneering in such work, Merle Curti studied Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, in the formative years 1850-1880 and came to the conclusion that "our study, both in its quantitative and qualitative aspects, lends support to what we believe are the main implications of Turner's thesis about the frontier and democracy, so far as Trempealeau County is concerned."⁶⁰ Harry Schieber in 1969 emphasized the need for more of such studies. If anyone is to suggest an effective synthesis or reevaluation of Turner's theory, that new synthesis must include the founding and development of new communities on the frontiers,

59 John D. Barnhart, Valley of Democracy (Bloomington, 1953), 224.

60 Merle Curti, The Making of an American Community (Stanford, 1959), 42.

for they were "an important segment of the American experience." As Scheiber observed, "to understand the dynamics and national impact of community-building ventures, systematic comparative studies must be undertaken by scholars who share a commitment to fundamental reorientation of the field." Until such basic conceptual issues are settled, "the failure of the Turner legacy leaves the history of the West a subject in quest of a purpose."⁶¹

To aid in this reorientation, I submit this study of Montgomery County, Iowa, to test Turner's theories of social integration and mobility on the frontier. Turner himself offered the Mississippi River region as "a scene of typical frontier settlements."⁶² According to Turner, the process of the frontier in this area in particular produced an equalitarian attitude where all men were seen as equal. In 1896, Turner wrote in the Atlantic Monthly that the heterogeneous population of the Midwest was "being fused

61 Scheiber, "Turner's Legacy and the Search for a Reorientation of Western History," 239, 245.

62 John Francis McDermott, The Frontier Reexamined (Urbana, 1967), 1.

into a national unity."⁶³ As a process, Turner saw the frontier had moved as a transforming influence "up the valleys of western Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont, into western New York, into Ohio, into Iowa and out to the arid plains of western Kansas and Nebraska."⁶⁴ This free land of the frontier was "always available in the border regions between the wilderness and the more fully developed communities of the settled districts." In this transition area between the wilderness and civilization, the frontier exerted its influence through the presence of vast amounts of this free land. But no area remained a frontier for very long. No sooner was the conquest completed in one area than "new frontiers appeared upon the horizon, and what had once been "West" now became "East."⁶⁵

According to Turner, what the pioneers in this area instinctively opposed "was the crystallization of

63 Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Problem of the West," Atlantic Monthly, LXXVIII (September, 1896), 257.

64 Frederick Jackson Turner, "Dominant Forces in Western Life," Atlantic Monthly, LXXIX (April, 1897), 441.

65 Frederick Jackson Turner, quoted in Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (New York, 1940), 57.

differences, the monopolization of opportunity, and the fixing of that monopoly by government or by social customs." To Turner, "the winds of the prairies swept away almost at once a mass of old habits and prepossessions."⁶⁶ But did they in Montgomery County, Iowa? Or were the "winds of the Prairies" that Turner speaks of too weak in this area to produce such an egalitarian society? To answer those questions, we will have to proceed to what our research reveals.

⁶⁶ Frederick Jackson Turner, quoted in Ray Allen Billington, The Frontier in American History (Chicago, 1964), 342, 348.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING: EARLY SETTLEMENT AND FOUNDING

Montgomery County Before 1859

Montgomery County, like hundreds of other counties established in Turner's heartland in the nineteenth century, was created through an act passed by the state general assembly. Meeting at Iowa City on January 15, 1851, the Third Iowa General Assembly secured the approval of Governor Stephen Hempstead to organize five southwestern Iowa counties. Once the governor approved the act, "defining the borders of Montgomery and other counties," Montgomery was taken from the provisional County of Pottawattamie and officially organized. The next official record we have of the County itself is on January 12, 1853, when the area was attached to Union and Adams Counties for judicial and revenue purposes. On July 3, 1854, Circuit Judge Amos G. Lowe divided the County into two Townships: Jackson Township (now East) including the present Townships 71, 72 and 73 North of Ranges 36 and 37 West; and West Township

including Townships 71, 72 and 73 North of Ranges 38 and 39 West. On August 25 of that same year, the county seat itself was officially established at Frankfort town in Jackson Township (now Frankfort) on the southwest quarter of Section 17 of Range 37 West.¹

Through a population survey conducted in 1851, the S. F. Snider, E. Heady, John Ross and John Stafford families were recorded as living within the confines of the County. Two years later, on August 1, 1853, eighteen voters were in attendance at the John Harris home near Villisca for the county election. In comparing these two listings, it is obvious that between 1851 and 1853 the County witnessed an increase of at least seventeen families---or approximately one hundred people. What is significant about these two isolated population listings is the predominance of native-born American settlers in each.²

Throughout this early period, the County witnessed an influx of native emigres, such as the Carroll and Nelson

1 History of Montgomery County, Iowa (Des Moines, 1881), 327, 334-335. See Appendices M and N for the proper orientation of the various ranges and townships.

2 Ibid., 327-328.

families from Indiana, John Stafford and his family from Illinois, and others. These same native migrants and the other native groups that followed in their steps, set up the legal basis for county organization and opened up the area for settlement. For example, Douglas and Frankfort Townships were organized on March 20, 1857, by these native groups. Douglas Township owes its origins to the efforts of Benjamin Archer, Jacob Shoemaker and A. P. Whittier. Frankfort Township was organized by Dr. Amasa Bond and his family from Indiana, Wayne Stennett and his family, and others. In the same vein, other native groups organized the remaining ten civil townships in the decade 1860-1870.³

As the natives organized their townships, they also began to plot their villages along the streams and paths of the County. Frankfort, the county seat, was already well

³ Ibid., 338, 366, 467, 473, 494, 499, 501, 527, 530, 534. Red Oak and Washington Townships were organized in April, 1859, by J. F. Hendrie and J. W. Hewitt; Pilot Grove Township was organized in April, 1861, by A. B. Milner, John Askey and J. A. Spicer. Sherman was organized by Wayne Stennett with Grant (Joseph Carlisle, T. W. Crandell, Samuel Dunn) and Lincoln Township (P. P. Johnson, James Devore, Melvin Eaton) in July, 1868. Stanton Township was constructed from existing portions of Grant and Jackson Township by Samuel Walker, G. N. Cady and B. W. Sparger in June, 1870 (later Scott). Walnut Township, the last of the twelve, was created in September, 1871, by George Teavers, Isaac Cook and Osmond Runnels (later Garfield).

on its way to becoming the social and commercial center of the County by 1855.⁴ Oro quietly developed around David Silkett's mill two miles north of the present site of Red Oak. Carr's Point developed in West Township on Walnut Creek. Milford was platted by Thomas Donaho on June 29, 1858, around what later would be Smith's Mill. The small community centering on Samuel Morton's flour mill on the Nodaway River began to prosper after 1857. Hiram Harlow's optimistic experiment at Rossville (now "Ross Grove") in Jackson Township was platted in April, 1855. Red Oak Junction began to develop around James Shank's (3/11/54) and Pleasant Jones' (4/12/55) holdings. "The Forks" area between the Middle and West Nodaway Rivers saw the West, Penwell and Gourley families---all native Ohioans---forming Villisca around 1858. And finally, J. W. Patterson's survey in August, 1854, around the Arlington Mill on the lower Nodaway emerged as the village of Arlington. Thus, centering on either grist mills or post offices or both, these native-born Americans organized their towns and

4 Frankfort itself, centrally located on "The Ridge"---the best land in the County, was on the main line of the Des Moines-Council Bluffs route of the Western Stage Company.

counties unaware of the mass migrations of foreign peoples into the County that were soon to follow.⁵

The Influence of the Burlington
and Missouri River R. R., 1859-1869

In large measure, one could say that the foundations of the County itself were set by the development of the Burlington and Missouri River R. R. Company. Through an act of the United States Congress meeting on May 15, 1856, the budding railroads were granted financial assistance in crossing the state of Iowa. According to section four of that act, for the benefit of the railroads, "a quantity of land not exceeding 120 sections for each of said roads, and included within a continuous length of 20 miles of each of said railroads may be sold."⁶ On July 14, 1856, the Iowa General Assembly in special session accepted this grant from the Federal Government on the condition that only rail companies who had at least 75 miles of completed

5 Ibid., 370, 469, 472, 486, 506, 542. Also see W. W. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County, Iowa, From the Earliest Days to 1906 (Red Oak, 1906), 123, hereinafter cited simply as A History of Montgomery County (1906).

6 History of Montgomery County, Iowa (1881), 212, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1881).

track in Iowa by December 1, 1859, be considered.⁷ As a result, a good share of the total number of the western counties of Iowa were granted to the different railroads to subsidize their construction. The B&MRR itself acquired over 287,000 acres of land along the southern tier of counties in 1859. In Montgomery County alone, some 95,000 acres, or almost a third of the County, was granted to this railroad in the following years.⁸

The speculation and rivalry that followed the railroads is a familiar story. Not unlike the early Ohio River railroad rivalries of the 1830's, the burgeoning villages of Montgomery County fought to gain the rail head.⁹ The early development of the County itself, then, cannot be fully understood without reference to the original railroad plats. In 1859, Alfred A. Hebard, a Connecticut native

7 Another provision, later repealed because of the disruption caused by the Civil War, required the same roads to terminate their Iowa lines by December, 1865. See HMC (1881), 212-213.

8 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 65.

9 See particularly Richard C. Wade, "Urban Life in Western America, 1790-1830," American Historical Review, LXIV (October, 1958), and Harry N. Scheiber, "Urban Rivalry in the Old Northwest," Ohio History, XIV (September, 1962), for a comparison.

and graduate of Yale in 1832, crossed the County surveying for the B&MRR right-of-way.¹⁰ Within five years after its organization in 1854, Montgomery County had developed a county seat in Jackson Township with a number of other satellite village centers scattered around Frankfort. The advent of the railroad with Hebard's survey, however, spurred a flurry of town promotion and land speculation that was to change the complexion of the County significantly.

Between Hebard's survey in 1859 and the arrival of the first freight train into Red Oak Junction on November 24, 1869, the County had experienced many noticeable changes. In 1859, the site of Red Oak Junction was little more than a homestead for James Shank and Pleasant Jones. By 1869, Jones' feed lot had become the city square and over 800 people called the new county seat home. At a time when the majority of the Red Oak residents were of the porcine and equine variety, the most prosperous community in the County, and what was of more importance, the county seat, Frankfort, was looking ahead to a bright future. Yet by

¹⁰ Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 108.

1869, only a few stores and crumbling houses remained. The force of change in both cases was the railroad.¹¹

But all was not so serene for Frankfort even in 1859. By that year, the residents of Frankfort were already looking warily upon the developing hamlet of Oro (J. Zuber and David Silkett families) on the Nishnabotna River. When Hebard's survey revealed the new rail route would bypass Frankfort entirely and pass just south of Oro, the "prominent families" of the county seat sought any means available to avoid moving to the Oro-Hebard's Grove-Red Oak Junction area.¹² According to one resident of Frankfort, "the people of Frankfort never for a moment entertained the thought of adopting Red Oak as their town . . . to think of such a thing as going over to Red Oak was as the thought of going over to the Philistines."¹³ Another Frankfort resident observed that "Red Oak . . . seemed given over to saloons, dances, fights and all sorts of sensational

11 HMC (1881), 356.

12 The "prominent families" of Frankfort, according to the contemporary historian, W. W. Merritt, were the Bond, Sperry, Packard, Strait and Merritt families. See Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 50.

13 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 53.

doings."¹⁴

To counter the Oro-Red Oak threat, a Frankfort resident, Jason Bennett Packard, surveyed the area just south of Red Oak Creek on the B&MRR right-of-way for the location of a new town. For a time, the "Flora Town Company of Montgomery County, Iowa" seemed to be the answer for Frankfort. Interest in this enterprise, however, was doomed to failure with the coming of the Civil War. By 1864, Frankfort had definitely lost the struggle for control of the County. Disputing the validity of the county voting results in the first attempt to transfer the county seat to Red Oak Junction (October 13, 1863), the Frankfort residents saw they could only delay and not retard the demise of their settlement.¹⁵ In April, 1864, in the First Circuit of the Third District Court, after the second election's results were again disputed by the Frankfort residents, the county seat was officially transferred to Red Oak Junction. By November of 1864, the county seat was firmly established at Red Oak Junction. With its removal

14 HMC (1881), 445.

15 Ibid., 335.

from Frankfort, most of the settlers of the latter either moved on to the Red Oak area or left the County entirely.¹⁶

South of Oro at "Hebard's Grove," the new settlement of Red Oak Junction, now secure with the B&MRR line running through the new county seat, but anxious to live up to its name, optimistically awaited the development of another rail line south to Nebraska City. As late as 1879, two decades after the first B&MRR survey, three Montgomery County residents, Alfred A. Hebard, Wayne Stennett and Edward Moriaritz, were attempting to organize the "Atlantic, Red Oak and St. Louis Railroad Company" in conference with Jay Gould in Chicago.¹⁷

In these same two decades, land speculation promoted the development of other town sites along the B&MRR main line. A native Vermont resident, Justus Clark, for example, worked with the B&MRR to set up the village of Coburg on the proposed Nebraska City line. The village of McPherson on the B&MRR main line eclipsed the earlier

16 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 48. Amos G. Lowe, in fact, left Frankfort for Council Bluffs, Iowa. His son, Enos, later was influential in the development of what became Omaha, Nebraska.

17 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 332.

settlement of Hawthorne in the same section of Walnut Township. J. W. Patterson's Arlington Mills settlement on the Nodaway, originally directly on Hebard's 1859 survey, lost this advantage to Villisca in Jackson Township in May, 1858.¹⁸ The town of Holmstad itself (later Stanton town), also on the B&MRR, was platted by George Harris, a land commissioner of the B&MRR line, in October of 1870.¹⁹ The town of Elliott, platted by Anselmo B. Smith on the north branch line in 1879, was organized under the auspices of Charles F. Perkins of the B&MRR.²⁰ In short, Montgomery County, typical of Iowa rail counties, owed much of its early development before the arrival of the foreign immi-

18 Evidence here exists to indicate the influence of a number of stockholding Villisca residents who formed a lobby to secure the B&MRR main line. See Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 310.

19 Ibid., 317. In connection with the influx of Swedish immigrants to this village in the 1870's and 1880's, it is revealing to observe that a vast majority of the males either worked for the B&MRR or were engaged in secondary railroad industries. See particularly Population Schedules of the Tenth Census of the United States: 1880, Vol. XXIV: Montgomery County, Iowa, Red Oak Junction, microcopy #102, roll 517.

20 Perkins is generally remembered for his expansion of the B&MRR's descendent, the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad in the 1880's.

grants to the land speculators and officials of the

B&MRR.²¹

The Immigrant Surge

Before one can appreciate the great changes that the immigrant groups unconsciously produced in the County, an awareness of the population base as it existed in the early 1870's is necessary. By 1871, the native settlers had divided the County into twelve civil townships, namely: Jackson (East), West, Douglas, Frankfort, Grant, Lincoln, Sherman, Pilot Grove, Washington, Scott (Stanton), Red Oak and Walnut (Garfield) Townships. The total population of the County in 1870 had reached 5,934. In comparison with the 1860 population of 1256, a gain of approximately 4700 inhabitants through both natural increase and new migration into the County in the decade produced nearly a four-fold increase in the total population size. Turning to Appendix B, the reader will observe the Federal Census of 1860

21 Even the "American Emigrant Company," a land speculation company chartered in Connecticut that secured more than 4700 acres of swamp land in the county before the Iowa Supreme Court voided its title to the lands in Montgomery County vs. American Emigrant Company, is often connected with this rail speculation fever. See particularly Iowa Reports (Chicago, 1892), XLVII (December, 1877), 91.

recorded only 21 foreign-born inhabitants within the County. Thus, the foreign element, which represented a scant 2 percent of the total population in 1860, represented more than 11 percent by 1870.²² By 1880, the percentage of foreign-born residents had increased to more than 15 percent of the total population and remained stable at that level until the end of the period in 1920.²³

At the same time the immigrant groups pushed into the County, other native American groups were arriving. In the five-year period from 1870 to 1875, the County had nearly doubled in population size and in effect gained in those years more than eight times as much population as the County had all totalled twenty years before. What is significant here is that the lion's share of this increase was native, not foreign---or specifically due to American-born natives from Illinois counties or other areas of the Old Northwest, or from other Iowa counties, rather than foreign-born natives of Sweden or Wales who happened to pass through Illinois or other counties in Iowa on their way to Mont-

22 See Appendix B.

23 Ibid. As Appendix C demonstrates, the relative proportion as well as the rank order of foreign-born settlers remained relatively stable throughout this same period in every township.

gomery. Regardless of their meager numbers, however, the latter two immigrant groups were gathering momentum in the early 1870's and would soon dominate the migration history of the County in next decade.

In response to the increasing population pressure in the mining districts of their homeland after the Napoleonic Wars, the Welsh immigrants sought the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Carbondale-Pittsburgh areas of Pennsylvania as a "mecca of the industrial worker."²⁴ For example, the Davies, Owens and Williams families first settled in the Scranton-Pittston coal areas before moving on to the Coal Valley, Illinois, area. Typically, the Welsh families who settled in Lincoln Township between 1869 and 1880 had followed a pattern of settling in one coal mining area after another across the country. These newcomers to the United States, whether they arrived at Boston or New York, were encouraged to move on to the Pennsylvania coal fields, the Ohio fields in the Meigs County area and the Coal Valley, Illinois, area before arriving in Montgomery County.²⁵ It is perhaps

24 Alan Conway (ed.), The Welsh in America (St. Paul, 1961), 9.

25 See Hammond Ambassador World Atlas (Maplewood, New Jersey, 1966), 222, 284, 293.

significant that many of the young men continued to work during the winter months in the Pennsylvania coal areas long after they had settled down to farming with their families in this Iowa county.²⁶

Typical of other Welsh groups who settled in the New World, this Welsh community, fearing the loss of their language and culture, settled en masse in Lincoln Township.²⁷ Centered around the Reverend Owen Owens, who had led his congregation from Pennsylvania to Ohio to Illinois and finally to Montgomery County in 1871, the community of "Wales" began on a base set down previously in 1855 by two other Welshmen, Benjamin Thomas and David Harris.²⁸ Throughout the 1870's and 1880's various Owens, Jenkins, Jones, Roberts, Williams, and Thomas

26 This is based upon the author's interviews with first- and second-generation descendents of Welsh settlers. As to why Owens and his group specifically selected Montgomery County, the fact that producing coal mines were within twenty miles of the settlement may have been a factor.

27 As Conway points out, Welsh immigrant groups in the late nineteenth century, such as the Samuel Roberts group from Llanbrynmair in eastern Tennessee and the Michael Jones group from Bala in Patagonia, tended to settle as a group around one leader. See Conway, The Welsh in America, II.

28 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 319, 320.

families settled in the township. It is significant to observe that nowhere else in the County did the Welsh immigrants settle. As evidenced by their group movement, the Welsh settlers had a strong, cohesive community consciousness.

While the Welsh centralized their settlement at Wales, the Swedish immigrants also began arriving in the County. Leaving their homeland by the thousands, partly in response to the meager harvest years of 1867-1868, many sought the rich farm lands of the American west with the hope of success where before there had been only failure. Between 1867 and 1886, while Montgomery County realized its greatest immigration of Swedish peoples, Sweden herself released more than 450,000 citizens. Like Wales, throughout the early nineteenth century, the southern Swedish countryside had experienced overcrowding to the point that many simply sold their farms and left for the New World. As Ingmar Anderson noted, as early as the 1820's a rumor had reached Sweden that in a foreign country "fertile land was to be had for the asking, with every prospect of

future riches for the owner."²⁹ It is no wonder that these people flocked to the American west when agricultural depression and overpopulation faced them at home.³⁰

Like the Welsh, the Swedish settlers came to the United States and settled here in groups. For example, typical of the Swedish movement into the County, the Ahlquist family arrived in the United States in 1869 and departed immediately for the Warren County, Illinois, region for employment with the B&MRR.³¹ In that Illinois county, the Reverend Bengt M. Halland served the same function as the Reverend Owen Owens had in the Welsh community by binding these foreign families together in a strange land. When officials of the B&MRR offered Halland his choice of their lands for a settlement along the right-of-way in Iowa in April, 1869, he chose to purchase the

29 Ingvar Anderson, A History of Sweden (New York, 1956), 381, 383.

30 Symptomatic of this agrarian crisis of the 1860's, a careful analysis of the naturalization petitions and records in the Montgomery County Courthouse will reveal that without exception the Swedish immigrants claimed original residence in the southern Swedish agricultural provinces of Westergothland, Ostergothland, and Wermland.

31 HMC (1881), 695.

B&MRR lands in the three Townships Frankfort, Scott, and Grant in Montgomery County.³² Settling at Homstad, named in honor of Halland's home village, in Stanton Township, the initial Swedish settlement served as a mecca for other Swedish immigrants throughout Illinois and Iowa.³³ In comparison with the Welsh process of gradual migration across the United States, however, the Swedish immigrants generally came directly to the Montgomery County settlement once Halland and his vanguard had arrived.

Both of these foreign groups then, Welsh and Swedish, settled in closely-knit, compact settlements centering around a church leader. In the Swedish settlement, Halland and his Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mamrelund Church, established in 1870, was the focal point of the settlement's activity. In the Welsh settlement, the Welsh Congregation of the Church of Gomer, organized in 1872,

32 Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 317.

33 Homstad became Stanton town in October of 1870. Stanton Township was also renamed Scott Township in September of the same year. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County (1906), 317.

and Owens served the same purpose.³⁴

Whatever the reasons, whether because of linguistic differences or common modes of dealing with the environment, the two communities became solidified and intensely exclusive. There is no evidence of any significant inter-ethnic relation between the two major foreign settlements which would point to some sort of "united front" to counteract the dominant native American power group in the county at large. On the contrary, the Welsh and Swedish settlements maintained this mutual exclusion policy until well into the present century. This development was not, however, a characteristic common only to the foreign groups in the County---for as we shall see, the native American migrants were as exclusive in their own way as the foreign groups, both socially and physically.

34 It is significant to observe in this case that there is no evidence to indicate that either the Welsh Presbyterians or the Swedish Lutherans cooperated with the existing Presbyterian and Methodist organizations within the County.

CHAPTER III

THE FRONTIER AS A MOVING PROCESS

The Early Period, 1850-1885

According to Frederick Jackson Turner, the "frontiers" of the American west moved from east to west at different speeds.¹ The settlement frontier itself moved more like a twisted, wriggling snake than a closing steel vise. Often it regressed or receded, and often islands were left behind in the process itself. In general, however, the evidence in Montgomery County suggests a larger, slow-moving national process of movement from east to west by generations. Typically one will find the sons and daughters of Massachusetts or New York residents transplanted in the frontiers of Ohio or Indiana in the 1830's and 1840's. These same pioneers, or their own children, characteristically will move on to Illinois and eventually find their way into Iowa and Montgomery County by the 1860's or 1870's.

1 Ray Allen Billington, America's Frontier Heritage (New York, 1966), 24.

After staying for a time in one location, many moved west to Nebraska or Kansas or points beyond. In short, what we have here is a true "frontier process" of movement from civilization to the frontier and a movement of civilization to the frontier at the same time.

In Montgomery County, this process of movement is seen in nearly every family group that settled in the County. For example, William Bacon, who arrived in Montgomery County and settled in Douglas Township in 1873, was born in Steuben County, New York; later moved with his parents to Tioga County, Pennsylvania; and as a young man moved to Henry County, Illinois, before entering this Iowa county with his family.² Many of the original settlers, who founded the governmental system and organized the social matrix of the County, later departed and continued to push westward. R. W. Rogers, for example, who attended the first county election in August, 1853, by 1881 had secured a farm for his family in Montgomery County, Kansas.³ Character-

2 History of Montgomery County, Iowa (Des Moines, 1881), 550, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1881).

3 W. W. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County, Iowa, From the Earliest Days to 1906 (Red Oak, 1906), 367, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1906).

istic of Montgomery County, Iowa, and the settlement frontier as a whole, these early pioneers seemed to have the idea that the grass was greener on the other side of the fence. As conditions in one area worsened, or as more settlers arrived and the area that was once frontier became "civilized" and static, the American pioneer---restless, impatient, and forever looking for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow---moved on. In Montgomery County, this void created by the departure of many of these early pioneers was filled by later native American and foreign-born movements into the County.⁴

At the same time, this frontier process in Montgomery County was not an unconscious, amorphous movement of individuals or undifferentiated masses of people that just happened to develop into a rational scheme of development. On the contrary, group movement and settlement was the rule and not the exception. Even when no large group settled en masse, over a period of a few years, centralization around either a key figure (a Halland or an Owen, for instance) or

⁴ In Montgomery County, particularly, throughout the 1850's and 1860's "Iowa Fever" brought new settlers into the County to avoid other problems, i.e. drought in Ohio, industrialization in Indiana. See Nathan H. Parker, The Iowa Handbook for 1857 (Boston, 1857), 9, for particular reference to this problem.

a specific location (the Nodaway Valley "Forks" region, the Frankfort "Ridge", "Hedgy Hollow", etc.) on the basis of a common origin was the general pattern for native born and foreign born alike.

While this group tendency is most obvious in terms of the two major ethnic groups, the Swedish and the Welsh, it is also apparent in the native American communities in the County. That is, native families whose origins were a particular state tended to settle in close proximity with those of the same state, probably not because of an intense need for security in a new land which characterized the foreign groups, but because of common experiences and close familial relationships. For example, Jason Bennett Packard, who was born in Genessee County, New York, in 1819, moved on to practice law in Jackson County, Michigan, in the 1840's. It was no accident that Packard happened to stop in Jackson County---his grandfather, James Bennett, was one of the original settlers in that county, and his first cousin, Maria Honora Bennett Mills was living there with her husband, Dr. Cassius Andrew Mills. Once Jason Packard had finally moved on to Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1854, other relatives followed. Packard's niece, Tillie Morgan, convinced her husband, Charles H. Lane, to leave New

Hampshire and journey to Montgomery County to set up the Lane Implement Company. After Packard's first cousin, Maria Honora Bennett Mills, died in Michigan, her fifteen-year-old daughter, Mary Louise, came to Montgomery County to live with her second cousins, Tillie Lane and Kennedy Packard. To complete this "Waspish" consolidation, in 1867, Charles H. Lane, W. W. Merritt, and Jason B. Packard journeyed to Glenwood in Mills County to convince a young Monroe County, New York, lawyer, Charles Emery Richards, to come to Red Oak Junction. Mary Louise Mills soon became Richards' wife. Thus it was that the secondary Packard-Lane-Merritt-Richards power group was created.⁵

This tendency for American native and foreign-born settlers to seek security through association with fellow countrymen is obvious if one analyzes the population origins and migration histories of both groups in every township. The following analysis is based on original Federal population schedules of film at the Iowa State Historical Society Library at Iowa City, Iowa. Having computed the percentage of a township's residents born in x, y or z areas

5 Letters from Kennedy Packard to Mary Richards, 1906, Richards Papers, Red Oak, Iowa.

from the manuscript returns, I have supplemented that data where applicable with information derived from numerous other sources.⁶ The utilization of the 1880 census percentages presumes a stationary population in the period 1870-1920, but as no population remains unchanged in every respect for such a long period of time, the reader may justifiably question the neglect of later manuscript census records. However, the basic static character of the area in terms of social mobility is also reflected in terms of population origin and total number---notice, for example, how well the Grant-Scott-Frankfort-Lincoln Township rank proportions of 1880 compare with the 1880-1920 census breakdowns.⁷

In comparing this examination with Appendix B, the reader may be puzzled when he finds that throughout the period 1870-1920 the majority of the inhabitants of each

6 Immigration and Naturalization Files; various fiscal documents; inventories of property; will records; lists of heirs; marriage, birth and death records; and county land transfer records on file at the Montgomery County Courthouse were used to supplement the manuscript returns. Newspaper files of the Red Oak Sun at the Red Oak Public Library were also utilized.

7 The reader is referred to Appendices A-D. Manuscript records after 1880 are also not in existence for comparison.

township were Iowa or Illinois natives. This discrepancy can be dismissed, as the author found more than 80 percent of the Iowa and Illinois natives recorded in the manuscript census years 1860-1880 to be original Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania or New York residents enroute to Montgomery County. After 1880, approximately 36 percent of the Iowa and Illinois residents recorded in the census years 1870-1910 were sons or daughters of Swedish or Welsh immigrants enroute to the County. As a consequence, if all Iowa and Illinois natives were included in this analysis, the results would be misleading. To avoid this, the author has taken the head of the household's native state as recorded in the census and multiplied that figure by the number of minors and adults in that household.

Douglas Township

Organized on March 20, 1857, by native Americans, the Township claimed 467 residents in 1870.⁸ Examining the manuscript census records of that year (7/22/70), we find 30 percent of the inhabitants claiming nativity in Ohio--- and of that 30 percent, a definite leaning towards the southeast counties of Guernsey (Aaron Patterson family),

⁸ See Appendix A.

Noble (James Scott family), and Athens (William Stipe family). Some centralization is also indicated in the north central Ohio counties of Crawford (Frank Sillik, S. D. McGrier), Knox (L. D. Stinemate), and Union (Henry Lott). Twenty percent claimed original birth in Illinois---particularly such counties near the Iowa border as Kewanee (Henry Howard), Henry (Judson Mayhew), and Warren (John P. Norcross). The eastern counties of Tazewell (J. B. Reid) and Morgan (Thomas R. Westrope) also indicate a similar centralization. Fifteen percent claimed Indiana as their native birth state---here a definite tendency is revealed in movement west from Clay (W. F. Brenton) and Parke (J. F. Brenton) Counties on the western border, and Clark (Samuel Archer) and Percy (William Figgins) Counties in the southeast river district. At the same time, some 20 percent of the population claimed nativity in New York State; however, this movement west was from a number of scattered counties such as Franklin (Alonzo Allard), Steuben (William Bacon), Oswego (D. J. Diamond), and Montgomery (Hinton Maybon). The remaining 15 percent are of foreign or native birth and represent a sprinkling of states across the United States, but even here there is order, the majority of that 15 percent moving across the northeastern or north central United

States at one time or another.

We can see the frontier movement as a group process in the migrations of the D. J. Diamond and William J. Bacon families from two non-contiguous counties of New York State (Steuben and Oswego respectively) to McHenry County, Illinois. In 1873 both of these families moved to Montgomery County, Iowa, from Illinois. Again, the L. D. Stinemat and R. F. Tubbs families display a similar pattern by leaving two separate states (Ohio and New York) to settle in Warren County, Illinois. In 1868, the two families departed for Montgomery County, Iowa, together. The William Stipe and Urias Patterson families, the latter from Guernsey County, Ohio, and the former from Frederick County, Virginia, departed from Lee County, Iowa, together for the County in 1853. Typical of the migration patterns seen in this township is the Daniel Chard family. Beginning in Scioto County, Ohio, the family moved on to Henderson and later Whiteside County, Illinois, before arriving in the County in 1869.⁹

By 1880, Douglas Township began to feel the effect of

9 HMC (1881), 550, 554, 561, 563, 566.

the immigrant farmer. According to manuscript census records of that year, the "foreign" element had more than doubled in proportion.¹⁰

Frankfort Township

Organized on March 20, 1857, with Douglas Township, Frankfort Township claimed 437 residents in 1870.¹¹ Studying the manuscript returns of that year, we find some interesting similarities between this township and Douglas. As Douglas Township was dominated by Ohio, Indiana and New York native groups in 1870, so Frankfort displays a similar Ohio-Indiana-New York native dominance in 1870. According to the manuscript returns of that year, only one Swedish native, Daniel Nelson, lived within the township to com-

¹⁰ Throughout this particular segment of this study, a cultural definition of "native" and "foreign" will be used. The term "native" refers to those native-born American residents with native American parents and cultural heritage. The term "foreign" refers to those residents with foreign-born parents who were themselves born in foreign area, as well as those residents with foreign-born parents who were born within the United States and who maintained their ethnicity within foreign settlements across the United States. This differentiation is made to clarify the role of nativism and the forced ethnocentrism characteristic of the descendents of foreign-born settlers in this County.

¹¹ See Appendix A.

plete the 2 percent foreign-born total. The remaining 98 percent native domination was spread among the three states of Ohio, Indiana, and New York. Approximately 30 percent claimed residence in scattered counties of New York State and a nearly equal percentage seems to have emigrated from the Hamilton County, Ohio, region. Thirty-one percent claimed residence in Indiana. The remaining 8 percent is distributed among those who claimed residence in other states of the East, with a few non-Swedish foreign elements included.

In order to explain the later large concentration of Swedish immigrants in this Township, one need only look to the large migrations of the late 1870's and 1880's for an explanation. Typical of this migration period are the Andrew Carlson, August A. Johnson and Alexander P. Anderson families in this Township. The remainder of the Swedish families who did not enter the County with the latter families in 1875 from Sweden did so at various times in scattered individual family attempts at settlement. For example, from 1869 (when Daniel Nelson left Shelby County, Illinois, for the County) to the time of the gathering of the Tenth Census (perhaps early 1880 and the arrival of the Theophile Planck family from Ostergöthland via LaSalle

County, Illinois,) a constant influx of Swedish families into the Township was the rule. Typical of the general pattern of movement for these Swedish groups (1860's and 1870's to the United States---movement to Illinois river counties for work with the B&MRR---arrival in the County in the late 1870's or early 1880's) is the Gustaf Jackson family. Leaving Smaland in 1867, the family arrived in the United States in 1868. From the eastern seaboard, the family moved on to the Henry-LaSalle County area in Illinois near Burlington, Iowa, found work with the B&MRR there, and arrived in the County permanently in 1875.¹²

By 1880 the complexion of the Township had changed abruptly. The manuscript returns of that year reveal 64 percent of the population claiming original residence in three of the southeastern coastal provinces of Sweden: Småland, Ostergöthland, and Westergöthland. By 1880, the Ohio, Indiana, New York native dominance had shrunk to less than 34 percent of the total population. In terms of absolute numbers, the American native group was barely holding its own.

12 HMC (1881), 568, 570, 571, 572, 574.

Grant Township

Created on January 5, 1868, with Sherman Township out of parts of existing Frankfort and Red Oak Townships, Grant's population in 1870 reached a total of 351.¹³

The manuscript returns of 1870, similar to Frankfort Township, show more than 97 percent of the inhabitants claiming native birth in states of the United States. Of that 97 percent, the bulk of the natives emigrated from the three states of Ohio, New York and Indiana. Analogous to Frankfort Township, in 1870 a small foreign element composed almost entirely of Swedish railroad workers from the southern provinces of Småland and Östergötland lived amidst the dominant native group.

By 1880, the same characteristic foreign expansion seen in the Frankfort area is evident here in Grant. According to manuscript census returns of 1880, 51 percent of the total population claimed original residence in Sweden. Approximately 31 percent of the population was born in one of the three states Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois. The majority of the Indiana natives came to the County from the

¹³ See Appendix A.

eastern counties of Henry, Percy and Pickaway. The remaining 10 percent is a mixed combination of native Americans and foreign elements displaying no specific migration pattern.

Typical of the native emigrants into the Township in this period is the Isaac McAlister family. Moving from Pickaway County to Monroe County, Ohio, the family later moved on to Morgan County, Illinois, before arriving in the Township in 1873. The foreign groups, on the other hand, tended to follow a different pattern from this gradual westward movement which seemed to characterize the native groups. Particularly the Swedish element, quite in contradiction to the general movement pattern of either the Welsh groups in Lincoln Township or the native emigrants in this Township, usually moved directly to Illinois from Sweden to gather into a mass before moving west to the County with Halland. The August Johnson family, for example, after entering the United States in 1868, moved immediately to Moline, Illinois, where employment was available with the B&MRR. In company with the Hawkins family, the Johnsons left Moline with Reverend Bengt Halland's group for Montgomery County in 1871.¹⁴

14 HMC (1881), 580, 581.

Jackson Township

Organized with West Township on July 3, 1854, Jackson's population of 1870 (1109) must be analyzed with the realization that Jackson Township (later East Township) at this time encompassed portions of what later became Scott Township. The manuscript census returns of 1870 reveal 97 percent of the population claimed to be native-born American settlers. Of that 97 percent, the overwhelming majority (76 percent) claimed original residence in the two states of Ohio and Pennsylvania. The Ohio natives display a definite pattern of migration from the south central river counties of Brown (Orange A. Fisher), Athens (T. J. Farlin, Clarence Kennedy), Highland (Isaac C. Rains, Jonathan B. Cowgill) and Gallia (James P. Brown). The remaining natives (21 percent) claimed birth in the three scattered states of Missouri, Indiana and New York.

Typical of the native emigrants from the Ohio area, the Lundy, Rains, and Cowgill families moved en masse from Highland County to Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1864. The Thurman and Moore families soon followed their lead from

the same county in 1866---the Orange A. Fisher family, in neighboring Brown County, moved west to the County in 1870. As a process, we can see the B. F. Clayton family beginning in Fairfield County, Ohio---moving on to Miami County, Indiana; Niles County, Michigan; and finally arriving in the County itself in 1871.¹⁵

By 1880, Jackson Township had increased to 2203 inhabitants, but had retained its Ohio character. According to census returns of that census year, 92 percent claimed native birth with the majority of those from the states of Ohio, Indiana and New York. The New York increase (20 percent of the total population) represented the movement of various families from the scattered New York counties of Steuben, Tyre, Cataragas, Schoharie, and Dutchess in this decade. A smaller concentration (14 percent of the total population) entered the County directly from the Delaware County, Indiana, area. The remaining 9 percent of the population displays no specific pattern of migration. While the major share of the foreign-born element in 1880 (8 percent) claimed Sweden as their native homeland, the German immigration total was nearly of equal

15 HMC (1881), 592, 597, 603, 606.

size.

Lincoln Township

Created from Frankfort Township on January 1, 1868, (but subsequently reorganized by the Welsh in 1872), Lincoln Township recorded 195 residents in 1870.¹⁶ The decade of the 1870's produced a four-fold increase in the number of settlers, for in 1880, 885 residents were recorded as living within the confines of the Township. Lincoln Township, not unlike Frankfort and Grant Townships, witnessed initial dominance by native American groups by 1870, with that control being challenged in the 1870's and 1880's by a foreign-born immigrant group---in this case, the Welsh.¹⁷ However, unlike the Swedish element in Frankfort

¹⁶ See Appendix A.

¹⁷ The reader should not assume by the continuing exodus of Welsh settlers in this Township that the Welsh colony was in a state of decline. The Montgomery County immigration records reveal a constant influx of native-born Welsh immigrants throughout the period 1870-1920. Not unlike the Swedish immigration which followed the initial consolidation of that colony at Stanton, the Welsh immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries filled the vacuum created by the departure of other colony members. Initially, the Welsh had to face the native American families in control of the Township, i.e., Pittinger, Haag, Aiken, Buffington families.

and Grant Townships, in Lincoln Township we see the beginnings of a cohesive Welsh colony as early as 1870 in the James Gardner, Samuel Davis and Richard Jones families. By 1880, the Welsh immigrants represented nearly 26 percent of the total population.

Significantly, the Welsh concentration in this Township represents a gradual movement across the United States throughout the late 1860's and early 1870's. According to John G. Jones, who arrived in the United States in 1849, the settlement began in Lincoln Township due to the acquisition of land there by one Llewellyn Evans of Coal Valley, Illinois, in 1870.¹⁸ In any event, when Jones arrived in the Township in 1871, the James Davis, John M. Davis, Richard C. Jones and John E. Wood families were already in the area. The major concentration arrived en masse in 1877 or shortly before that time under the aegis of Reverend Owens.

Characteristic of this group, the early foreign-born settlers settled en masse as well as moving in single family groups. The Jenkin Jenkins and William Jones families, for example, put their energies together and

¹⁸ Red Oak Independent, VIII (January, 1895), 32.

departed from New York in 1871 for Louisa County, Iowa, before arriving together in the Township in 1874. As a process, typical of most of the Welsh settlers, the David M. Davies family left Montgomeryshire, North Wales, in 1869; arrived in New York in the same year; moved to the Scranton, Pennsylvania, area; moved to the Meigs County, Ohio, area; moved on to the Coal Valley, Illinois, area; and finally arrived in Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1870. John G. Jones himself was typical of the Welsh migration pattern. Leaving Wales in 1849 for New York, Jones worked for a time in a lime kiln, moved on to the Lake Michigan area where for three years he served as a sailor, married a native Welsh girl in Chicago, and ended up in Lincoln Township and "Wales" in 1871.¹⁹

Pilot Grove Township

Carved from existing portions of Frankfort Township in 1870 (9/6/70), Pilot Grove Township achieved a population

¹⁹ HMC (1881), 609, 612; Red Oak Independent, VIII (January, 1895), 34. The native settlers display to a lesser extent a similar pattern of gradual movement across the nation. The Haag family, for example, left Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, in 1860 for Stevenson County, Illinois, before entering Lincoln Township in 1873. See HMC (1881), 611.

of 878 residents by 1880.²⁰ Examining the manuscript returns, we find 45 percent of the settlers claiming nativity in Pennsylvania. A strong migration centralization in the counties of Center (Samuel Askey), Mifflin (William Barr), Northumberland (W. W. Bruner), Bedford (George Dolson), Schuylkill (R. C. James), Somerset (Emanuel Lambert), and Huntingdon (John McCracken) seems to indicate an emigration from one locale in the period 1870-1876. It is also significant to note the Samuel Askey, W. W. Bruner and George Dolson families moved en masse to Stevenson County, Illinois, in 1871. Other central Pennsylvania families, for example, the Burr, Lambert, and McCracken families, soon followed the 1871 migration to Stevenson County, Illinois, before emigrating to Montgomery County, Iowa.

The Jacob Focht family of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, is indicative of the settlement process in this Township. Leaving the latter county, the family moved on to Auglaize County, Ohio, finally arriving in the Township in 1856. The remaining 55 percent of the inhabitants display no specific settlement emigration pattern, being

20 Refer to Appendix A.

scattered United States natives and foreign immigrants. This unusually large proportion of settlers with no evident patterning in their emigration may have resulted from earlier departures by the first settlers of the 1860's, since this Township was once the most densely settled portion of Frankfort Township.²¹

Red Oak Township

The most populous township throughout the period 1870-1920, Red Oak was organized in April, 1859, and claimed 3,539 inhabitants by 1870.²² From a careful study of manuscript records of the Township in 1870, we find 34 percent of the total population representing scattered counties of Ohio (Clinton, Lorain, Logan, Highland), 25 percent from scattered counties in Pennsylvania (Washington, Northumberland, Erie) and 19 percent from a number of New York counties with no contiguous borders or other similar characteristics (including Jason Packard and C. E. Richards from Genesee and Monroe Counties, respectively.) The

21 HMC (1881), 623. By the time the first settlers had departed, Pilot Grove Township was no longer a frontier haven.

22 Refer to Appendix A.

remaining 22 percent of the population is a mixture of scattered native-born Americans (Vermont, Bishop; Indiana, Shank, etc.) and foreign settlers restricted to the countries of Wales, England, Sweden, Ireland, Germany and France. Generally speaking, this Township was one of the most heterogeneously based townships in the County, with Welsh, Scottish, Swedish, Irish, German and native American elements living and working in close proximity. If ever there was a "melting pot" or a "crucible of the frontier" in the County, Red Oak Township and Red Oak Junction in particular would be in the center of that phenomenon.

It is worth noting that in the 12 percent of the population that claimed foreign birth in 1880, some semblance of a moving frontier process is discernible. While it is not the large mass movement we are accustomed to viewing, it is nonetheless important. The process of individual family movement reveals a patterning as significant as the group movement characteristic of Lincoln and Scott Townships. For example, the Elijah Gaff family left Norfolk, England, in 1871; arrived in New York City in the same year; moved on to Troy, New York, and arrived in the County in 1875. The Robert McMillan family left Antrim, Ireland, in 1848; arrived in Philadelphia in the same year;

moved on to Peoria, Illinois, and arrived in Red Oak Junction in 1876. The Henry Peterson family, like Swedish families in Scott Township, had moved on to Geneseo County, Illinois, after arriving in the country in 1854. From Geneseo County the Peterson group moved on to Kossuth County, Iowa, finally arriving in Red Oak Township in 1872. The G. Y. Diederiks family left their native Holland in 1857, moved first to Cincinnati and the "Queen City" region of Ohio before pushing on for Pella, Iowa, and Montgomery County in 1868. The Kasper Keil family, in the same manner, left Hesse, Germany, in 1869 for New York City, moved on to Henry County, Illinois, moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, and ended their travels in Red Oak Township in 1876.²³

Individual family movement characterized the native migration patterns as well as the foreign. The Isaih Babb family, for example, left Clinton County, Ohio, and moved to Fountain County, Indiana, and Monroe County, Iowa, before arriving in Red Oak Township in 1867. The Watkins family left Steuben County, New York, and journeyed to Madison, Wisconsin, and Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, before arriving in the Township in 1869. The examples of native family movement

23 HMC (1881), 633, 639, 641, 661, 675.

are as numerous as those of the foreign families.²⁴

Scott Township

Created from the north third of the east half of Washington Township and the east half of Jackson Township in September, 1870, (Stanton Township since June, 1870), Scott claimed 1139 settlers in 1880. Looking at the manuscript returns of that year, one finds 86 percent of the population claiming original residence in Sweden's southern coastal provinces, with a significant 9 percent of the Township's residents from various Ohio counties around Highland County (including the Hiram Huntley, Elias Neil, and Joseph Haynes families.)²⁵ The remaining 5 percent encompasses scattered native Americans (from the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, as well as foreign-born migrants from Iceland, Germany and England).

Centering around the Reverend Bengt M. Halland who arrived in the United States from Halland, Smaland, in 1855

24 Ibid., 629, 646. The frontier as a moving process was obviously still in effect through this family movement from east to west.

25 In this connection it is revealing to observe that the Aaron Milner, William Parker, and William Powers families seem to have followed the Thurman, Lundy, Moore, Rains and Cowgill families of Highland County to the Jackson-Scott Township area.

(and who later moved with his settlement group through the states of New York, Illinois, and finally Iowa in 1871), the Swedish majority in this Township can be typified by the John Ahlquist family who left Halland, Smaland, with the main group in 1869 for Warren County, Illinois, before settling in Scott Township in 1873. Another large family group, the Jona Ossians, left Sweden for Henry County, Illinois, and settled in Scott Township with Reverend Halland in 1870.²⁶

Sherman Township

Created with Lincoln Township in January, 1868, Sherman's population reached 295 in 1870. Turning again to the manuscript returns, we find 36 percent of the population claiming birth in Indiana (centering on the eastern river counties of Franklin, Switzerland and Rush), 14 percent entering the County from scattered areas of Pennsylvania (Warren, Fulton, Jefferson and Chester Counties), with the remaining 54 percent representative of scattered U. S. and foreign families with no specific or significant group movement indicated.

Akin to its neighbor to the south, Red Oak Township,

26 HMC (1881), 695, 700.

Sherman Township was characterized in this period by a strong settler heterogeneity. In spite of this mixture, the reader may be surprised to find the geographical mobility of the frontier process again in evidence. Even in this Township, where no particular cultural group held sway, the process of the frontier was working. The Anthony Binder family, for example, left their native France in 1853 and arrived in New York City in the same year. From New York, the family moved on to Pittston, Pennsylvania, before following the Welsh migration from the same area to Montgomery County.²⁷

Walnut Township

Organized on September 7, 1871, out of existing parts of Lincoln and West Townships, in 1880 this Township was the home for 785 settlers. Examining the census reports of that year, we find 30 percent from the state of Ohio with no specific area emphasized (Meigs, Wayne, Licking, Clark Counties), 10 percent from Pennsylvania with the same lack

²⁷ Ibid., 708. It is not to be inferred from this that the author has evidence to indicate Anthony Binder followed consciously the Welsh exodus to Iowa. However, it is probable that Binder was aware of the Montgomery County area through his proximity to the parents of second-generation Welsh residents here.

of specific migration center (Franklin and Blair Counties), with the remaining 30 percent of the total population from scattered eastern states and foreign areas. Again, the heterogeneity of this Township's settlement is apparent to even the casual observer, as no population patterning or specific immigrant or emigrant group is in evidence here in any significant quantity by 1880.

Yet, even in Walnut Township, as one of the most heterogeneous townships in the County, there is evidence to support the concept of the settlement frontier as a gradual east-west movement. For example, the J. G. McNeil family left Vermont for Summitt County, Ohio; later moved on to Hancock County, Illinois; on to Ft. Madison, Iowa; and finally arrived in Walnut Township in 1869. Also, the Joseph Newcomb family, in a similar vein, left Steuben County, New York, for Galesburg, Illinois, before arriving in the Township in 1870. The point is that the geographical mobility of the frontier process was still very much alive even in this isolated township.²⁸

Washington Township

Created from parts of Jackson and Frankfort Townships

28 HMC (1881), 721.

in March, 1857, by 1870 the Township could claim 426 settlers. The manuscript census reports reveal 20 percent of the settlers were originally Ohio residents with a clear emphasis on the east central counties of Knox, Belmont, and Guernsey. Eighteen percent claimed original residence in scattered areas of Pennsylvania (Schuylkill and Washington Counties). Fifteen percent claimed residence in scattered areas of Indiana. The remaining 32 percent of the total population was born in scattered areas of the United States (Virginia, Kentucky and New York) and provinces of various European countries (England, Canada and Sweden) with no specific centralization origin indicated.

As a process, the settlement of this Township is revealed in the movement of the William Dunn family. Leaving Belmont, Ohio, the family pushed west to Lee County, Iowa. One of the earliest families in the County itself, the William Dunn family arrived in what later would be Washington Township in the spring of 1855.²⁹

By 1880, Washington Township, like the other townships in the County, began to experience a decline in the proportion of native residents due to the addition of

29 Ibid., 727.

foreign-born migrations into the Township. As Appendix C indicates, however, this decline was relatively insignificant for Washington Township. The Township was able to retain its basically native character from 1870-1920.

West Township

Organized in June of 1854 as one of the original townships in the County, West claimed 432 residents in 1870. The manuscript returns of 1870 reveal that 24 percent of the total population was from Pennsylvania with an emphasis on the northeast counties of Bradford, Clearfield, Columbia, and Fayette. Twenty percent originally resided in Indiana's south central river county, Percy. Fifteen percent were born in Ohio. The remaining 41 percent were scattered United States and foreign-born settlers with no specific migration history or origin pattern in evidence. One of the most heterogeneous townships in the County, West also clearly displays the pattern found in the other eleven townships---the moving process of the frontier in terms of geographical mobility. For example, typical of the Township's heterogeneous settlers, the Peter Gallagher family left Ireland in 1851 for New York City. From New York the Gallaghers moved on to Ross County, Ohio; returned to the

East Coast and Rhode Island; moved to Illinois; and finally arrived in the Township in 1876. In a similar vein, the Conrad Strickler family left Fayette County, Pennsylvania, for Knox County, Ohio; moved on to Jackson County, Iowa; finally settling in West Township and Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1876.³⁰

The Later Period, 1885-1920

Experiencing the effect of the great immigrant movements into the County after 1880, all of the townships witnessed a change in the proportion of native and foreign-born residents. Some townships, such as Douglas, Red Oak, Lincoln, Grant, Jackson, and Frankfort, experienced an average 20 percent decline in the native proportion in these years. Other townships, such as Washington, Pilot Grove, Sherman, Walnut, and West, experienced little change in the basic proportion of native to foreign residents set in the early period. Thus, while there was no basic change in either the total population or the ethnic proportion of the County at large in this period, there was considerable ethnic consolidation in the form of the Welsh and Swedish

30 HMC (1881), 734, 739.

colonies in the four Townships Grant, Frankfort, Scott, and Lincoln. In the same period, other townships in the County (Sherman and Washington, for example) witnessed a net decrease in the proportion of foreign inhabitants as the latter moved closer to their own ethnic core.³¹

Between 1880 and 1920, the basic proportion of foreign-born to native-born settlers remained essentially static in the County at large. (See Appendix B.) Within the Townships of Lincoln, Grant, Red Oak, Scott, and Frankfort, however, changes of import were occurring, for it was here that the immigrants chose to build their colonies in the late nineteenth century. The process of the frontier in the sense of constant movement and change was still in action. For example, in Red Oak Township, and particularly in Red Oak Junction itself, the early domination of the community in the 1880's by such men as Charles H. Lane, Alfred Hebard, and Justus Clark was eclipsed by 1920 by a new power structure headed by such leaders as Hiram C. Houghton, Thomas D. Murphy, and David A. Replogle. In the rural areas, the same pattern is evident in Lincoln Township with the Owens-Jones family land concentrations set

31 See Appendices A, B, and C.

down in the 1880's yielding ground to a new Williams-Thomas land group by 1920.³²

Land ownership in the eight predominantly "native" townships and the four "foreign" townships was in a constant state of flux from 1870-1920.³³ Yet while the names in most cases changed in each and every township in the later period, the important factor is that the basic concentration proportions of native-born and foreign-born settlers in the County at large did not. Aside from the foreign concentrations in Lincoln, Frankfort, Grant and Scott Townships, there was a comparatively even migration from the County balanced by a steady immigration to the County in the period 1885-1920. This would in part explain why there was basically no significant change in the constitution of native townships. While it is true that many native settlers departed for the West to respond to gold

32 What is significant in the change of elite control in Montgomery County is the fact that there was no intermingling of the two groups. In a sense this reflected the dominant character of the County as a whole. While the Frankfort, Red Oak, Scott and Lincoln Township power groups were in a state of flux in the period 1870-1920, each retained its distinctive "native" or "foreign" base.

33 All townships except Scott, Frankfort, Grant and Lincoln are henceforth referred to as "native."

rushes or "fevers" of one sort and another, proportionately the same number of natives arrived to take their places--- thus retaining the basic static constitution of the County. The only basic change in the County's population base is revealed in Appendix E: the rural townships in the period 1885-1920 did experience some decrease in population---however, this was due in no small part to the urban movement to Red Oak, Villisca, Stanton, and Elliott---and not to a population movement away from the County.³⁴

At the same time, while the population base remained essentially static in terms of the relative proportion of native-American to foreign-born settlers, there was little breakdown in the social barrier which separated the foreign-born from the native American. As the Welsh and Swedish colonies experienced a decrease in population from natural causes as well as departures, enough new foreign-born groups arrived to add to the natural increase from the birth rate to keep the separateness of the settlements distinct and apart from that of the native-American element. Thus, as

³⁴ There was significant emigration from the Welsh colony in this period, but the addition of new immigrants into that area cancelled that loss. See Appendices A, B, C, E, and F for a breakdown of the County 1870-1920.

one group began to adjust to the new environment, many families (foreign and native alike) moved on and would be soon replaced by similar groups and families---in essence, the process of assimilation for the foreign immigrant was barely begun before the process of the moving frontier pushed the settlers on. Thus, Montgomery County was seemingly forever in a sort of constant "frontier state," never achieving any but the barest of community or county consciousness apart from that of the initial awareness of the native settlement group.

For example, in the Swedish settlement area around Scott, Frankfort and Grant Townships, the period 1885-1920 witnessed a steady increase in the number of immigrants arriving from southern Sweden. A close examination of the immigration records reveals the constant addition of new Swedish families into these three Swedish townships. In fact, the Swedish petitions and intention papers recorded in the Montgomery County Courthouse for the period comprise at least 70 percent of the total number of such entries (the balance being Welsh, Russian, German and English records). For instance, Nels Peterson, who was born in Kristianst ad, Oveshalm, Trance district of Salskay province, Sweden, in 1881, arrived in Red Oak and settled in section

33 of the latter (bordering Grant Township) in 1906. In 1908, Karl Isak Isakson left his native Lindhem, Kisa province, Ostergöthland, Sweden, for Section 30 of Scott Township---replacing Peter Johnson who arrived in the Township in 1882 but decided to move on west from the same section. Generally speaking, most of the Swedish immigrants to the County in this period came directly to the settlement from the Göteborg/Katmar region of southeast Sweden; replaced other Swedish settlers who had moved on west; or expanded out into the fringe areas of Frankfort or Grant Townships that were native controlled at the time.³⁵

In the Welsh settlement, as the sons and daughters of the original settlers grew to maturity, many decided to move on to the West. There was no longer any "free land" open for the new families to homestead. As Turner would say, the frontier in this area at least, was completed. As a result, we find a constant migration away from the settlement at "Wales" beginning in the 1880's and tapering off only after

35 Petition and Record of Naturalization, Montgomery County Courthouse, Clerk of the District Court, Red Oak, Iowa, VII, 1, 2. So many Swedish immigrants applied and filed for naturalization in this period that the County seems to have printed special forms stating the subject's intention to "renounce and abjure forever Oscar II, King of Sweden"---this in contrast to the usual blank form.

the First World War. The Red Oak Sun reported on August 28, 1885, the departure of D. J. Davis and his family to "his new Nebraska farm." Early the next month, J. D. Watson hinted he was leaving with his family for Chase County, Kansas. On the 11th of September, John Moates announced he was following the Watson family to Kansas; Frank James and Everett Roberts had already departed for Wayne, Nebraska; etc. Jumping ahead a year or so, we find Thomas Pritchard and Hugh Jones leaving for Nebraska in March, 1886; D. J. Davis departing for western Nebraska in May of the same year; and D. W. Rees following Davis in June to Brown County, Nebraska. Twelve years later, the pattern is the same---in January, 1898, Thomas Sylvanus and Hugh Jones announce plans to move to the Nebraska colony in the spring.³⁶

It is senseless to present the hundreds of such movements in and out of the two major foreign settlements in detail. That is not the reason for this thesis. The point is, the geographical mobility process of the frontier in terms of conscious group movements was still very much

36 Red Oak Sun, August 28, 1885; September 4, 1885; September 11, 1885; March 19, 1886; June 11, 1886; January 7, 1898. Red Oak Public Library, Red Oak, Iowa.

alive. As the old areas became "civilized" and settled, there seemed to be a desire in every young man to move on over the ridge and see if there was not something a little better. As Marcus Lee Hansen has written of this mobility characteristic of the settlers of the 1880's and 1890's, "with so much land to choose from, one could never be content with what he happened to possess. Somewhere there was a perfect 160 acre tract."³⁷ As Paul M. Gates has observed of the immigrants in this area, "they abandoned their places in Iowa by the thousands in the 70's and 80's for a new try at ownership in western Kansas or Nebraska."³⁸ The Welsh and Swedish settlers, as well as the native American emigrants themselves, seemed determined to find their own special Canaan in the wilderness of the West---if not in this County, then perhaps in the next county, or the next state.

What is unusual about the migration patterns in this period is the absence of any real migration out of the

37 Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (New York, 1940), 61.

38 Paul W. Gates, "Frontier Estate Builders and Farm Laborers," in The Frontier Thesis in Perspective, edited by Clifton B. Kroeber (Madison, 1957), 149.

County from the Swedish settlement in contrast to the native and Welsh movements. At the same time the first native and Welsh family groups began to leave the County, a basically static Swedish concentration achieved a net gain in ethnic concentration through the influx of large numbers of new Swedish settlers. In the early period group concentration was deemed necessary for ethnic solidarity as the immigrants sought security in an unknown land. This early colony, adrift in a sea of natives as it were, was of necessity quite small. With the addition of new immigrants, the Swedish settlement could now disperse. This one-way migration, so different from the two-way process of the other groups in the County, encouraged the Swedish settlements' cohesion at the same time it allowed the colony to expand spatially in this period to the neighboring townships.³⁹ Unlike the Welsh colony, the Swedish colony did not remain static with the total number leaving

39 The new immigrants who fostered this expansion from the initial Swedish settlement undoubtedly were encouraged by the promotional literature of the period. The reader is referred to the newspaper files of the Council Bluffs Weekly Bugle, Chronotype Weekly, and Nonpareil on file at the Council Bluffs Free Public Library. At the same location, various pamphlets and settler's guides also reveal the force of the promoters. Refer to the bibliographical section for specific references.

the settlement balancing those who arrived. As a result, in terms of sheer numbers as well as proportion, we see a growing Swedish settlement population and a relatively stable Welsh settlement population in the midst of a fairly static native population group.

A close examination of the immigrant population mobility figures in the Appendix seems to indicate a tightening rather than a loosening of group consciousness. From the population figures, one would expect to find the Swedish settlement as exclusive as ever in its expansion---since the new population base would be comprised almost completely of newly-arrived immigrants.⁴⁰ In view of the mass movement out of the "Wales" colony in this time span and the subsequent arrival of a similar number of new Welsh settlers, we would expect to find a redistribution of land within the colony with the settlement playing a basically static role in terms of spatial expansion into other townships. To test these assumptions, it is necessary to turn to the land transfer data that is available in these areas.

40 These newly arrived immigrants tended to come directly from Sweden to the County. As a result, with the initial barrier of language to surmount, these settlers unconsciously maintained the ethnocentrism of the first wave of Swedish settlers who came with Halland in the early 1870's.

CHAPTER IV

SOME SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE COUNTY

Foreign Concentrations, 1870-1920

Concentrating on Lincoln, Scott, Grant and Frankfort Townships, as they exhibit an abundance of foreign-born settlers in 1880, we find that the county land sale records in most sections from the first entry through 1920 demonstrate an increase rather than a decrease in ethnic cohesion in those Townships.¹

Lincoln Township

The first individual patent was recorded in April of 1856 by Benjamin Hanbey on Section One (please turn to Appendix S). Up to June, 1917, and J. A. Nelson's entry on the northwest quarter, there is no evidence of any Welsh

¹ The reader is referred to the Transfer of Lands, Books 3, 4, 5 in the main vault of the Auditor's Office, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa. Specific references to section ownership in these townships, as well as the "native" townships, used in this Chapter will be found in these volumes.

settlement in that section. However, as we move deeper into the core of the Township, a definite pattern of Welsh concentration emerges. In Section Two, for example, from Samuel Jones' October, 1874, entry to the end of the 1920's, the land transfer activity that did take place in that Section was within the Welsh community itself. Thus, we see the David E. Woods (1877), Robert Owen (1892), Thomas Jones (1904) and George Cooper (1891) families either selling or annexing more territory in that particular Section.

Movement south into the second tier of Sections reveals a similar pattern. In Section Nine, for example, which is typical of this tier, Griffith Jones (December, 1871), William A. Williams (1873), and Griffith Thomas (1874)---all native Welshmen---secured most of the land granted in the original 1859 patent. Later Welsh settlers in the same Section, such as Thomas R. Williams (1889), secured the remainder of the Section for the community.

Movement into the third tier of Sections in Lincoln Township reveals an even more obvious pattern of Welsh concentration. Indicative of this third tier, the David J. Williams (1870), Lewis Thomas (1865), Henry Thomas (1874) and Andrew Jones (1881) families controlled most of Section Fifteen by the early 1880's. Later arrivals, such as the

Henry Williams (1889), John Owens (1892), Richard Jones (1892), W. R. Williams (1892), and Henry Thomas (1892) families purchased the remaining areas of the Section.

The next tier of Sections south reveals the same concentration pattern. In Section Twenty-one, for example, John G. Jones (1881), William Jones (1882), and Robert Thomas (1887) dominated the Section by 1890. In the next decade, total Welsh control of the Section came with Maguire Jones' purchases (1890-1894). By 1907, the Thomas and Jones families had complete control of the entire Section.

The fifth tier of Sections, typified by Section Twenty-eight, also follows this pattern of Welsh population concentration and exclusive settlement from 1870-1920. In this Section, from the Griffith Jones purchase in 1879, William R. Jones (1880) and William Owen (1884) were able to share with Jones the domination of the entire Section by 1885. From 1885 to the end of the period in 1920 there is an unbroken Welsh domination and control of 90 to 100 percent of this Section.

Not surprisingly, the sixth tier, or the extreme southern string of Sections in the Township bordering the native-dominated Walnut Township, is similar to the first

tier of Sections; Welsh land ownership is marginal in comparison to the non-Welsh element in control. Section Thirty-three, for example, is indicative of this tier--- only the Watkins Jones family controlling the northeast quarter in March, 1884, is Welsh. By 1920, this Section had no Welsh native families in residence at all.

In Lincoln Township, then, we find a native base arriving in the 1850's and early 1860's being supplanted by Welsh immigrants centered around the Reverend Owen Owens in the period 1870-1890. By 1890, in varying degrees from the center of the Township and the Welsh community of "Wales" on Section Sixteen, the Welsh had concentrated control of their community and secured a tight settlement of Welsh land owners. By 1907, 80 to 95 percent (508-572 residents out of 636) of the Township was owned by native-born Welshmen on 80-120 acre farms. In 1920, surprisingly enough, the same families' descendents---Jones, Williams, Woods, and Andrews---controlled even more of the Township. As late as 1930, the concentration of Welsh families had decreased in total number but had increased in the amount of total land accumulated due to the amalgamation of the Owens and Evans holdings by the Jones, Williams and Thomas families.

Centering on the Welsh town settlement of "Wales", an

unincorporated farm center in Sections Sixteen, Twenty-three and Twenty-four, the Welsh population was isolated from the other parts of the County through its use of the native Welsh language and the natural cohesiveness a foreign group promotes through the perpetuation of native customs. An examination of the marriage records demonstrates that social cohesion followed this settlement centralization throughout the 1870-1920 period, i.e., Thomas Roberts to Mary A. Junkin in January, 1875; Robert Owens to Laura Jones in May, 1879; David Vaughn Williams to Edna Owens in September, 1919.² At the same time, movement in and out of the settlement brought new faces into the community and perpetuated this exclusive tendency at the same time it prevented assimilation. The Red Oak Sun reported in June, 1885, for example, that "the Reverend Samuel S. Jones has gone to New York and from there will go to the old country on a visit." In August of the same year, the Sun reported "D. J. Jones has invested part of the proceeds of the sale of his farm in a section of land in Nebraska

² The reader is referred to the Marriage Register, Book I, 99, 148; and Marriage Record, Volume XII, 187, both in the Office of the Clerk of the District Court, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

and intends moving to that state in the course of a few months." The next month there is evidence other Welsh settlers were leaving the colony; i.e., John Gaff went east to visit his mother in Peru, Illinois; Mrs. William Mason from Platte Center, Nebraska, visited her parents; J. D. Watson hinted he was moving to Chase County, Kansas. At the same time, in September, 1885, the Sun reported "Thomas Williams and Owen Jones have gone to Nebraska in search of land." While Williams and Jones searched for the "perfect 160 acres," others came to take their place.³

"Wales" and the settlement in Lincoln Township was not a depopulated Township with the mass moving on to the Platte Valley, Nebraska, area or to Kansas. On the contrary, in this Township there is what one might call "population pressure." In October, 1885, the Sun reported the arrival of the John Davies family from Wales. According to the Sun, "they will make their home with the Job Sylvanus," until their house is ready."⁴ As some members of the settlement moved west to Nebraska or Kansas (i.e., D. J. Davis,

3 Red Oak Sun, June 5, 1885; August 28, 1885; September 4-September 11, 1885.

4 Ibid., October 30, 1885.

Owen Jones, D. W. Reis, David Rees), other engaged in new agricultural exploits in the Township and reacquaintance-ship with earlier settlements to the east (i.e., T. D. Thomas move to eastern Iowa). In fact, the movement back and forth from Pennsylvania to "Wales," or from the Wayne County, Nebraska, area to "Wales," or from "Wales" to Wales proper up to 1900 is striking evidence of social cohesion within this group.⁵

Contributing to this "population pressure" effect was the increased migration after 1880 into the Township from Wales proper and from American Welsh settlements around the country. The naturalization records of the County show Walter Jones and his family arriving in 1882, more Jones family relatives arriving in 1883, and the process continuing unbroken to John Davis' entry in 1898. Native Welsh immigration continued beyond 1898. In 1906 Thomas Pierce Williams and his family left Carnarvon, North Wales, for Lincoln Township; in 1913, Alfred John Griffin left Cardiff, South Wales, for the settlement; and even as late

⁵ The movement of first generation and native-born Welsh and Swedish immigrants back and forth to the "old country" is indicative of their reluctance to break ties with the homeland and become "Americanized."

as 1921, David Percy Jones arrived in New York from Meriod, Wales, on his way to "Wales." The period 1880-1920, then, witnessed a constant influx of scores of native Welshmen with their families to the settlement.⁶

By 1920, then, there was a centralized Welsh settlement in Lincoln Township. Eighty to 90 percent of the land was either owned or controlled by native Welshmen. Marriage was characteristically endogamous. Population mobility characterized the settlement with new ideas and individuals either passing through or settling. In short, assimilation by the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture in Montgomery County had made little progress. By the end of the period (1920), Lincoln Township and the "Wales" community had its own schools (administered by the local board of education), its own magazine (many subscribed to the Utica, New York Y Cyfaill o'r Hen Wlad), its own newspapers (most received the Pittsburgh Welsh paper), its own churches (Welsh Congregation of the Church of Gomer), and its own society distinct from that of the native-American culture.

⁶ The reader is referred specifically to the Petition and Naturalization files, Books IV-VII, in the basement vault of the Clerk of the District Court's Office, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa. See particularly VII, 6; VIII, 12; and VIII, 28.

In 1906, a local antiquarian noted in passing in a history of the County, "the Welsh are a patriotic, law-abiding people and quickly imbibe the spirit of our institutions."⁷ If this was true, it appears it was a diluted spirit if any at all. As Marcus Hansen noted, "as long as any community retained its own language, amalgamation with American social life was impossible."⁸ This was one such community.

Scott Township

One of the three townships selected by the Reverend Bengt M. Halland in 1869 for the original Swedish settlement, Scott Township (originally Stanton Township) with Stanton town at its center became the focus of the Swedish concentration. It will not be a surprise to the reader, therefore, to find that 90-100 percent of the land holdings in the Township in the period 1875-1920 were Swedish. In this Township, a distinct pattern appears. Every alternate section of land, originally granted to the B&MRR (3/23/59),

7 W. W. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County, Iowa, From the Earliest Days to 1906 (Red Oak, 1906), 320, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1906).

8 Marcus Lee Hansen, The Immigrant in American History (New York, 1940), 203.

was purchased by the Swedish settlers. Further centralization involving the purchase and absorption of native holdings in the Township followed.⁹ Land transfers after the initial establishment of the Swedish settlement followed the same basic pattern as that of the "Wales" community ---sale within the native group. As in the Welsh settlement, in later years we can see a trend to land centralization in the hands of a few dominant Swedish families (Ossian, Johnson, etc.)¹⁰

Differing from the Welsh immigration in the period 1880-1920 only in the larger number of new settlers and the absence of departures, the Swedish population expanded into the neighboring townships of Grant and Frankfort. Eighty to 90 percent of the new immigrants who settled on this "carpet of verdure and flowers surrounded by a fringe of timber," and who filed naturalization papers in the

9 Some indication of the price paid per acre by the Swedish settlers can be seen in one particular booster pamphlet of the time. According to the pamphlet, "the B&MRR owns large bodies of vacant lands in the County and have just brought them into the market for sale . . . land ranges in price from five to ten dollars an acre due to its proximity to railroads." See Homes for the Million (Council Bluffs, 1870), 50.

10 See Appendix V. The majority of the Swedish settlement's residents in this period either rented or owned small plots.

county courthouse came from southern Sweden.¹¹ The marriage records of the County indicate social exclusion existed either consciously or unconsciously in the group---for like the Welsh, Swedish immigrants tended to marry Swedish natives. For example, in March, 1875, Alford Dalquist was married by Reverend B. M. Halland to Lottie Anderson; in February, 1877, C. P. Jacobson married Augustiur Anderson, etc. The marriage records are filled with such entries.¹²

In this connection, it is significant to note that many returned home to their native Sweden for the sole purpose of finding a mate! Those who did not return to Sweden secured native Swedish marriage partners in the County. This "intelligent, thrifty, and industrious class of citizens," as one observer wrote of them in 1891, centralized their land holdings in the Township and oriented their social and religious life around the Swedish Evangelical Mamrelund Lutheran Church at Stanton. By 1881, 240 acres were set aside and the first building of the Swedish Orphan's Home was set up in the Township with J. T. Ring-

11 H. Howe Parker, Iowa As It Is In 1855 (Chicago, 1855), 26.

12 See Marriage Register, I, 90-116 particularly.

berg as manager. By 1906, the "Home" housed 45 children. With a constant stream of immigration flowing through the Township during this period, this institution served as a "half-way house" for Swedish newcomers.¹³

By 1920 Scott Township retained as closely-knit a base as it had in 1880. In fact, so much alike are the plats of 1880 and 1920 that one could easily mistake one for the other. For example, going diagonally across the Township, Section One by 1887 was totally owned and settled by the native Swedish families of Andrus Anderson (2/2/82; N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$), John Larson (7/25/82; S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$), and Peter Lindahl (January, 1884; SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$). The plat of 1920 records the Larson family still in control of the southern half of the Section with the addition of F. J. Nelson and G. Swanson to replace the Lindahl and Anderson groups. Section Eleven in 1885 was controlled by August Larson (11/81; S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$) and Claus Erickson (9/85; N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$)---by 1920, the same Erickson family (C. A., S. J., H. S. Erickson) controlled the north half and the southeast quarter of the Section, with the Larson family heirs in control of a large strip across the center of the Section in conjunction with Patrick J.

13 HMC (1906), 317-319.

Hansen's SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$. Going on to Section Twenty-nine, by 1890, G. Alfred Mainquist (3/86; NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$), B. Franklin (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; 12/89), and Edward Bishop (3/90; SW $\frac{1}{4}$) controlled the Section---by 1920 we find the Mainquist heirs in control of three-fourths of the Section with the Bishop lands having been cut down by the addition of the S. Hjerpe, J. F. Carlson and A. Berglund groups in place of the Franklin family.¹⁴

What we can discern from this land transfer history of the Township is the constant domination of all Sections by the immigrant Swedish groups. Further, it is obvious that sales were almost exclusively within the community, either to a relative or to a fellow countryman.

Grant Township

Less than 40 percent of the settlers in the period 1870-1890 who settled in this Township were native Swedish immigrants. This minority group, not surprisingly, dominated the eastern ridge of Sections bordering on Scott Township to the east. Thus, we see J. F. Sandell (1880), John Johnson (1884), and Emil Anderson (1886) in Section One;

¹⁴ See Appendix V and Transfer of Lands, Book 5, 29.

the L. J. Sandell (1877), Andrew J. Ossian (1880), B. C. Anderson (1889), Charles V. Almquist (1880) and other Swedish families in Section 12; the Daniel Wieland (1870), Anders Sandell (1879), Christopher Johnson (1880), Andrew Lindstrand (1879) and Andrew Requist (1881) families in Section Thirteen; the Ossian (1870-86) and Munsen (1878) families in Section Twenty-four; the Gustav Peterson (1870), Amos L. Dahlstadt (1882), C. P. Swanson (1880), etc. families in Section Twenty-five; and the Swan Peterson (1874) and Mainquist (A. M., Andrew P., Gustav Alfred) families in Section Thirty-six.¹⁵

By 1920, however, the Township had experienced a definite rearrangement of land holdings. From 1890 to 1920, as immigration "population pressure" affected Scott Township to the east, later arrivals successfully purchased the lands held by American natives in this Township. Where once the Mainquist and Ossian holdings were separated from the main Swedish settlement's land concentration, by the end of the period the settlement had expanded into Grant Township to encompass them.¹⁶

15 See Appendix Q and Transfer of Lands, Book 4, 1-36.

16 See Appendix M in comparison to Appendix N.

Like Scott Township, Grant displays some patterning in its settlement. By 1920, we can discern the same basic pattern of endogamous sale either in the immediate family or to new Swedish immigrants. In this Township particularly, we can begin to see the result of immigrant "population pressure" in the County. As more immigrants came to the Swedish settlement, less land was available for farming. As a result, unlike the Welsh who often simply passed on to Nebraska or Kansas, the Swedish settlement pressed out and expanded into neighboring Townships such as Grant. Whereas in the 1880's the Swedish element dominated only the eastern sections bordering Scott, by 1920 the settlement concentration had expanded to the mid-section line (near the present location of U. S. Highway 48). For example, Section Eleven, which in the 1880's had no Swedish settlers, was controlled by the C. A. Renander (SW $\frac{1}{4}$), A. Carlson, E. F. Hallquist, and A. J. Anderson families by 1920. Section Twenty-two, which in 1881 was controlled by Nels Olson (October, 1880), a native of Denmark, and Nels Johnson (March, 1881) from Sweden---by 1920 was dominated by the S. Anderson (SW $\frac{1}{4}$) and H. A. Liljadahl (N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$). Typical of the Scott Township's characteristic sale within the ethnic group, in Grant Township we can see the same phenomenon. For example,

Section Twenty-three in 1885 was controlled by Gustav E. Linquist (October, 1882), August Johnson (October, 1882), Oscar Munson (February, 1885), and A. J. Landstrom (February, 1885). By 1920 property had changed hands with Emelia Liljedahl, A. J. Swanson, C. R. Swanson, and E. Anderson (all native Swedish immigrants) in control.

The years (1880-1920) witnessed a tremendous expansion of Swedish immigrant influence in all Sections. However, at the same time, the native-American controlled B&MRR town promotion scheme of Coburg was the least affected section of the Township. The five sections around the section including Coburg (20, 29, 31, 32, 19) retained their basic native-American dominance throughout the period. As late as 1920, for instance, Edward Kretchmer's (August, 1867) original land holdings ($NE\frac{1}{4}SE\frac{1}{4}$; $NW\frac{1}{4}$; $SE\frac{1}{4}$) in Section Thirty-one were still in the hands of the Kretchmer family at Coburg. At the same time native Swedish concentrations developed in this Township around the old Swan Ossian claim (originally on Section Twenty-four, filed June, 1870, on $W\frac{1}{2}NW\frac{1}{4}$). By 1920, his heirs were well represented in Sections 24, 12, 1, 25 of the Township. The same characteristic development from isolated Swedish land holdings occurred with the Gustav Alfred Mainquist homestead's heirs.

Originally in Section Thirty-six on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ (filed in April, 1876), by 1920 the family had control of Sections 36, 35, and 10.¹⁷

Frankfort Township

The third of the Halland settlement townships, Frankfort displays the same patterns that the other marginal Halland township, Grant, displayed in the early 1870's and 1880's. Namely, a strong Swedish domination in the southern areas bordering on Scott Township, and a sparse representation above the 19-24 section line (the old Frankfort town road). In the northern sections, only in Section Ten does the Swedish element display itself in the Martin Hanson (March, 1877) and John Larson (September, 1881) entries. Moving south, however, there is evidence of strong Swedish domination. Moving across the southern sections diagonally, we find Gustav Danbom (1880), John Bergeson (1882), Jacob Peterson (1882) and the John and C. J. Palmquist (1888) families in Section Twenty-three; Charles Johnson (1880), John Larson (1883), Nels Nilson (1883), A. F. Ahlstrom (1887), and C. J. Hulquist (1888) in

17 See Appendix Q and Transfer of Lands, Book 4, 1-36.

section 27; and the Reverend Bengt M. Halland himself (1882) with Fred Johnson (1888) in Section Thirty-three.¹⁸

Like the other two Swedish townships, marriage was characteristically endogamous. That is, Swedish immigrants married native Swedish people---whether it was in Burlington, Iowa, (Jackson marriage), or in Sweden itself (Nyberg family). In fact, characteristic of the other Swedish townships, once having set up a new home in Iowa, many Swedish farmers sent home for their parents.¹⁹

One of the four original townships organized in the 1854-1857 period, Frankfort displays some unusual characteristics which distinguish it from either Scott or Grant because it was the first major settlement region for the native emigres in the 1850's and early 1860's. Amos G. Lowe, the circuit judge who organized the first two townships in the County in 1854 (Jackson and West), lived at Frankfort town himself. A month after organizing the latter, Lowe selected Frankfort for the county seat. The original land owners of the town of Frankfort---the Samuel

18 See Appendix P and Transfer of Lands, Book 3, 1-36.

19 History of Montgomery County, Iowa (Des Moines, 1881), 569, 572, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1881). The best example of this is the August Johnson family.

Baers, Dr. Enos Lowe, and Isaac Bolt---soon were overwhelmed by other native families in the mid-50's such as John Burnsides (arrived in 1855 and eventually found his way to Colorado), Jacob Stover (from Pennsylvania in 1855), Samuel C. Dunn (who had arrived in the County from Ohio in 1853), Dr. Rufus Sperry (who arrived in 1855 from New York) and Dr. Amasa Bond (from Indiana in 1856).²⁰

From 1854 to 1865, when the village lost the county seat to Red Oak, the social life of the native Americans in Montgomery County had centered on Frankfort. Jason Strait's hotel handled the new arrivals and Noah Barr shoed their horses and tended their wagons. At Frankfort, a distinctive society formed around the Jason Packard, Amasa Bond, and Strait families. According to some reports, John Brown himself often visited Amasa Bond and discussed the abolitionist movement with the group. At times, Jason Packard, an admirer of Henry David Thoreau, would discuss Emerson, Carlyle, Goethe, or some other philosophy at the "Castle of Montgomery County," the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Sperry.²¹

By the time the Swedish immigrants began settling in

20 HMC (1906), 45.

21 Ibid., 174-175.

the area, Frankfort's importance had passed. By 1870, the Civil War and the railroad's arrival had destroyed the settlement. At the end of the period in 1920, in fact, the Swedish element had expanded into the northern section formerly occupied by the native Frankfort residents. The native American element in and around Frankfort town had disappeared with the demise of that village. On Section Seventeen itself (the location of the original town), the Swedish immigrants (F. O. Malmberg, A. P. Veak, and M. A. Lundberg) had taken the place of the earlier Baer-Lowe-Bolt control. Perhaps it is significant that by 1920, where once Jason Packard discussed Transcendental philosophy, Fred Malmberg's stock roamed at will. So much Swedish expansion had taken place by 1920 that three of the northern most sections in Frankfort (5, 4, 3) were over 90 percent Swedish! (5, Linder, Andrews, Sederburg; 4, Ogden, Pierson, Peterson; 3, Rydquist, Dahlquist, Bayer). South of the old site of Frankfort town over 90 percent of the land was owned by former Swedish immigrants in 1920. In response to the "population vacuum" created by the transfer of the county seat to Red Oak in 1869, the Swedish immigrants, seeking new land, spread north.²²

22 See Appendix P.

Native Concentrations, 1870-1920

Concentrating on the other townships in existence by 1880 (Douglas, Washington, East (Jackson), Pilot Grove, Sherman, Red Oak, Garfield (Walnut), and West) with particular reference to Red Oak and Sherman Townships, the county land transfer records from the first entry on each section to the 1920's display a consistency in domination by native American settlers. While not revealing the strong social cohesion found in the Swedish and Welsh concentrations, the native group in all of these townships, as a whole, in spite of their mobility and transient nature, differed only in degree from the foreigners in their preference for endogamous marriage. In fact, native settlers of a particular state or locale often married other natives of the same state or locale after arrival in Montgomery County. While this surely was not intentional discrimination on their part, preferences based on proximity and common background encouraged the development of a "group consciousness" on the part of the natives as well as the less stable and fluid foreign groups.

As we have seen in Chapter III, by 1880 the non-

foreign townships were controlled by either strong Ohio native concentrations (Douglas, Washington, East, Walnut and Red Oak), Pennsylvania native groups (Pilot Grove, West), or Indiana settlers (Sherman). That a larger proportion of native descendents were residents of all of these townships (save Red Oak Township) at the end of the period could lead us to the assumption that strong native concentrations, not unlike the foreign settlements, did develop in this period. On the contrary, the fluidity of land ownership in these native townships is in marked contrast to the relative immobility and actual increased concentration characteristic of the foreign settlements. In essence, while land transfer in the foreign group tended to be within either the immediate family or kin group---land transfer in the native groups was haphazard.

For example, Sherman Township bordering the Welsh settlement in Lincoln Township on the west, was dominated by native groups from Indiana and other scattered northern states of the Union from the beginning. In 1858, Anthony Binder, a French immigrant, arrived in the Township. In 1874, an Irish immigrant, Pat Conley, arrived in the same Township. By 1874, Carl Gebbers, originally of Hanover, Germany, had purchased his own farm in Sherman Township.

In 1900, however, these foreign elements had been replaced by native Americans. Characteristic of these native townships, Sherman Township had no significant southern native emigration after the Civil War. The second wave of native migrants tended to come from the East or Old Northwest area. Through the years 1870-1920, the northern natives dominated the townships---and in the case of Sherman, increased their control through the period.²³

As we would expect, the only foreign concentration in Sherman Township was on the western border with Lincoln Township. There Sections Eighteen (C. E. Thomas, N $\frac{1}{2}$, L. J. Rees); Thirty (J. M. Jones, NW $\frac{1}{4}$); and Twenty (M. Evans and W. P. Jones, SE $\frac{1}{4}$) outline the fringes of the Welsh settlement. In the same connection, the northern sections of Garfield Township to the south of Lincoln display this overlap in Sections Three and Two with the Stewart and Thomas families in the north half of both. The fact we can discern these fringe areas of foreign concentration so readily on the plat of 1920 indicates the dominance of native land owners in these townships through these years---for in spite of the fact that the native group as a whole was very

23 HMC (1881), 708-710.

transient---later native groups more than filled the vacuum created by those who departed. A comparison of the manuscript census records of 1870 with the returns of 1920 demonstrates few original native family names extant by the latter census, as well as a paucity of immigrant residents in the Township.²⁴

The most heterogeneous township of them all, Red Oak, maintained a dominant native concentration throughout the period in spite of significant immigrant incursions into the Township itself.²⁵ By 1920, for example, a Swedish dominance in the east half of the Township (Sections 36, 25, 35, 13, 1) emphasized the expanding Swedish movement out of Scott and Grant Townships. At the same time, however, in and among the Swedish group were Scottish, Irish, English, German and French groups which prevented the strong ethnic cohesion characteristic of Scott, Grant, and Frankfort Townships from forming in Red Oak Township.²⁶

24 See Appendices S, W and X.

25 See Appendix U.

26 In reference to Appendix U, the Scots were represented by the McLean and McIntosh families in Sections 27 and 7; the Irish in Section 20 with the Callahans; the Germans in Section 7 with the Wolfe family; and the French in Section 5 with the Nicoll and Lamphere families.

While the relative percentages of native and foreign elements in these townships did not change significantly from 1870-1920, social isolation did exist insofar as endogamous marriage is taken as indicative of overt exclusion. It was the exception and not the rule when a native chose a first or even second-generation descendent of a foreign immigrant for a mate. It is for this reason that the marriage of Justus Clark's daughter, Iowa, a native of Vermont, to Edward Kretchmer, a native of Germany, in 1866 is remembered.²⁷ Generally speaking, it seems to be characteristic of the native townships that the single, male, native settlers either sent word to the original homestead in Ohio or Indiana that all was well and their sweetheart could follow---or met and married some young girl who just happened to come in with a group from the same state.

For example, in the northern "native section" of Frankfort Township, Augustus Ross arrived from Norfolk County, Massachusetts, in 1870 and started farming. Four years later at Red Oak, he met and married Nellie S. Cram of Massachusetts. Ben Askey of Pilot Grove Township, who arrived in 1871 from Stevenson County, Illinois, after

27 See Red Oak Independent, VIII, 26.

having left his native Center County, Pennsylvania, married a Pennsylvania native at Red Oak in 1875.²⁸

Most native settlers moved as family units into the County; the single male or female pioneer was the exception. Most of the settlers were married before they arrived in the County. Dale Swisher of Red Oak Township, for instance, who was born in Darke County, Ohio, met his wife in Livingston County, Illinois, before arriving in the County in 1871. And yet, even here the selective marriage principle is in operation---Swisher, typical of many native settlers, succeeded in marrying a native of his own state while en-route to Iowa.²⁹ The majority of those native settlers in the County in 1900 had mates of similar background.

Usually those spouses were from the same state, and often they were even from the same county or village. There is no evidence in the marriage and divorce records of the County that this characteristic pattern changed from 1900-1920.³⁰

In contradiction to Turner's "free lands which pro-

28 HMC (1881), 574, 619.

29 Ibid., 690.

30 See Marriage Register, Volume 1, 48-378, for proof of this allegation.

moted individualism, economic equality and a freedom to rise," it is significant to observe that both the foreign and native groups were obliged to purchase their land holdings from native speculators already well established in the County.³¹ As early as 1856, the Davenport Gazette observed that "comparatively few of the immigrants to Iowa locate upon lands obtained directly from the government," as the public lands were already in the hands of private and corporate speculators.³² In Montgomery County itself, it is revealing to observe the recurrence of the names Packard, Merritt, Richards and Clark in the Scott, Frankfort, Lincoln and Grant Township land records. A major factor in the initial settlement of the County by native American groups was the desire to reap profit through land sale. Jason B. Packard, for example, who became a surveyor for the B&MRR as well as the first county surveyor, came to Montgomery County to claim a land grant his wife, Cornelia

31 Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 28.

32 Nathan H. Parker, The Iowa Handbook for 1856 (Boston, 1856), 49.

A. Kennedy (Packard) held from her father.³³ Justus Clark himself originally came to the County as a land agent for the B&MRR.³⁴

Some indication of the cost of settlement can be gleaned from the newspapers and promotional pamphlets of the time. As early as 1848, Sargent's Notes on Iowa observed the construction of a cabin cost between fifty and a hundred dollars.³⁵ In 1857, The Iowa Handbook recommended that each settler bring at least two thousand dollars for a quarter section of land, a cabin, a shed, a reaper and thresher, and fencing.³⁶ By 1866, Campbell's Western Guide noted that the average price for land was two dollars and fifty cents an acre, with land near Council Bluffs ranging from five to twenty dollars an acre.³⁷ Near the end of the

33 HMC (1881), 681. Packard sold all of his claim, and with his profits speculated in the purchase and sale of land throughout the County.

34 HMC (1881), 659. As land agent, Clark secured the right-of-way for the B&MRR and leased railroad land to less fortunate immigrants on a cash basis.

35 George B. Sargent, Notes on Iowa (New York, 1848), 40.

36 Nathan H. Parker, Iowa Handbook for 1857 (Boston, 1857), 45. This \$2000.00 recommendation did not even include stock or the cost of hiring a special plow to break the sod!

37 John R. Walsh, Campbell's Western Guide (Chicago, 1866), 22.

settlement period in 1889, land in Montgomery County itself averaged between twenty and forty dollars an acre for unimproved land.³⁸ It is obvious that poor immigrants and natives would not seek Montgomery County for any sort of "gate of escape."

While studies of land ownership and the lack of spatial mobility are adequate indices of some degree of social exclusion in the rural townships, the same studies would not necessarily indicate any such pattern in the most heterogeneous township of them all, Red Oak. On the contrary, in Red Oak Township and the county seat of Red Oak Junction, according to Turner, we should expect a high degree of economic and social mobility for all native and immigrant groups---after all, it was in Red Oak Junction that the most frequent face-to-face contacts were made. To discover the extent of social mobility available to the immigrant and native American outside of the cohesive foreign and native settlement concentrations, it is necessary to examine Red Oak Junction in some detail.

38 Blue Grass League, A Brief Description of the Blue Grass Region of Iowa (Creston, 1889), 26.

CHAPTER V

SOME SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE COUNTY SEAT

A Discussion of Method

Long before Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr. supplemented Turner by publishing his article "The City in American History" in 1940, Frederick Jackson Turner considered integrating the urban and rural frontiers.¹ As early as October, 1922, Turner filed away notes for an essay entitled "City, Frontier, and Section, or the Significance of the City in American History." In his annotations, Turner reminded himself to "examine the extent to which the cities were built up by movement from interior rural areas . . . the city is dependent upon natural resources, and markets, furnished by extending frontier . . ." Not unlike later urban historians such as Richard C. Wade and Carl Briden-

1 See Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., "The City in American History," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XVII (June, 1940), 43-66.

2 Frederick Jackson Turner, American's Great Frontiers and Sections, ed. by Wilbur R. Jacobs (Lincoln, 1965), 38.

baugh, Turner hinted that an intimate relation existed between the hinterland and the urban environment. If, as Turner explained in his thesis, "the frontier promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people . . . and . . . the most important effect of the frontier has been in the promotion of democracy." In the frontier communities we would expect to find most of the social mobility characteristics of that frontier, as it was in these small communities that the most frequent face-to-face contacts were made. According to Turner, "in the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race."³ On the basis of this theory, in the small frontier communities, one would expect the pioneers to meet and mingle in this "crucible," and as a result to somehow form Turner's distinctive traits of the American character.⁴ Thus, whatever level of social

3 Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 11, 14.

4 According to Turner, the frontier experience produced distinctive American traits including "dominant individualism and that buoyancy and exuberance which comes from freedom." See Wilbur R. Jacobs (ed.), America's Great Frontiers and Sections, 167.

mobility is in existence in the hinterland of the frontier community, should be an integral part of the makeup characteristic of the village center.

In recent years, social historians have begun to tackle the city and the small community through the use of quantitative techniques. In his study of Newburyport, Massachusetts, for example, Stephen Thernstrom utilized the sample and introduced us to some of the potentialities of social history "written from the bottom up." Testing the idea of the distinctive fluidity of our social order, which Thernstrom felt "had been a national obsession for more than a century," Poverty and Progress revealed less social mobility existed at both the intragenerational and intergenerational levels than we had previously assumed. According to Thernstrom, the promise of mobility formed the "central cultural theme in America" in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With his systematic mobility research study, Thernstrom concluded that his working class population, by accepting this middle class myth of mobility, was able to achieve some degree of occupational and property mobility at the intragenerational stage---but this was often at the expense of whatever mobility was possible at intergenerational level. Thus, while a first generation

immigrant or native working family might achieve some level of concrete mobility of an economic sort through the building of a small savings account or the purchase of a house lot, the members of the second generation would experience either static or downward economic mobility as their efforts were required to build up the former at a time when education offered them their one avenue of escape. In short, as Thernstrom noted of Newburyport, there was social mobility, "but only in rare cases was it mobility very far up the social ladder."⁵

Thernstrom ended by observing that larger cities would probably be less favorable to social and economic mobility than Newburyport. At the opposite extreme, Thernstrom noted, the greatest variations from the social patterns revealed in Newburyport would probably be in small, static, and traditional towns. But as Thernstrom pointed out, "precisely what this means as to social mobility opportunities is unknown, since such a community has yet to be studied thoroughly."⁶

5 Stephan Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress (Cambridge, 1964), 1, 7, 57, 114. For a similar approach to social history "written from the bottom up," see Sam Bass Warner, Street-car Suburbs (Cambridge, 1962).

6 Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress, 205-206.

It is my intention here to examine one frontier community, Red Oak Junction, in an effort to discover what opportunities actually existed in terms of social mobility for American and foreign-born residents alike. However, before one can embark upon such a study, a precise definition of social mobility is necessary. It is the writer's view that as Thernstrom's study dealt with but one aspect of social mobility, namely economic mobility (occupational and property varieties), he failed to achieve an encompassing view of the cumulative social mobility factor of which economic mobility is but a segment. According to Thernstrom, "social mobility refers to the process by which individuals alter their social position." But is one man's "social position" determined, as Thernstrom seems to indicate, by his occupational or property status? Occupational and property mobility rates are obviously the major factors in any consideration of the level of economic mobility, but economic mobility alone does not explain "the process by which individuals alter their social position." As Thernstrom observed in defense of his methodology, occupational mobility is but one variable, "but it is the variable which includes more, which sets more limits on the other variables than any other criterion of class." No one would seriously

dispute the latter, however, something more is required. By excluding an evaluation of "prestige rank," Thernstrom limited the applicability value of his study to anything more than economic mobility patterns.⁷

Accepting Thernstrom's definition of social mobility as "the process by which individuals alter their social position," I will further distill the concept of social mobility by separating the process into its constituent elements.⁸ Thus, in our "crucible of the frontier," we find various types of social mobility---e.g., occupational, property, status, intra-ethnic,---each of which, as Seymour Lipset and Reinhard Bendix noted, "has its own status structure and its own conditions for the attainment of a position of prestige within that structure." As Lipset and Bendix discovered in their Oakland study, "every society may be thought of as comprising a number of separate hierarchies," and as parallel development in each hierarchy is unusual, a usual "status discrepancy" pattern exists.⁹ This lack of

7 Ibid., 83-84.

8 Ibid., 83.

9 Seymour Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society (Los Angeles, 1967), 64.

parallelism of status is understandable in terms of such factors as new educational levels attained and new wealth secured. In terms of a comprehensive social hierarchy system, one's rate of economic mobility and the final level of economic solvency attained are necessary but not sufficient causes of one's assignment to a particular social position. An equally significant factor is the rate of one's status mobility and the final status level attained in society.

According to Lipset and Bendix, "men can improve their social-class position only by being admitted to relationships of intimacy with those who already possess a higher rank."¹⁰ It is the purpose of this segment of the study to examine both the economic (associated in this study with occupational, property, and financial mobility in terms of a rising level of status in occupation, ownership of real estate, and size of savings and checking accounts) and status hierarchies (associated in this study with family life style, socio-economic background, place of residence, and length of residence) of the social system and thereby come to some conclusion regarding the cumulative social

¹⁰ Ibid., 275.

mobility factor as it operated in Red Oak Junction. In essence, to what degree did the foreign immigrant groups succeed in achieving social mobility in terms of this hierarchical system in the village? If they succeeded in achieving a parallelism of status, how was this done? If, instead, a status discrepancy pattern characterized the majority of the foreign groups, what forces encouraged this situation?

To objectively approach this subject, a stratified random sample (stratified before sampling through an analysis of existing manuscript census data and other census reports) derived in part from the manuscript reports of 1870 and 1880 was used.¹¹ The population of Red Oak Junction was stratified or divided into blocks of ethnic units on the basis of original origin in such a manner that the units in each stratum or block were as similar as possible. Each of the groups was then sampled at random to create a balanced proportion of foreign-born and native-born groups in terms of

¹¹ Supplementing the rather limited type of information available in the manuscript returns, the following sources were utilized: immigration data, naturalization files, various fiscal documents, inventories of property, wills, lists of heirs, marriage settlements, birth and death records, newspapers, city directories and city and county land transfer records.

the official census returns of 1880. An effort was made to include existing probate records in the Montgomery County Courthouse in the hopes of achieving a relative idea of economic mobility for foreign and native-born settlers.

Utilizing the town as the basic unit of the sample and derived proportions of foreign-born and native-born residents from the censuses of 1870-1920 as the constants, a sampling fraction of 6/1 was used to expand the male surnames to create a base from which a percentage of the total frame was created.¹² The sampling process presumes a stationary population in the period 1870-1920, but as no population remains unchanged in every respect for such a long period of time, the reader may question the validity of the sample. However, in defense, the basic static character of the County and county seat in terms of social mobility is also reflected in terms of total population proportions.¹³ Notice, for example, how well the Red Oak Junction sample proportions of 1875-1880 compare with the actual 1880-1905

12 The sampling fraction was created by dividing the number of families extant in 1880 into the total number of residents in the same year. An average number of household members was thus approximated.

13 The reader is referred to Appendices A, B and C.

census breakdowns.¹⁴

The Setting: Red Oak Junction

Red Oak Junction, now the City of Red Oak, was plat-
ted on July 22, 1857, by the Town Lot Company on the main
line of the 1853 survey of the Burlington and Missouri
River Railroad Company. Once the post office was moved
from Oro to Red Oak in March of 1858, the prospects for the
new village on the main line of the Burlington survey in-
creased.¹⁵ Named Red Oak Junction, as Colonel Alfred Hebard
of the original B&MRR survey commented to the founders "a
cross line will sometime be built to accommodate the wealth
that lies buried in the soil of this wonderful valley," the
town experienced a building boom in 1858 with the aid of
Charles H. Lane and H. C. Shank.¹⁶ Between 1858 and the

14 The reader is referred to Appendices H, I and J.

15 See W. W. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County, Iowa From the Earliest Days to 1906 (Red Oak, 1906), 277, 280, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1906); and The History of Montgomery County, Iowa (Des Moines, 1881), 507, hereinafter cited simply as HMC (1881).

16 According to the Directory of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1902), 59, Charles H. Lane was owner and proprietor of the Lane Implement Company which made and sold "farm machinery, buggies, carriages and wagons together with steam threshers, and a large stock of heavy and light harness manufactured by themselves." See HMC (1906), 280.

completion of the movement of the county seat from Frankfort to Red Oak Junction (1863-1866), Red Oak made little progress. Justus Clark, one of the original citizens of the town, stated that in 1868 he stood on the ridge of the hill where Alfred Hebard's romantic-classical mansion was in the midst of construction, and counted only fifty buildings of various types.¹⁷

After the Civil War, however, Red Oak began to expand both in terms of population and physical size.¹⁸ From a recorded population of 1315 in 1870 to 3755 in 1880, Red Oak Junction experienced a 185 percent increase in population.¹⁹ At the same time, new areas were developed and annexed to the City to provide space for that increase---i.e., Alfred Shank's additions in 1869-1870; Charles H. Lane's additions in 1871-1880; John L. Shank's additions from Swede Avenue in the period 1878-1880; and Justus P. Clark's addition in 1879.

As the City expanded in sheer physical size, it also expanded in terms of cultural and social outlets. During

17 HMC (1906), 282.

18 See Appendices D, E, and U.

19 See Appendices A, D, and E.

the building boom of the 1870's, the major religious denominations organized and constructed their houses of worship ---i.e, First Methodist Episcopal Church, organized 1860, church erected 1874; First Presbyterian Church, organized 1869, church erected in 1871; First Congregational Church, organized 1870, church erected in 1873; Evangelical Lutheran Church, organized 1872, church erected 1874. At the same time, various formal and informal social clubs began to crystallize the interests of the residents---i.e., Odd Fellows Lodge #176, organized August, 1869; Knights of Honor Lode #1161, organized July, 1878; Masons, Chapter #57, organized July, 1870; Red Oak Cornet Band, organized by John Kowsky in 1874; Sportsman Club, organized in 1873; Red Oak Driving Park Association, organized in 1880 by H. H. Palmer; Red Oak Trotting Association, organized in 1880 by J. F. Fisher.²⁰

As Red Oak Junction expanded, so did the need for public services. As a result, the first public fire company was organized January 7, 1876, after the disastrous fire of December 23, 1875, destroyed the east side of the public square. Soon, the construction of the city water works in

20 HMC (1881), 512, 517, 518.

1880 by P. B. Perkins and Company replaced the private well system. The organization of the 219 schools in the County through the centralization of the new Montgomery County Teacher's Association (in February, 1881) gave the County its first superintendent. Even a horse railway system was installed from Sixth and Prospect Streets to the passenger depot by P. P. Johnson in 1881.²¹

In this same period of physical and cultural expansion within the City, the foreign concentrations, already firmly established in the County at large by 1880, began to send their sons and daughters to Red Oak Junction. The two major ethnic concentrations, the Welsh settlement in Lincoln Township and the Swedish settlement centering in Scott Township, together comprised the majority of the non-native Red Oak population of 1880. In comparison, by 1890 that same foreign element had decreased from 24 percent of the total population of the town in 1880 to less than 18 percent by 1890. At the same time, however, the City itself declined from 3755 to 3321. By 1895, the foreign element comprised a high 29 percent. In 1905, the Swedish-Welsh percentage had dropped to a low point of 12 percent. By 1905, the County itself

21 Ibid., 392, 518; and HMC (1906), 292.

revealed a 35.9 percent foreign element, and yet in Red Oak Junction the percentage was close to a third of the County average! Why had they gone?²²

Seemingly, social mobility for the foreign immigrant groups was more promising outside of the power structure of Red Oak Junction. At least by 1905, 492 of the foreign born in the County were in Stanton village in Scott Township (or roughly 25 percent of the total foreign born in the County in 1905)---another 125 were near Wales in Lincoln Township (5 percent)---with the remaining 70 percent, except for the 32 percent in Red Oak Township, scattered around in rural districts of Grant Township, Frankfort Township, and West Township.²³ As some immigrant families moved out of the village of Red Oak, native families from outlying areas of the County moved into the vacuum created by the departure of the former group. To test this hypothesis that the immigrants were experiencing a low degree of social mobility in the town itself and, as a result, sought the safety of their own ethnic communities, I will turn to an examination.

22 The reader is referred to Appendices A-E for clarification of this problem.

23 Derived from the Census of Iowa: 1905 (Des Moines, 1905), XXXV.

of the probate records of the county court to determine the foreign populations' economic mobility rate in comparison with the average native-American resident.²⁴

Foreign Economic Mobility in Red Oak, 1870-1920

Upon the reorganization of the judicial system of Iowa by the Twenty-first General Assembly in 1886, the circuit court was abolished. As a result, where once the circuit court had probate jurisdiction, now the county court assumed that jurisdiction over the distribution of estates ---hence, the difference in estate notation which the reader will readily discover. Generally speaking, whether an individual dies intestate (without a will, an administrator is appointed by the court in question) or testate (with a will, an executor is typically expressed in the last will and testament of the decedent), if he or she has no property or real estate in the County at the time of death, no probate record is filed. However, if he or she failed to transfer property to the heirs before death (in the days before estate and government taxes, this was a common prac-

24 The probate files in the vaults of the Clerk of the District Court, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa, will hereafter be referred to simply as Probate File number such and such.

tice in order to avoid probate expense), the court was required to probate that individual's estate inclusive of personal belongings.²⁵

Tracing our sample representing 40 percent of the total population of the Town in 1875 to the probate files, we find enough evidence of economic mobility among the 30 percent of the foreign element of that sample to warrant a significant number of immigrants as "middle class." Of the 70 percent proportion of natives (predominantly Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York emigres), we find a higher degree of economic mobility. While it is true that some intra-generational economic mobility existed for the immigrant residents, it was almost always either a case of one immigrant family bringing wealth in with them from either the native land or from other areas of the United States, or the result of a son or daughter at the intergenerational level leaving the County to acquire wealth elsewhere before returning to retire in the county seat.²⁶

25 C. P. Holmes, Probate Law and Practice of the State of Iowa (Chicago, 1900), 1.

26 The Swedish immigrants purchased their land from either the B&MRR or resident speculators. The Welsh also migrated to the County with no small amount of wealth. See particularly, Transfer of Lands, Book 4, 231, and Book 3, 161. The reader is referred to Appendix K for a discussion of the class breakdown.

Swedish Economic Mobility

The best examples of the latter method of economic mobility occurred within the Swedish immigrant subculture representing 13 percent of the sample population. For example, the Swedish immigrant John Shepard, who arrived in Red Oak Junction in the 1860's prior to the mass Swedish immigration to the County at large in the 1880's, spent his life as a janitor in the Montgomery County Courthouse.²⁷ His only son, Oscar F. Shepard, left Red Oak and helped J. C. Penney organize his empire. Returning to Red Oak Junction in 1921 to retire, the son of John Shepard died in April of 1960, with healthy real estate holdings: the south two-thirds of Lot 1 in Block 88, estimated to be worth \$12,000.00 at the time of his death; and more than \$19,000.00 on deposit at the Montgomery County National Bank

²⁷ According to the manuscript returns for Red Oak Junction, in June of 1870, John Shepard was an employee of the B&MRR. It is significant to note that Shepard allowed ten fellow countrymen and B&MRR employees to board at his home. Shepard's estate in 1927 revealed his ownership of several inexpensive lots in the Railroad and Griffith Additions at Red Oak. John Shepard's \$1000.00 deposit at the Farmers National Bank was claimed in toto by his son, Oscar,---and thus was not subject to probate. See Probate File #2505.

at Red Oak. The success of Oscar's activities outside of Red Oak and Montgomery County is revealed in his ownership of 26,667 shares of J. C. Penney Co.; 900 shares of Union Carbide Corp.; and 2,154 shares of American Telephone and Telegraph Co.; as well as several series of government bonds. Shepard's estate totalled more than 4½ million dollars in April, 1960.²⁸

Another "rags-to-riches" tale for the Swedish immigrants in the County at the intergenerational and intra-generational level was the story of Peter J. Larmon of Stanton village. Peter Larmon arrived from Sweden and succeeded in setting up his own banking house in the Swedish settlement. Upon his death in June of 1932, Larmon owned substantial real estate appraised at more than \$84,000.00 including Lots 5 and 6 in Blocks 1 and 18 of the Original Plat of Red Oak Junction. When Peter's eldest son, Sigurd G. Larmon, finally closed the estate in 1933 as executor, his younger brother, Lars Leonard, and his mother, Sophia, were able to share with Sigurd more than \$92,000.00

²⁸ Probate File #6927. By 1971 standards, Shepard's estate would total more than 5 million dollars. Unless otherwise noted, hereafter all estates will be evaluated in terms of 1970 standards. See Appendix G for the conversion ratio.

(\$330,000.00:70).²⁹

But what of the majority of the Swedish immigrants who settled and stayed in Montgomery County in Red Oak Township and City? The Oscar Shepard and P. J. Larmon cases were the exception. Generally, the immigrants fared less well. Shepard and Larmon may, in fact, have served as models to the rest of the Swedish community. Accepting the latter as examples to emulate, as Thernstrom would say, the majority of the Swedish residents accepted the myth of social mobility, for here was its proof.

Olof Olson, a Red Oak baker, is perhaps closer to the mean. Born in the village of Digebirga, Christianst ad province, Sweden, in September, 1851, Olson left Sweden in 1873 and arrived in Montgomery County and Red Oak in the same year.³⁰ When his estate was probated in 1881, Olson held more than \$1000.00 in loans to fellow Swedish settlers. With \$100.00 in cash on hand at the time of his death, Olson's estate (including his personal estate) totalled

29 Probate File #3831. This conversion to 1970 values was made in order to create a common base for the comparison of all estates. Hereafter, all estates will be converted into 1970 dollar values.

30 See HMC (1881), 681; "Last Will and Testament" of Olson in Probate File #284.

about \$1200.00 (\$6,371.00:1970).³¹

Like Olson, another Swedish settler, Charles Gustavson, who was born in October, 1835, at Linköping town, Leinco province, Sweden, and who arrived in Red Oak as a tailor in 1876, died in January of 1896, with an estate half the size of the latter. Unlike Olson, however, Gustavson achieved the property mobility stage of social mobility by acquiring more than 100 acres of land in Section 26 in the southeast corner of the Town. However, L. D. Fuller held a large mortgage on the land (valued at nearly \$4000.00) which left Gustavson's heirs approximately \$600.00 made up mostly of loans to fellow Swedish settlers, e.g., Nels Heckerson, L. J. Hedstrom. By today's standards, Gustavson's estate would total approximately \$3,100.00.³²

Typical of the Swedish immigrant settlers who acquired significant property to require probate upon their death, John Nordquist's estate was filed in February of 1882, and totalled nearly \$1200.00 (\$6,500.00:70). According to John's son, John L. Nordquist, in his administrator's "Report of Real Estate of Decedent," the elder Nordquist

31 Probate File #284.

32 Probate File #853.

owned Lot 9 in Block 50 in the Original Plat of Red Oak Junction, as well as land in Section 30 of Frankfort Township.³³ John L. himself was able to maintain a middle-class economic position as his estate of 1921 shows. Upon his death in May, 1920, the younger Nordquist was a major stockholder in the Farmer's Grain and Live Stock Company; owned eighteen \$100.00 bonds; and had a little over \$500.00 in the First National Bank of Stanton. With the latter added to his father's real estate holdings, the younger Nordquist died intestate leaving his daughter Dagmar with more than \$7600.00 (\$17,230.00:70).³⁴

Another Swedish settler who achieved a representative degree of economic mobility was Henry Peterson. Born in Sweden in December of 1844, Peterson immigrated to the United States in 1854.³⁵ When Peterson's final will and testament was filed and the probate was recorded in March, 1910, Peterson owned more than 600 acres in Red Oak Township, as well as Lots 9 and 10 in Block 16 and Lot 4 in Block 7 of

33 Probate File #289.

34 Probate File #2583, "Statement of Condition" file, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

35 HMC (1881), 641.

"Quinby Addition" of Red Oak Junction. According to the appraiser's return, the Peterson estate in total value exceeded \$13,000.00 according to 1910 standards (1970 standards: \$62,508.00). With nearly \$800.00 in cash on hand, twenty shares of stock in the Red Oak National Bank, and three life insurance policies totalling \$3,000.00, Peterson's estate totalled more than \$16,000.00 (1910). However, this figure is deceptive, as nearly \$11,300.00 was secured through mortgage on the real estate, thus leaving the remainder of the estate to pay the claims against Henry Peterson. When the estate was closed in March of 1910, less than \$1,200.00 was left for distribution to the heirs (\$6,720.00 by 1970).³⁶

Aside from the majority (58 percent) of the Swedish estates which average \$6,200.00-\$6,800.00 total dispersed to the heirs, between the middle class landholding majority and the extremely rich (i.e., Shepard, Larmon, Planck), a median range of \$15,000.00-\$25,000.00 characterized a significant number of families. For example, Peter Wenburg, who was born in Halland, Sweden, in February of 1832, and who arrived to farm near Red Oak Junction in 1868, died leaving

36 Probate File #1693.

all of his property to his wife, Nellie C. Leander (Wenburg), also a native of Sweden. When Nellie died in March of 1937 at the age of 98, her estate included land holdings in Section 7 of Red Oak Township (appraised at \$6,000.00); one certificate of deposit at the First National Bank of Red Oak for \$700.00; two certificates of deposit at the Montgomery County National Bank totalling \$350.00; \$10.00 in "personal effects"---all totalling some \$6,800.00 (1970: \$19,000.00).³⁷

In the same relative category as Peter Wenburg is Charles Lilljeberg, a local bootmaker who was born in August, 1847, in the village of Blackstadt, Calmer Lane County, Sweden, and who migrated to the United States in 1875.³⁸ Lilljeberg left no record of his real estate history in the probate files, but one daughter Anna E., who died in October of 1924, died leaving Lots 9 and 10 in Block 61 in Red Oak Junction (appraised at \$4000.00) and a note to Walter L. Wilson (\$2,700.00) for a total estate of \$6,700.00 (\$16,080.00).³⁹ Another daughter, Gertie T., inherited

37 Probate File #4289.

38 HMC (1881), 676.

39 Non-Probate File #5-357.

some \$350.00 (\$1500.00) through a guardianship account in 1899 disposing of her mother's insurance policy with the Scandanavian Insurance Company of Galesburg, Illinois.⁴⁰

Significantly, it seems to be characteristic of this \$15,000-\$25,000 range group that they were in fact the "power elite," or leaders of the Swedish business community within the County. Gottfried A. Ossian, for example, who died in April of 1917, controlled ten shares of the First National Bank of Stanton (appraised at \$3,500.00); twelve shares in the Stanton Grain and Lumber Company; and numerous loans to fellow Swedish settlers, all for a total of more than \$8,000.00 (1917). After court costs and all claims were paid, the estate was closed in February of 1926, with more than \$8,000.00 going to his wife, Matilda Carolina Ossian. In conjunction with his ownership of Lot 199 in Stanton town, and some land in Scott and Grant Townships (Sections 24 and 7 respectively), Ossian had a strong real estate folder. But as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Farmer's Grain and Live Stock Company (Stanton), and with a controlling interest in the First National Bank of

40 Probate File #2272. In this connection it is revealing to observe that Charles married another Swedish born immigrant, Christina Larson, in Montgomery County in 1878. See Marriage Register, I, entry 312.

Stanton, and a controlling interest in the Stanton Lumber and Fuel Company, Ossian was definitely an important member of the Swedish community in the County.⁴¹

In a similar position of economic and social power in the Swedish community at large, H. B. Binns, another immigrant, died leaving 210 shares of stock (out of 1000) in the Red Oak National Bank to his heirs. When his only heir, his sister, Rebecca Binns, died in December of 1908, her estate included Lot 1 of "Northeastern Addition" to Red Oak Junction; 80 acres in Section 8 of Grant Township, and a monetary estate of more than \$6,400.00 (\$15,500.00:1970).⁴² H. B. himself probably avoided probate by signing over the bank stock to his sister sometime before his death, as no probate record was ever filed in the County for him.

One of the more wealthy Swedish immigrants of the intragenerational stage who followed the Shepard-Larmon "rags-to-riches" path by leaving the County to make wealth elsewhere before returning to settle down, Gordon E. Anderson, Sr., died in 1947 with an estate totalling more than

41 Probate File #2272; "Statement of Condition" file, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

42 Probate File #1578; "Statement of Condition" file, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

\$525,000.00 (\$1,310,000.00:70). In addition to his healthy real estate holdings within the County---e.g., Lot 19, "Prospect Addition" to Red Oak plat; Lots 1-10, Block 10, "Victory Addition" to same; Lots 210-220 Hawthorne town plat---characteristic of the very wealthy immigrants, Gordon E. Anderson went to Hyannis, Nebraska, and secured 606 and two-thirds shares of the Dumbell Land and Cattle Company (60,000 acres and 4,000 cattle) worth \$119,000.00 in 1941. To the heirs, Anderson's estate netted nearly \$115,000.00 (1970). Still, in order to maintain a high level of economic status within the County, Anderson retained some fifty shares in the Farmer's National Bank in Red Oak.⁴³ In spite of his success, however, it does not appear that Anderson served in this subculture power structure.

Generally speaking, then, it appears that economic mobility was available to the Swedish immigrants who settled in Red Oak at both the intragenerational and intergenerational stages. However, it is also obvious that the most successful immigrants in terms of economic mobility

43 Probate File #4283; "Statement of Condition" file, hereafter cited simply as SCF.

were, in contradiction it seems to Thernstrom's Poverty and Progress, as well as Frederick Jackson Turner's theory, those who left and found their success elsewhere before returning. With one exception (and that is William Planck, born in Merike County, Sweden, in December of 1854, who settled in Red Oak in 1877 and who amassed real estate and financial resources of some \$700,000.00 (1970) by the time of his death in 1914),⁴⁴ it seems that those who remained at the Swedish settlement village of Stanton in Scott Township experienced less economic mobility than those who moved on into the county seat. More than likely, those who came to settle in the village were more successful in the County at large economically speaking than those who remained at the settlement. The latter could not afford the luxury of moving to town and the added expense of a tenant to operate the old farmstead. The economic differences created in the outlying districts explain the difference in economic mobility rates characteristic of the two areas. It would be a mistake to assume that residence in the county seat caused economic mobility---more than likely that characteristic had been secured long before movement into the Town occurred.

44 Probate File #2035; HMC (1881), 684.

German Economic Mobility

Of the 5 percent of the total community of German origin, the results were less promising. The majority (71 percent) of the German immigrants never were able to amass enough wealth to warrant probate. Many left the County entirely. Pardee Schweppenheiser, for example, moved with a Russian immigrant family to King County, Washington.⁴⁵ Of those who stayed in the County, the results were meager. Gottfried Loeb, for example, who was born in Bavaria in September of 1842, and who arrived in Red Oak in 1867, became a clothier and married a fellow Bavarian in Red Oak in 1877, Addie Maas.⁴⁶ Gottfried was able to leave his children very little. The guardianship record for his children, as heirs of Regina Maas, was set up in 1893 for \$370.00 (\$2,100.00:1970).⁴⁷ Analogous to Loeb is another German native, Henry Hagemaster, who died in November, 1927, leaving Lots 367, 573 and 574 in the Villisca plat; about

45 Probate File #2864.

46 HMC (1881), 677.

47 Probate File 563.

\$300.00 on deposit in the Red Oak National Bank; and \$40.00 in personal goods to his wife Sarah. So little value was this last estate that no inheritance tax was paid to the state of Iowa, as it was below the exemption limits of \$15,000.00.⁴⁸

Russian Economic Mobility

Of the Russian immigrant families, representing another 5 percent of the sample, an even bleaker picture is painted for us. This group supports Thernstrom's contention that those who could not achieve significant social mobility of some sort departed.⁴⁹ According to John Ross' probate file of 1911, for example, his sons Eugene and Gilbert, the only heirs, were living with I. H. and G. M. Nazarenus in King County, Washington.⁵⁰ A quick review of the Russian immigrant population's probate record reveals little if any economic mobility was achieved at the intragenerational level within the City. For example, Gottlieb Reifschneider, who brought his family to Red Oak Junction in 1906 from

48 Probate File #2842.

49 Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress, 158.

50 Probate File #1656.

Saratov, Russia, left an estate in 1935 valued at less than \$1,000.00 (\$2,300.00:1970). Reifschneider experienced some property mobility, as he did own Lots 24, 39 and 40 in "Thompson's Addition" to Red Oak. Unfortunately, Reifschneider also had a mortgage for \$3,400.00 (\$7,400.00) on the same property---as this was exempt from inheritance taxes by statute, Reifschneider entered the "non-probate" files.⁵¹

Another countryman of Reifschneider's, Jacob Ross, fared a bit better. When Ross died in 1910, there was nearly \$1400.00 available for the heirs (\$6,700.00:70). This is deceptive, however, unless you realize that \$2000.00 was added to the estate on Jacob's death by the Red Oak Electric Company for damages.⁵²

Other Anglo-Saxon Economic Mobility

The Anglo-Saxon immigrants were, generally speaking, the most successful group in terms of economic mobility. Job Sylvanus, for example, an early Welsh settler in Lincoln Township, died in May of 1920, owning Sub Lot 3 of Lot

51 Non-Probate File #4142.

52 Probate File #1656. It seems Jacob Ross was electrocuted by faulty wiring in his own abode!

10 in the old "Wales" plat; a \$5,000.00 certificate of deposit in the Red Oak National; a \$200.00 note to a fellow countryman, Frank Williams; another \$1,000.00 note to another Welshman, Spencer Jones---all totalling nearly \$7,700.00 (1920). Once the expenses of the estate were paid and the claims against the same were settled, Sylvanus' heirs possessed more than \$4,200.00 (\$7,700.00:1970).⁵³

Another Welshman, Samuel Baxter, born and raised in North Wales, left Wales in 1835 and moved to the United States. His wife, Blanche Baxter, declared insane in November of 1876, after escaping from the asylum at Mt. Pleasant, left an estate of \$200.00 in cash; "one small revolver;" a note at 10 percent interest for more than \$800.00 on an Arthur Baxter---which today would total \$4,474.00.⁵⁴

Thus, like the Swedish immigrants who seem to have succeeded relatively well economically in the period, the Welsh immigrants were able to achieve nearly the same degree of economic mobility. Often times it was by sheer coincidence, as for example the case of Humphrey Evans, born in September of 1848, in Penymaes Towyn, County of

53 Probate File #2579.

54 Probate File #201; HMC (1881), 628.

Merineth, Wales, who died in January, 1936, at the same location with property in Section Twenty-four of Lincoln Township appraised at more than \$26,000.00 (\$74,900.00: 1970).⁵⁵ But this was the exception, as we have seen.

The English immigrants in the City, on an average, were the most successful of the Anglo-Saxon group. For example, representative of this group is the case of Elijah Gaff. Born at Norfolk, England, in March of 1847, Gaff immigrated to the United States and Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1871. In March of 1879, he married Sarah A. Oliver, the daughter of another Englishman, William Oliver, at Red Oak. When Gaff's estate was filed in March of 1927, it revealed an estate totalling some \$15,000.00 (\$42,500.00:70) with debts of only \$800.00. Aside from about \$3,800.00 in cash, and several series E and B bonds totalling \$4,100.00 (\$11,400.00:1970), Gaff owned land in Section Twenty-seven of Pilot Grove Township appraised at \$11,200.00 in 1927. According to the "Preliminary Inheritance Tax Report" submitted by Clifford Powell in 1927, the total proceeds of the estate were released to Gaff's adopted heir, Cora

⁵⁵ Probate File #4251. Evans remained in this country for only a few years in the 1870's.

Whiley.⁵⁶

Other marginal immigrant families fared less well. The C. Y. Diedericks family, for example (the elder Diedericks having been born in September of 1824, in southern Holland), had very little to show for their efforts in America. Coming to Red Oak in 1857, the elder Diedericks set up his pawn shop at Red Oak before traveling to Kansas City to marry another Hollander, Eliza Post. Upon his death in 1899, the state of Iowa waived assessment as the estate was less than the \$2,000.00 minimum. According to the "Inventory of Assets," Diedericks' personal property amounted to only, "one box of tools valued at \$10.00 and billboards valued at \$61.15." While it is true the latter owned Lots 1 and 2 in Block 26 of "Railroad Addition," the sale of the same to the Russian immigrant Jacob Ross in May or 1899, netted a meager \$440.00 for the estate (\$2,100.00: 1970).⁵⁷

One French immigrant, Charles Renardin, born at Troy, France, just north of Paris on August 6, 1830, immigrated to

56 Probate File #3260; HMC (1881), 633; see also Appendix T.

57 Probate File#994; HMC (1881), 661.

the United States in 1856 and became a local bartender.⁵⁸ There is no probate record of Charles, but his wife Mary Marguerite Renardin, whose estate was closed in February of 1900, reveals the meager returns for the Renardin immigration. Appearing before the Vice Consul General of the United States of America at Paris in November of 1898, Eugene Louis Leroux and Marie Blanche Muller nee Leroux, the sole surviving heirs of the Renardin line, granted the power of attorney to R. M. Roberts at Red Oak. After the debts of the estate were paid, only Lot 7 of "Lane's Addition" to the Red Oak plat remained for the heirs. According to the transfer records, Eugene Louis Laroux transferred the same to Wealthy R. Roberts shortly after the estate was closed in the United States.⁵⁹

Foreign Economic Mobility: Conclusions

What does this reveal about the immigrant families who chose to settle in this community? Was there significant economic mobility, enough say, to allow them some measure of status mobility? Yes and no. Within their

58 HMC (1881), 685.

59 Transfer Book, II (Town Lots), 114; Probate File #988.

immigrant groups, those families who at least achieved a lower to medium middle-class economic status (\$6,000.00-\$10,000.00) were undoubtedly respected models for their fellow countrymen. Thus, for example, we can speculate that among the Russian immigrants in "Russiatown", Jacob Ross was one of the latter.⁶⁰ The fact that Ross was a major figure along with I. H. Nazareus in bringing more Russian immigrants to Red Oak would encourage this. Analogous to Ross, the Hagermaster family probably served the same function in the German community; the Sylvanus family in the Welsh; and the Peterson, Nordquist and Olson families in the Swedish group. The exceptions, such as the Oscar Shepards or the William Plancks, served to bolster the social mobility ideology of middle-class America, for these were "rags-to-riches" cases in their best light. In order to evaluate the immigrant's relative economic and status mobility in terms of the total community, we need to examine the success of the native Americans in the same relative terms.

60 "Russiatown" was a derogatory term used by the native-American residents of Red Oak Junction in reference to the Russian settlement in Railroad Addition.

Native Economic Mobility in Red Oak, 1870-1920

Seventy percent of the total population sample represented native settlers. Of that 70 percent, 17 percent claimed original residence in Ohio, 13 percent in Pennsylvania, 13 percent in New York, 5 percent in Illinois, 6 percent in Indiana, 3 percent in New Hampshire, and 13 percent were scattered United States. Of the latter, an emphasis on the northern states is obvious. Proportionally speaking, this sample is comparative to the township average of 24 percent Ohio, 20 percent Pennsylvania, 19 percent New York, and 23 percent scattered. Comparing Appendices I and J the reader will readily see how valid the sample percentage base is in reality.

Iowa and Illinois natives were not included as separate units, as examination of "Iowa" or "Illinois" natives usually disclosed eastern origins for those natives. Also, as many Swedish and Welsh immigrant groups settled in western Illinois and eastern Iowa before migrating to the Township in the period 1880-1890 with their families, it is necessary to know more than an individual's place of birth in many cases. As a result, an effort has been made to

trace the history of a family's movement from east to west across the country. If "Iowa" and "Illinois" natives were included as separate strata in the sample, more than 65 percent of the Township would reveal "Iowa" and "Illinois" natives---and would thus be deceptive in terms of such factors as cultural heritage, life style, and religious base.

Ohio Natives

Of the 17 percent who claimed original residence in Ohio, 77 percent of the sample left no record of probate in the district court files. There are three possibilities that could account for this absence: a.) the residents had no property; b.) the residents transferred their property before death; or c.) the residents moved out of the County before death. In view of the city directory of 1915, the latter two possibilities are most plausible.⁶¹ John M. Killits, for example, born in October of 1858, at Lithopolis, Ohio, spent a short time in Red Oak as editor of the Red Oak Express before returning to Lithopolis to edit

⁶¹ See specifically, Directory of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1915), 7-29.

another paper. Indicative of many of the native settlers, Edward Moriartz, a local grocer born at Portsmouth, Ohio, in February of 1842, was able to transfer his holdings to his heirs while he was still living and thus avoid a court probate.⁶²

Relatively speaking, however, it appears the Ohio natives fared much better than the average successful immigrant family that achieved economic mobility. For example, J. J. Manker, one of the original settlers in the Red Oak vicinity (David Silkett's mill became Manker's mill), was born in January of 1818 in Clinton County, Ohio.⁶³ Upon his death in 1896, his probate inventory revealed the ownership of more than \$11,000.00 worth of stock in the Bank of Elliott, as well as nearly \$4,200.00 in cash in the Red Oak National Bank (\$75,000.00:1970).⁶⁴ Similarly, Armstead Milner, born in August of 1829, in Highland County, Ohio, died in January of 1916 with about \$400.00 in cash on hand in the Red Oak National Bank; \$1,700.00 in loans to Harvey Milner; plus the 320 acres in Section Twenty-four of Red Oak

62 HMC (1881), 675, 680.

63 Ibid., 638.

64 Probate File #844.

Township---all totalling more than \$18,300.00 (or by 1970 standards: \$71,400.00).⁶⁵ In both cases, a little more than \$3,300.00 was left for distribution to the heirs once the claims against the estate were paid (thus \$15,800.00 and \$9,840.00, respectively).

Other Ohio natives, while failing to leave any probate records, have left us some indications of a similar success in terms of land ownership (property mobility aspect of economic mobility). John Arnott McLean, for instance, a graduate of Monmouth College (1873) and the then superintendent of public instruction, who was born in April of 1852, in Ashland County, has left us no probate record.⁶⁶ His father, however, John L. McLean, died in April of 1874, leaving 240 acres of land to his son, John Arnott McLean.⁶⁷ Likewise, Benjamin St. Clair, who was born in October of 1852, in Jackson County, left no probate record---but a guardianship organized in May of 1867, by W. W. Merritt for the latter as heir of David St. Clair, reveals Benjamin's

65 Probate File #2174.

66 HMC (1881), 639.

67 Probate File #128. McLean's 240 acres included parts of the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15 in Red Oak Township. See Appendix U.

ownership of 240 acres in Sherman Township in Sections 3, 4 and 10.⁶⁸

Pennsylvania Natives

A similar pattern is revealed in the 13 percent of the sample representing the second largest native settlement group in the City. Again, a high proportion (79 percent) of those natives avoided probate in some manner. Of those who did file probate information, like the Ohio natives, the Pennsylvania group achieved a high degree of economic mobility. For example, Scott Brownlee who was born in Washington County in April of 1831, died leaving his assets to his wife, Lenora J. Brownlee. When Lenora's estate was filed in February of 1924, she owned no real estate---but the nearly \$13,000.00 in notes, bonds and bank holdings with over \$11,000.00 (\$33,500.00:1970) left for distribution to the heirs reveals her economic success.⁶⁹ Likewise, Joseph Junkin, born in the same County as Scott Brownlee in February of 1815, left his son Joseph M. Junkin (born in April of 1854, in Jefferson County, Iowa; LLD.

68 Probate File #56; HMC (1881), 643.

69 Probate File #2826; HMC (1881), 630.

Iowa State University, 1879) a sizeable estate.⁷⁰ When Joseph M. Junkin's estate was closed in October of 1913, a total of nearly \$2,500.00 (\$11,200.00:1970) was available for his heir, Chevalier J. Junkin.⁷¹

While it is true that the native Pennsylvanians, relatively speaking in terms of the foreign immigrant groups, achieved more economic mobility, there were exceptions to this rule. Isaac J. Stocksleger, for example, who was born in March, 1837, in Adams County, died in November, 1889, with over \$13,000.00 (\$82,200.00:70) invested in worthless gold mining stock (Grass Valley Consolidated Mining, Alder Creek Gold Company, Iron King Extension Gold Mining Company, Cyuba River Placer Mining Company, Balbarat-Smuggler Mining Company, etc.), and only \$50.00 in cash on hand to offset his \$3,700.00 debt to various Red Oak banks!⁷² Likewise, J. W. DeFrehn, a Red Oak house painter who was born in October of 1849, in Columbia County, died in January of 1919, owning only Lots 5 and 6 of Block 7, Red Oak plat.

70 HMC (1881), 674.

71 Probate File #1976.

72 Probate File #1381. Stocksleger's debts were paid in 1906 "by the heirs of decedent and owners of real estate as heirs of said deceased."

The DeFrehn estate was appraised at less than \$2,000.00.⁷³

Other Native Residents

Of the remaining 40 percent of the residents in the City who were native Americans, the same characteristic of either avoiding probate by 1) distribution of estate holdings before death (i.e., John Loomis, Jason Packard, Smith McPherson), or 2) migration from the County (i.e., Pegram, Watrous, Hendrix, Crittenden) characteristic of the native-American groups is apparent. However, an examination of the "Statement of Condition of Banks and Corporations" file in conjunction with existing probate data does reveal the economic power elite of the community. Surprisingly, the two states of Indiana and Vermont, which both combined account for less than 8 percent of the total population of the City, contributed the central core to this power structure. A quick examination of the Indiana group reveals the key town developers. The son of the leader of the Frankfort power structure of 1860 (Amasa Bond of Frankfort Township), Ellis Bond was born in June of 1842, in Hamilton County, Indiana, and died in September of 1918, with a

73 Probate File #2224; HMC (1881), 661.

total estate of nearly \$11,000.00 (\$38,700.00:1970).⁷⁴ The lawyer, Horace Emerson Deemer of Marshall County, Indiana, (born September 24, 1858), died in April of 1917, owning 20 shares in the First National Bank of Red Oak; more than 7,500 shares of American Colortype (preferred); \$13,500.00 in paid life insurance; as well as exempt real estate holdings of Lot 17 in "Prospect Addition;" Lot 10 in Block 65; and significantly, "one Cadillac automobile worth \$500.00." By today's standards Deemer's total estate of \$45,300.00 would be worth more than \$138,000.00.⁷⁵

The control of the financial establishments in any community reveals the economic power elite, as many sociologists have discovered.⁷⁶ In this connection, it is interesting to observe that all of the banks in the City, and often in neighboring towns, were controlled by the natives from the three states of Vermont, Indiana and Connecticut. Justus P. Clark, for example, who was born in March of 1819,

74 Probate File #2428; HMC (1881), 629.

75 Probate File #2260; HMC (1881), 661

76 See particularly Robert Lynd, Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture (New York, 1929); and his Middletown in Transition (New York, 1937). Lynd deals with Muncie, Indiana, but it is equally applicable to Red Oak Junction, Iowa.

in Windsor County, Vermont, began as a lumber merchant in Red Oak. Upon his death in 1882, Clark transferred to his two sons, B. B. Clark and P. P. Clark, more than 3000 acres of land in Mills and Montgomery Counties (not subject to estate appraisement), as well as a total estate of nearly \$35,000.00 (\$220,000.00:70).⁷⁷ These two sons went on in the early 1900's to expand that capital through the purchase of sizeable blocks of stock in the Red Oak Building and Savings Association, and through the establishment of the Coburg Savings Bank (B. B. Clark, President).⁷⁸

While Justus Clark built up his estate centering on the Red Oak National Bank Charles F. Clarke, a native of Shelby County, Indiana, (born in August of 1846), centralized his control of the First National Bank of Red Oak. When his estate was closed in September of 1906, Clarke owned 310 shares of stock in the First National Bank (\$46,600.00:1906); controlling interest in the First National Bank of Elliott (\$3,000.00:1906);---in addition to the west half of

77 Probate File #837; HMC (1881), 655.

78 See SCF, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Court-house, Red Oak, Iowa. Justus Clark also left his sons more than \$20,000.00 worth (1882) of stock in the Red Oak National Bank.

Duell County, Nebraska! The latter, in conjunction with his local real estate which included half of Lot 13 in "Shank's Addition;" half of Lots 3 and 4 in "Southwestern Addition;" half of Lot 2 in Block 75 of Red Oak; and half of "Fairview Addition" (Lots 7-74), gave Clarke's heirs a healthy start. The total of his non-landed estate alone totalled approximately \$50,000.00 (\$270,000.00:1970).⁷⁹

Another Vermont native resident, Hiram Cole Houghton, who was born at Bennington, Vermont, died in August of 1925, with a similar large estate based on property and bank stock. When the estate was closed in March of 1927, Houghton owned Lots 1, 2 and 3 of Block 48 in Red Oak; Lots 59-61 in "Southern Addition;" as well as a sizeable block of land within the County (\$196,000.00 assessed mortgage value in 1927). With nearly \$100,000.00 in various stocks (controlling interest in Red Oak Building and Savings Association; control of H. C. Houghton's Bank with nearly \$176,000.00 in total assets on January 1, 1902); \$4,600.00 in grain; and more than \$11,000.00 in cash on hand, the total personal estate totalled more than \$378,000.00. After the claims

⁷⁹ Probate File #1382; HMC (1881), 656. Charles' only daughter, Georgia Johnston Clarke, acquired the lion's share of his estate in 1906.

on the estate were paid (about \$113,000.00) more than \$266,000.00 was distributed to the heirs (\$730,000.00: 1970).⁸⁰

Alfred Hebard, who was born in May of 1810, at Windham, Connecticut, and who graduated from Yale College with the class of 1832, came to Red Oak as the head of the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad survey team of 1853 and became "a real estate dealer and capitalist."⁸¹ Upon his death in November of 1896, Hebard's estate holdings revealed more than \$41,000.00 worth of Red Oak National Bank stock (80 shares); Lots 2 and 3 in the original Red Oak plat; Lots 1 and 2 of Block 75 in "Northeastern Addition" to Red Oak plat; in addition to more than \$23,000.00 in "personal property"---all totalling nearly \$47,000.00 (\$300,000.00:70) free to the heirs.⁸²

80 Probate File #3132; SCF, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

81 HMC (1881), 670.

82 Probate File #909.

Native Economic Mobility: Conclusions

What does this reveal about the native-American migrants who chose to settle in this community? Was there significant mobility, enough say, to allow them some measure of status mobility? Yes and no. Within the native-American community, those families who at least achieved a middle or upper-middle-class economic level (\$10,000-\$20,000) were definitely leaders and models to the remainder of the native community. Thus, for example, while the Clarke, Houghton, and Deemer families comprised the economic and social elite, such families as the McLeans, Mankers, and Junkins formed a strong middle class. Relatively speaking, however, the native group was predominantly of a middle-class level vs. the immigrant community where such a class level was the exception.

One result of the immigrants' failure to achieve a strong economic middle-class standing in the period was the control of the strongly economically segregated neighborhoods of Red Oak by the native-American groups. "The Hill" area of Red Oak, for example, composed almost entirely of upper-middle-class and upper-class members of the native

community, was created before the immigrants were able to achieve any significant economic mobility.⁸³ By the time that base was secured, the native-American groups had become sufficiently aware of their own nativist settlement pattern to encourage social exclusion in their neighborhoods.

Social Mobility in Red Oak Junction

What does our sample reveal about socio-economic mobility in this frontier, rural farm center? Relatively speaking, it appears that the immigrant groups did not achieve the same economic mobility status as did the American natives. This is not surprising, of course, when we realize that the native-born groups had well established economic bases before moving into the County (either by their own or through inherited wealth), whereas the immigrant groups typically had little if any financial security upon settlement. In the two immigrant groups that did bring wealth to the County from their native land, the Swedish and the Welsh, there is a resulting higher level of economic

83 "The Hill" was a derogatory term used by the Red Oak working class population when reference was made to the power elite. In response, the upper class referred to "The Flats" as the area where the working class population of the City lived. Typographically speaking, both terms had a good physical basis.

security and mobility in comparison to the Russian, French, Dutch or German groups.

Underlying this study has been the assumption that a relationship exists between the level of economic security and the level of social acceptability. However, there is no indication that a definite 1:1 relationship exists between the two.⁸⁴ On the contrary, a settler's origins (ethnic or regional) often seem to have determined in many ways where that settler at either the intragenerational or intergenerational level was accepted. For example, in spite of the fact that William Planck, a native of Sweden, controlled a sizeable landed estate in the County in addition to his \$70,000.00 estate in 1914 (\$310,000.00:1970), he did not live on the "The Hill" with the natives (i.e., Hebarads, Houghtons, Deemers, Clarks).⁸⁵ At the intergenerational level Oscar Shepard, the son of the Swedish immigrant John Shepard, in spite of his ownership of the largest estate in the County's history (\$4,800,000.00:70), never moved away

84 See Lipset and Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, 2. According to this study, "an ideal ratio between the distribution of rewards can obviously never occur in society."

85 Probate File #2035.

from his fellow second-generation Swedish residents living in "The Flats" of Red Oak Junction.⁸⁶

More than economic mobility was necessary before one immigrant or even one native was able to achieve significant status mobility of his own ethnic or regional group. As we have seen, the Larmon, Planck and Anderson families could well have served as subculture leaders as well as examples or models for the newly arrived immigrants who questioned the mobility opportunities. However, when a Peter J. Larmon or a William Planck approached a Horace E. Deemer or a Charles Lane, there was a social gap that could not be breached with economic solvency.⁸⁷

In dealing with the mystique of small town America, or for that matter with any area so far removed from the pres-

86 Shepard never moved from his residence at the corner of Sixth and Prospect Streets which was at the base of "The Hill" district/"Flats" division line.

87 Some indication of this intangible "social gap" can be recovered by looking at the calling list in the Mary Louise Mills Richards Papers. As late as 1897 Mrs. Charles E. Richards' "party book" contained the wives of such dominant native-American families as the Clarks, Deemers, Hebardts, Bishops, Hinchmans, Kretchmers, Mankers, Merritts, and Shanks. The same "party book" of Red Oak "society" included not one Planck, Jones, Larmon, Owens, Reifschneider or Nazareus.

ent time, the intangible element of social status, so necessary to an understanding of economic mobility and its relation to social mobility, escapes any quantitative device social historians can devise. It is physically impossible to interview these people and determine precisely why a Peter Wenburg was not as socially acceptable as a Zebulon M. Pike Shank. We can only generalize about the relation between economic and status mobility and their effect on the comprehensive social mobility factor. It is obvious that while many immigrants became "captains" in the economic sphere with other native-American migrants, in the realm of social status the same immigrants failed to be leaders outside of their respective communities.

From this research, it appears that those immigrants who succeeded economically and moved into a middle-class position in the community, often did so at the expense of their fellow countrymen. At the intragenerational level, for example, William Planck and P. J. Larmon both grew rich through the interest charged on mortgages and loans, Planck through his private loans to fellow Swedish farmers in the County and Larmon through his investment in the Stanton

Mutual Loan and Building Association.⁸⁸ In the Welsh community Humphrey Evans, who died in Wales in January of 1936, with United States holdings of \$74,900.00 (1970), controlled 85 shares of stock with Benjamin Davis in the Farmers National Bank of Red Oak.⁸⁹ John G. Jones, another Welsh native, died in 1920 with an estate valued at more than \$42,000.00 (1970). Jones' estate was, in large measure, built by loans to fellow natives (i.e., John R. Jones, Lizzie A. Williams).⁹⁰ Even the Reverend Bengt M. Halland's estate of \$6,800.00 (1919) was based on high interest loans.⁹¹

Of those immigrants who achieved the most in terms of economic mobility, the examples of Sigurd Larmon and Oscar Shepard stand out. In both cases the sons of first-generation immigrants moved outside of the County to achieve

88 SCF, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa; Probate Files #3831 and 2035.

89 SCF, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

90 Probate File #1600. Analogous to Jones is Griffith Thomas' estate of more than \$86,000.00 (1970) created in large measure by loans to David Davis, E. E. Jones, J. D. Robbins, and Thomas Lewis.

91 Probate File #1163.

economic mobility. Relatively speaking, while it is true that those of the intergenerational stage who remained in the community fared less well than these last two examples, those who remained fared much better than the majority of those who left. The Larmon/Shepard "rags-to-riches" exceptions are revealing, as they undoubtedly served as examples for the remaining intergenerational group; however, the opposite was the usual case for those who departed. For example, the leading force behind the Russian settlement was not Jacob Ross as we might assume by his property holdings and general economic level. On the contrary, it was I. H. Nazarenus who left no probate record and owned no property in the County at all. By 1911, I. H. Nazarenus and his son, G. M. Nazarenus, had moved out of the County and State to settle in King County, Washington.⁹² Significantly, then, in both cases---Nazarenus or Shepard---a son moved out of the City because of the lack of economic mobility possibilities.

This movement out by those residents who did not achieve either sufficient property or occupational mobility to keep them in Red Oak Junction was not restricted to the

92 Probate File #1656.

immigrants. In fact, in comparing the sample native population with the 1902 "Directory of Montgomery County," nearly half (43 percent) of the original families are absent.⁹³ It may be that most of those who failed to achieve significant economic mobility gains departed for a second chance elsewhere, as Stephen Thernstrom would say. This would account in part for the lack of probate records for those native residents. Perhaps a lack of status mobility coupled with an awareness of the futility of competing socially as well as economically with the dominant power structure drove many otherwise middle-class immigrant and native families out of this rural farm center.⁹⁴

It is possible that the power structure, both socially and economically, set in Red Oak Junction before the mass of the immigrants arrived in the 1880's, effectively resisted any change in the set status levels. By 1880, the names Deemer, Houghton, Junkin, Clarke, Lane, and Shank had already displaced the earlier Stennett, Bond, Packard, Sperry structure that led the County from the old county

93 Directory of Montgomery County, 7-29.

94 This would account in part for the "push factor" urban historians are prone to accept as the rationale behind the rural-urban movement in this period.

seat of Frankfort.⁹⁵ Once the Swedish immigrants, for example, began to form their own socio-economic power structure headed by the Planck, Nordquist, Larmon and Anderson families, the native economic power structure in Red Oak had already become an accepted social power structure. As a result, a Swedish subculture with its own power elite formed. As time passed each power elite maintained the ethnic cohesion characteristic of the early period in order to perpetuate its control.⁹⁶

This is not to say there were no relations between the two economic power groups at the business level. H. B. Binns, a native of Sweden, for example, shared ownership of the Red Oak National Bank with the Clark brothers in 1908.⁹⁷

95 There is growing evidence here to indicate that the process by which the Frankfort elite either fused into or clashed with the succeeding Red Oak Junction elite was often characterized by conflict over the conception of their role in public affairs. In reference to this conflict, see Robert Sharkey, Money, Class and Party (Baltimore, 1957); Samuel P. Hays, "The Social Analysis of American Political History, 1880-1920," Political Science Quarterly, LXXX (September, 1965), 373-394.

96 In this connection, it is revealing to see that Horace Emerson Deemer's daughter, Dorothy Deemer, married Hiram Cole Houghton and moved into the former's residence on "The Hill" after his death in 1917.

97 SCF, Auditor's main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

At the social level, however, the intangible element of status created a distance and/or deference that was rarely breached. One breach of note was the marriage of Ethel Anderson, daughter of the Swedish immigrant C. E. Anderson, to a son of the Hawthorne-based Wearin family which allowed the latter to buy Lot 19 in "Prospect Addition" in the center of "The Hill" district of the Houghton, Deemer, Kretchmer, Clark native power structure. Generally, however, "The Hill" maintained its native-American base throughout the period.

Thus, economic mobility was common in Red Oak Junction for native and immigrant alike. There were exceptions ---some left and made hundreds of thousands of dollars and acquired hundreds of acres of land elsewhere than in Red Oak and Montgomery County where they had nothing. At the same time, some remained and left their heirs very little (i.e., Stennett, Bond families).⁹⁸ Downward economic mobility was possible for native and immigrant alike.⁹⁹ Still,

98 In connection with the latter two families, while both experienced downward economic mobility, neither suffered a substantial status loss.

99 "The Flats" was not entirely restricted to immigrant families. Many native-American groups lived in the same area.

while the various immigrant groups had their middle and upper-middle-classes and even upper-class economic elites at the intergenerational level, they were unable to cross the barrier of status that separated them from the social world of the native residents.¹⁰⁰

No one can deny the fact that most of the immigrant families experienced significant economic mobility in this frontier community even in relation to the native population. At the same time, no one can seriously contend that these same immigrants experienced a significant degree of status mobility in terms of the same group of natives. Social mobility cannot be defined in terms of economic mobility alone. Thus, while a William Planck may have amassed a monetary and physical fortune in excess of many of the natives, he was unable to acquire a high status or a favorable social-class position outside of the Swedish community due to his ethnic origin and family background. In Planck's

100 Perhaps the best example of this social barrier can be detected in the "Programme" of the Congregational Church on March 9, 1880, found in the Mary Louise Mills Richards Papers. In a pantomime based on the Jack and Jill story, the madams Loomis, Packard, Hiett and Richards cooperated with "Simple Simon," played by Mr. Kennedy Packard. There were no immigrant wives participating. In this case of social exclusion, perhaps "Simple Simon" was not as simple as one would expect.

case, we have a perfect case of status discrepancy, for while he accepted the values and life style of the native elite (note his huge Victorian mansion and coach barn in Red Oak Junction) in addition to his economic mobility success, his socio-economic origins did not allow him status mobility in terms of the native elite.

Red Oak Junction appears to have been characterized in this period by a more or less closed status system.¹⁰¹ Economically, movement into the middle and upper class was possible and for native and immigrant alike. Socially, however, the socio-economic origins of the immigrants and their children in effect determined the status level they might conceivably attain. The existence of such terms as "Russiatown," "The Hill," "The Flats," indicate that an awareness of the variation between positions on the economic

101 The nature of this closed system did encourage discontent among the dominant foreign group, the Swedish. As Lipset and Bendix note, this restriction caused by the inflexibility of such a system "may result in efforts by members of deprived groups to achieve collective or group mobility." The control of the County offices by the Swedish immigrants beginning in the early 1900's is an example of this very phenomenon. To this extent, the closed system of the town was not as tight as we might assume---perhaps a modified closed system would be more accurate. See Lipset and Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, 4.

and social hierarchies existed in the minds of the residents even at that time. Seymour Lipset and Reinhard Bendix observed in their study of an industrial city, "in an expanding, dynamic society, such barriers to social mobility as inherited rank can be a fundamental cause of instability, since expansion calls for an increase in the number of qualified leaders."¹⁰² Perhaps in Red Oak Junction, whose social and business institutions changed very little in terms of their functioning in a rural farm center from 1870-1920, such barriers to mobility as inherited rank, rather than serving as "a cause of instability," served as a cause of stability, since retaining the rural status quo called for a maintenance of the existing arrangement of society.¹⁰³

Thus it was, that in Red Oak, the established social hierarchy was unconsciously maintained by immigrant and native alike. Unlike an industrial society, where flexibil-

102 Ibid, 4.

103 Emile Durkheim suggested that stable poverty, or a lack of change in the situation of the lower group, is the best soil for moderation and conservatism. In this community, the rural-oriented immigrant groups on "The Flats" best fit in this category, for they desired to retain the status quo as much as the natives---but for different reasons. See Emile Durkheim, Suicide (Glencoe, 1951), 250.

ity in the social structure is necessary to avoid stagnation and discontent, in Red Oak Junction inflexibility was necessary to avoid disintegration of the rural society. As a result, the "proper role" of the immigrant as defined by the native elite was often unconsciously maintained by the immigrant himself. William Planck's attempts at social climbing, for example, were viewed by most members of his own subculture as gauche. Planck violated the unwritten law of the "proper role" which his own subculture either accepted in resignation or in fear of change.¹⁰⁴ If the immigrant did not recognize his position, and sought instead to challenge the structure, with few exceptions he left the County.

The "proper role" of the immigrant, whether he was Swedish, Welsh or Irish, is reflected in the manuscript census records of 1870 and 1880. In 1870, when the native residents accounted for more than 76 percent of the total number of residents in the Town, the majority of the Swedish

104 In this connection it is revealing to observe the sub-cultural cleavage between the Swedish Mamrelund Lutheran Church congregation at Stanton and at Red Oak. According to one informant, there yet remains an awareness of difference between the two congregations. The Stanton settlement Lutherans still look upon the Red Oak Lutherans as "bad Lutherans"---in part because of their assimilation and compromising attitude towards the native-American population.

and Welsh were either a) single male Swedish railway workers boarding in fellow native homes (i.e., John Holms, Lewis Pierson, and John Shepard homes); or b) single male immigrants residing in boarding houses (i.e., George Gaffe and Theodore Coonse boarding establishments). The remaining immigrants were often domestic servants in local homes (i.e., Charles H. Lane and three Swedish maids; Charles Bolt and one Welsh and Swedish manservant; Jason B. Packard, one Swedish domestic). A decade later, the same characteristic pattern emerges with an increase in Russian families,¹⁰⁵ and some dispersion of Swedish and other immigrant families in the City.¹⁰⁶ Significantly, by 1880 there is a definite increase in the use of Swedish and Welsh women as domestic servants who lived within the household.

105 By 1880, The Wombold, Wyman, Eisel, Webber, and Graff families substantially increased the size of "Russiatown."

106 Characteristically, the Swedish families who were able to move into their own home in the City allowed other single Swedish boarders to live with them (i.e., Olof Anderson and his four boarders; John Nordquist and eleven boarders beside his own family of six; Martin Hanson, a local cabinet maker, and his six boarders). Other foreign families either lived in George Leonard's boarding house (Leonard himself was an immigrant from Ireland), or lived separately in small one-family dwellings (i.e., Christian Ploghft and George Peters families from Prussia; John M. Woltz, a house painter from France).

Was there social mobility in this frontier community? Yes, if one speaks in terms of economic mobility, there was significant social mobility. However, if one speaks in terms of status mobility, there was very little social mobility. The best you can say is that at least in this frontier community, where the pioneers met and mingled, some varieties of social mobility were in existence for all. But the most significant result of the frontier experience in this case was not the development of an equalitarian spirit, or the creation of "an inventive turn of mind," but the creation of intense status discrepancies.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 17.

CHAPTER VI

THE MYTH OF FRONTIER EQUALITARIANISM

In view of the concentration of at least two distinct subcultures in the County, the Swedish in Frankfort, Grant, and Scott Townships, and the Welsh in Lincoln Township, and their increase in social as well as spatial cohesiveness through the years 1870-1920, it appears that there was actually very little social integration with the native-American population. The marriage registers and divorce records of Montgomery County further encourage this conclusion.¹ It has been assumed throughout this study that land ownership and settlement patterns (property and spatial mobility, respectively) studied through time reveal the relative degree of assimilation and interaction achieved by native and foreign-born groups alike. No effort has been made here to define precisely the social classes as they existed, or to

¹ There is no evidence of any significant number of foreign-born settlers marrying American natives in this period. Even at the second intergenerational level, the majority of the sons and daughters of foreign-born immigrants, whether by choice or circumstance, married within their own settlement.

take into consideration either the occupational or political mobility factors as they operated in this area.² It is obvious from this study, however, that it would be very unusual to find an immigrant settler, his son, or even his grandson in the seat of the president of the Farmer's National Bank at Red Oak either in 1870 or in 1920. As this is a rural county, a tripartite division of the lowest economic class like Thernstrom's would reveal very little.³ If such factors as the total amount of property amassed and occupational status were examined in more depth, the charge could be justifiably levelled that it was probably the lack of education at the intragenerational level that prevented the immigrant groups from assuming influential positions

2 This, because I found in this County a condition not unlike that described by Stephan Thernstrom in Newburyport, Massachusetts. That is, the first and second-generation immigrant families who dominated the "foreign" element from 1870-1920 remained essentially at a static occupational level. This is not particularly surprising, as most of the settlers in this rural County were farm laborers or were engaged in secondary farm industries. As this remained the basis for the economic subsistence of the area in these years, there was little change in occupational status apart from property accumulation.

3 Stephan Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress (New York, 1970), 91. Thernstrom divides his working class population into three categories in his social mobility study of Newburyport, Massachusetts.

in the social matrix of the dominant American native society.

While this study does not pretend to present a blocked mobility hypothesis, there is increasing evidence to indicate that less social mobility existed in this rural County than Turner's thesis would have us believe. According to Turner, "at the frontier, the bonds of custom are broken and unrestraint is triumphant." Each advance of the frontier furnished "a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past . . . and a scorn of older society." Turner saw the individual pioneer causing the "breaking down of social isolation" and the formation of a "common national feeling" as a result of the frontier experience. Class and social stratification were nonexistent in this social laboratory as "the free lands were too close at hand, the opportunities for social advancement too numerous for social stability." Here in a wilderness environment where every man was "free to hew out his own destiny," Turner proclaimed "equality of opportunity meant equality of condition." In the "free competitive conditions" of the West with its primitive society, "absence of restraint and a wealth of opportunities," Turner saw "the

fundamental social ideals of America" established.⁴

This study of Montgomery County, Iowa, reveals severely restricted social mobility existed even in the most heterogeneous Township in the County, Red Oak. Groups of Russian immigrants from Saratov, for example, who began arriving in the village of Red Oak Junction after the abortive "Revolution of 1905," found their fellow nationals segregated south of the railroad yards in an area referred to as "Russiatown."⁵ The creation of subcultures was not restricted to the Welsh and Swedish immigrants.

The endogamous marriage patterns characteristic of the Welsh, Swedish, and native American groups across the County were also prevalent among other foreign groups. In Red Oak Township, for example, Elijah Gaff, a native of Norfolk, England, who came to the County in 1875, married

4 Wilbur R. Jacobs (ed.), America's Great Frontiers and Sections (Lincoln, 1965), 167, 186, 187.

5 Among those Russians who came to Red Oak Junction in the early twentieth century were the families of Gottlieb Reifschneider (1906); Johannes Grasnick (1913); John Wagner (1913); and Ludwig Bekel (1912). Already situated in "Russiatown" were the families of Alexander Meng (1892); Johann J. Schenck (1900); David Weimeister (1894); Z. Malinofsky (1893); I. H. Nazareus (1882); and Peter Wombold (1886). See Naturalization: First Papers, II; Petition and Record of Naturalization, IV, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

Sarah A. Oliver, another native of England, at Red Oak in 1879. In the same township the Hollander, G. Y. Diedericks, left the County and returned after marrying another Hollander in St. Louis in 1881. In 1871, an Irish immigrant, Patrick Rooney, journeyed to Council Bluffs, Iowa, to marry another Irish native, Miss Allen Gonnonde. Ben Stroh and Carl Gebbers, both originally from Hanover, Germany, each married immigrant German women at Red Oak Junction. In West Township, another Englishman, David Birbeck, went to Chicago to marry the English immigrant, Anna Earl. The list is almost endless. The point is, endogamous marriage within the foreign or native group was the rule---perhaps in part because of a group cohesion fostered by common customs, but surely due to native-American exclusion to some extent.⁶

Assuming that a very restricted social mobility did characterize the County in this period, the question of why such a situation developed in the first place then arises. Ironically, the core of that answer lies in Turner's own concept of the frontier as a moving process. To Turner

⁶ Marriage Register, I, Clerk of the District Court, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa; History of Montgomery County, Iowa (Des Moines, 1881), 633, 661, 687, 689, 710, 732. In this connection it is revealing to observe that David Birbeck and Anna Earl were from the same village in Westmoreland County, England.

there was "a recurrence of the process of social evolution in each area of the West reached in the course of expansion." In this "competitive society of a primitive economic type," in direct contradiction to Turner, equality of opportunity did not mean equality of condition. On the contrary, as the settlers demonstrated by their movement and settlement in groups (as opposed to Turner's implied individual family movement), this primitive frontier environment encouraged the reinforcement of group cohesion, familiar mores, and the very crystallization of differences which the pioneers supposedly "instinctively opposed."⁷

In agreement with Turner's concept of "a recurrence of the process of evolution" with each successive frontier, it appears that Turner overestimated the effect of "the traces which persisted in the character of the people" after the initial settlement frontier moved on. Throughout the period treated in this study, the major foreign and native concen-

⁷ According to Turner, what the pioneers "instinctively opposed was the crystallization of differences, the monopolization of opportunity, and the fixing of that monopoly by government or by social customs." Later Turner observed that in the "free competitive conditions of the West, equality of opportunity meant equality of condition." See Ray Allen Billington, The Frontier in American History (Chicago, 1964), 342; Wilbur R. Jacobs (ed.), America's Great Frontiers and Sections, 187.

trations experienced a constant movement westward by members of those settlements. A transient group, many of the settlers of the 1860's and 1870's had moved on west by 1900 to seek more opportunity. This alone, however, would not in itself produce the limited social mobility and lack of integration which characterized the County. On the contrary, one might expect at first glance the creation of a tightly-knit, conservative society in the County where diminished immigrant and native concentrations would be assimilated into a homogeneous frontier society centered around Turner's "common national feeling." Left behind in the settlement frontier's movement west, Turner's "Americanization process" might have taken place were it not for two factors: neither did Montgomery County remain stable in terms of particular family concentrations nor did it turn inward to a forming societal homogeneity.⁸

Throughout the period, similar groups replaced those who had already coped with the "frontier environment" before moving on farther west. Thus, as each new group arrived to fill the vacuum created by the departure of another, the whole process of adjustment was forced to begin anew. As

⁸ Jacobs (ed.), America's Great Frontiers and Sections, 162, 167, 184.

new native Americans replaced other pioneer native-American settlers, or as new immigrants arrived from Sweden or Wales to occupy immigrant and native lands, any social assimilation, accommodation, or adjustment patterns that had been developing collapsed in the wake of the departure of the first residents and the arrival of the second. As Turner failed to observe, each new group was forced to develop its own particular scheme of adjustment.⁹ So, while Turner's process of the settlement frontier continued to encourage a certain portion of the County's residents to emigrate as the area became more "civilized," that same process reintroduced a "frontier" social environment through the introduction of new native American and foreign-born immigrants who arrived to fill that void.¹⁰ As we have seen, these new groups sought safety in numbers, and were hardly inter-

9 Certain forms of coping and adjustment were retained, i.e., the legal system, the town sites, particular modes of farming, but nonetheless, to a great extent each new group was forced to develop its own particular scheme of social adjustment once again.

10 In this reinstated "frontier" environment, whatever efforts at assimilation that had been successful in the past were for nought. As a result, the initial reaction to a strange environment by native and foreign-born settler alike may have unintentionally buttressed the already cohesive ethnic settlement concentrations characteristic of the early period.

ested in intermingling or assimilating---they were too busy just coping with the change in their own environment!

No one for a moment would seriously entertain the notion that this reintroduction of a "frontier" environment by the movement of population was an overnight phenomenon. On the contrary, it developed over a long period of time. For example, while the first settlers were centralized around "Wales" by about 1880, it was not until well after 1890 that the majority of this foreign group was displaced by another. The point is, such a displacement did indeed occur; and this, coupled as it was with the language barriers and alien custom bases, encouraged a high level of social isolation at the same time it discouraged social assimilation.

Turner suggested that men moving into the "frontier" were forced to reshape their original institutions and cultural baggage as they adapted themselves to a new environment. They left social and economic controls behind them because "as they left older communities, they abandoned a static social organization and entered an unorganized society where new conditions prevailed." Turner felt "free lands meant free opportunities." As a haven for the oppressed and a model for the East, "best of all, the West

gave . . . a vision of hope."¹¹

To find one factor which explains why two distinct and separate subcultures formed in this period is impossible, for we cannot interview the participants, and even if that were possible, it is unlikely they would be willing or even able to explain their awareness and reaction to the second-class citizen mentality that seemed to characterize the native American's view of the "foreign" settler. However, from the evidence presented here, it appears that one or both of the following occurred: (1) the foreign-born settlers refused to forsake their native heritage and be totally assimilated by the dominant native-American culture, and as a result turned to ethnic consolidation to preserve that heritage; (2) initially treated as second-class citizens by the dominant culture, the foreign-born settlers began this social and physical consolidation as a means of coping, and as resignation followed the latter groups' failure to break into the native-American culture on an equal basis, what began as an initial coping reaction became a way of life. In effect finding the "game" was fixed, the immigrant groups

¹¹ Nelson Klose, A Concise Guide to the Study of the Frontier (Lincoln, 1964), 5; Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 33.

countered with their own "game" and effectively excluded the native-born Americans.¹²

Seemingly, after having just finished reading Turner's thesis, the author of one of the County histories, W. W. Merritt (himself a native New Englander and resident of northern Frankfort Township), observed that "pioneer society was a true democracy, dominated by the spirit of brotherhood." In his county, the pioneers "met and mingled together---all class distinctions were done away with and party lines in church and state obliterated." Speaking specifically of the early pioneers from the Old Northwest and New England areas, Merritt remarked that those settlers "were scornful of social and class distinctions." At the same time, Merritt devotes but two pages of his volume to "The Foreign Element," as he calls it. By 1906, when the book was published, this "foreign element" represented more than 30 percent of the total population of Montgomery County!¹³

¹² Ironically, Turner himself pointed out the pioneers realized "the game must be played according to the rules. There must be no artificial stifling of equality of opportunity, no closed door to the able, no stopping the game before it was played to the end." See Billington, The Frontier in American History, 342.

¹³ W. W. Merritt, A History of Montgomery County, Iowa From the Earliest Days to 1906 (Red Oak, 1906), 37, 39. Refer also to Appendix B.

An observer in the Red Oak Independent optimistically observed in 1895 that "somehow in this beautiful, blue grass region of Iowa, the grass grows greener, the skies are bluer, the sun shines brighter, and the people are happier and more contented and prosperous than anywhere else on earth."¹⁴ And yet, underneath this peaceful facade lay a society controlled in the main by a dominant native-American elite, with at least two subcultures, Welsh and Swedish, going about their business, each seemingly oblivious of the others' existence. In fact, a sort of mutual exclusion seemed to characterize the relations of the two main subcultures with that of the prevailing Anglo-Saxon mentality.¹⁵

In 1890, one of Red Oak Junction's more prominent citizens remarked, "if you want to find a place where you can live and have everything you need to make you comfortable and happy, Montgomery County is the place."¹⁶ This must

14 Red Oak Independent, VIII (January, 1895), 17.

15 To realize the strength of this ethnic settlement concentration effect, it is revealing to observe that throughout the period the two main subcultures, the Welsh and the Swedish, did not cooperate either socially, economically, or politically.

16 Attributed to Justus Clark, The Illustrated West (October, 1891), 21.

have been the case, as many settled in the County and remained, not moving on to the frontiers of the Far West. But did the existence of free land and frontier conditions produce here the equalitarianism which Turner painted so vividly? Was Montgomery County a place where rugged individualism, democracy, political liberalism, and innovation flourished?¹⁷ The facts suggest a different story. If, as Frederick Jackson Turner wrote, the West at bottom was "a form of society rather than an area . . . where . . . both native settler and European immigrant saw in this fierce and competitive movement of the frontier the chance to break the bondage of social rank," Montgomery County was not in the "West."¹⁸

This much at least is clear: Montgomery County, Iowa, was no melting pot or crucible for the foreign-born settler. What hopes the immigrant may have had for social mobility outside of his own subculture were dashed by the harsh reality of native-American prejudice. The fact that a "crystallization of differences" actually formed and a

17 As suggested by Marcus Cunliffe, Pastmasters (New York, 1969), 105.

18 Frederick Jackson Turner in Billington, The Frontier in American History, 154.

"monopolization of opportunity fixed by social customs" was nearly achieved, indicates the weakness of the Turner thesis. In reply to Turner, Montgomery County offered to the immigrant settler a limited freedom of opportunity, intense class and status discrepancies, many social barriers, and a resistance to the formation of any "composite nationality" or "mixed race." Instead of individual pioneers braving "the winds of the prairies" that swept away inequality to make a better life, Montgomery County was characterized by group movements, group settlements, and intense group cohesiveness. As a "gate of escape from the bondage of the past," the existence of "free land" did not affect the "Americanization process" and allow for "economic equality and the freedom to rise." There was no "free land" to be had for the taking---the Swedish and Welsh immigrants, as well as the native American settlers, were forced to purchase their land when they arrived in the area previously surveyed and organized with a commercial-speculative orientation.¹⁹

19 Many of the first native settlers, i.e, the Packard, Richards, Merritt and Bond families, came to the County to engage in land speculation and town promotion. See Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 8, 10, 33; Billington, The Frontier in American History, 342, 348.

If, as Frederick Jackson Turner maintained, the process of social change was the same on all frontiers, the inadequacies of the frontier hypothesis in Montgomery County indicate the weakness of that thesis generally as an explanation of American development. Ray Allen Billington has suggested to the author that Montgomery County may have been an "island of settlement separated from the mainstream of the frontier process," and thus not subject to Turner's "freedom of the west with its primitive society, absence of restraint, and a wealth of opportunity."²⁰ Until comparative studies of neighboring counties in the states of Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, and Minnesota are made, we will never know if Montgomery County was an "island" as Billington suggests or if its lack of assimilation was characteristic of the entire settlement frontier.

20 Ray Allen Billington to author, Western Historical Association Meeting at Omaha, Nebraska, October, 1969. See also Frederick Jackson Turner in Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis, 28. Billington himself has reformulated Turner's concept of the moving frontier by postulating that the frontier "seldom moved in orderly fashion, but twisted awkwardly, leaving islands of settlement amidst the wilderness." See Billington's America's Frontier Heritage (New York, 1966), 24.

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APPENDIX A*

Population Totals by Township*

| | <u>1854</u> | <u>1856</u> | <u>1860</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>Douglas Twp.</u> (organized 3/20/57) | | | 212 |
| (Milford) | | | |
| <u>Washington Twp.</u> (organized April, 1859) | | 276 | 210 |
| <u>Jackson (East) Twp.</u> (organized 7/3/54 and reorganized 1910) | | 261 | 241 |
| (Villisca) | | | |
| <u>Pilot Grove Twp.</u> (organized 9/6/70) | | | |
| <u>Frankfort Twp.</u> (organized 3/20/57) | | | 285 |
| <u>Stanton (Scott) Twp.</u> (organized 6/8/70 and reorganized 9/6/70) | | | |
| (Stanton town) | | | |
| <u>Sherman Twp.</u> (organized 1/8/68) | | | |
| (Elliott) | | | |
| (Stennett) | | | |
| <u>Red Oak Twp.</u> (organized April, 1859) | | | 207 |
| (Red Oak town) | | | |
| <u>Grant Twp.</u> (organized 1/8/68) | | | |
| (Coburg) | | | |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

| | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>Lincoln Twp.</u> (organized 1/8/68) | <u>1854</u> | <u>1856</u> | <u>1860</u> |
| <u>Walnut (Garfield) Twp.</u> (organized 9/7/71 and reorganized 6/8/82) | | | |
| <u>West Twp.</u> (organized 7/3/54) | | 335 | 90 |
| Total Montgomery County, Iowa: | <u>233</u> | <u>872</u> | <u>1256</u> |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Douglas Twp.</u> | <u>1863</u> 197 | <u>1865</u> 224 | <u>1867</u> 295 | <u>1869</u> 375 | <u>1870</u> 467 |
| (Milford) | | | | | |
| <u>Washington Twp.</u> | 209 | 230 | 289 | 334 | 426 |
| <u>Jackson (East) Twp.</u> | 304 | 284 | 314 | 424 | 1109 |
| (Villisca) | | | | | 457 |
| <u>Pilot Grove Twp.</u> | | | | | |
| <u>Frankfort Twp.</u> | 242 | 335 | 485 | 237 | 437 |
| <u>Stanton (Scott) Twp.</u> | | | | | |
| (Stanton town) | | | | | |
| <u>Sherman Twp.</u> | | | | 184 | 295 |
| (Elliott) | | | | | |
| (Stennett) | | | | | |
| <u>Red Oak Twp.</u> | 194 | 319 | 575 | 820 | 3539 |
| (Red Oak town) | | | | | 1315 |
| <u>Grant Twp.</u> | | | | 191 | 351 |
| (Coburg) | | | | | |
| <u>Lincoln Twp.</u> | | | | 89 | 195 |
| <u>Walnut (Garfield) Twp.</u> | | | | | |
| <u>West Twp.</u> | 72 | 143 | 114 | 238 | 432 |
| Total: | <u>1218</u> | <u>1535</u> | <u>2072</u> | <u>2892</u> | <u>5934</u> |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

| | <u>1873</u> | <u>1875</u> | <u>1880</u> | <u>1885</u> | <u>1890</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <u>Douglas Twp.</u> | 514 | 656 | 849 | 868 | 943 |
| (Milford) | | | 235 | | |
| <u>Washington Twp.</u> | 553 | 648 | 760 | 867 | 839 |
| <u>Jackson (East) Twp.</u> | 1407 | 1625 | 2203 | 2419 | 2536 |
| (Villisca) | 642 | 836 | 1299 | 1401 | 1744 |
| <u>Pilot Grove Twp.</u> | 492 | 677 | 878 | 982 | 913 |
| <u>Frankfort Twp.</u> | 364 | 527 | 817 | 854 | 887 |
| <u>Stanton (Scott) Twp.</u> | 367 | 502 | 1139 | 1351 | 1386 |
| (Stanton town) | | | 247 | 352 | 399 |
| <u>Sherman Twp.</u> | 411 | 684 | 979 | 1053 | 1020 |
| (Elliott) | | | 177 | | 317 |
| (Stennett) | | | | 304 | |
| <u>Red Oak Twp.</u> | 4121 | 4484 | 4646 | 4200 | 4184 |
| (Red Oak town) | 1665 | 1823 | 3755 | 3410 | 3321 |
| <u>Grant Twp.</u> | 620 | 852 | 980 | 797 | 854 |
| (Coburg) | | | 83 | 151 | 60 |
| <u>Lincoln Twp.</u> | 343 | 541 | 885 | 818 | 801 |
| <u>Walnut (Garfield) Twp.</u> | 512 | 654 | 785 | 694 | 697 |
| <u>West Twp.</u> | 573 | 812 | 974 | 847 | 788 |
| Total: | <u>8601</u> | <u>10389</u> | <u>15895</u> | <u>15901</u> | <u>15886</u> |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Douglas Twp.</u> | <u>1895</u> 936 | <u>1900</u> 963 | <u>1905</u> 906 | <u>1910</u> 868 | <u>1915</u> 902 |
| (Milford) | 143 | | | | 314 |
| <u>Washington Twp.</u> | 944 | 948 | 716 | 791 | 732 |
| <u>Jackson (East) Twp.</u> | 2849 | 3147 | 2587 | 2666 | 2799 |
| (Villisca) | 2034 | 2211 | 2035 | 2039 | 2132 |
| <u>Pilot Grove Twp.</u> | 843 | 837 | 565 | 745 | 671 |
| <u>Frankfort Twp.</u> | 850 | 887 | 623 | 736 | 687 |
| <u>Stanton (Scott) Twp.</u> | 1510 | 1369 | 1347 | 1398 | 1505 |
| (Stanton town) | 518 | 404 | 588 | 653 | 705 |
| <u>Sherman Twp.</u> | 1123 | 1223 | 1010 | 1111 | 1152 |
| (Elliott) | 440 | 516 | 468 | 528 | 558 |
| (Stennett) | 38 | | | | |
| <u>Red Oak Twp.</u> | 5052 | 5417 | 5158 | 5530 | 6310 |
| (Red Oak town) | 4224 | 4355 | 4632 | 4830 | 5601 |
| <u>Grant Twp.</u> | 876 | 796 | 614 | 819 | 762 |
| (Coburg) | 171 | 164 | 167 | 177 | 176 |
| <u>Lincoln Twp.</u> | 720 | 728 | 532 | 636 | 536 |
| <u>Walnut Twp.</u> (Garfield) | 662 | 684 | 514 | 618 | 587 |
| <u>West Twp.</u> | 754 | 804 | 560 | 666 | 654 |
| Total: | <u>17119</u> | <u>17985</u> | <u>17021</u> | <u>16604</u> | <u>17297</u> |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

| | <u>1920</u> | <u>1925</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <u>Douglas Twp.</u> | 919 | 834 |
| (Milford) | | 285 |
| <u>Washington Twp.</u> | 737 | 709 |
| <u>Jackson Twp.</u> | 2726 | 2601 |
| (Villisca) | 2111 | 2034 |
| <u>Pilot Grove Twp.</u> | 727 | 668 |
| <u>Frankfort Twp.</u> | 734 | 614 |
| <u>Stanton (Scott) Twp.</u> | 1413 | 1316 |
| (Stanton town) | 749 | 669 |
| <u>Sherman Twp.</u> | 920 | 1027 |
| (Elliott) | 586 | 498 |
| (Stennett) | | |
| <u>Red Oak Twp.</u> | 6293 | 6247 |
| (Red Oak town) | 5578 | 5617 |
| <u>Grant Twp.</u> | 736 | 674 |
| (Coburg) | 170 | 176 |
| <u>Lincoln Twp.</u> | 576 | 635 |
| <u>Walnut Twp.</u> | 572 | 548 |
| <u>West Twp.</u> | 715 | 612 |
| Total: | <u>17048</u> | <u>16476</u> |

APPENDIX A (Continued)

*Derived from John A. Hull, Iowa Historical and Comparative Census...(Des Moines, 1883), pp. 199, 550; Compendium of the Tenth Census...(Washington, 1883), pp. 136-137; Compendium...Eleventh Census, Part I...(Washington, 1892), p. 154; Census of Iowa...(Des Moines, 1896), pp. 268, 55; report by County Auditor to State of Iowa...(Auditor's vault, R.O., Ia., dated 1904); Census of 1910, Vol. II...(Washington, 1913), pp. 608, 598; Census of 1915 for Iowa...Population Bulletins...(Des Moines, 1916), pp. 12-30; 14th Census of the United States...(Washington, 1923), Part I, Volume VI, pp. 157, 217, 216, 422, 213; miscellaneous reports in census file of Montgomery County Auditor, 1st floor, main vault. Note: the township totals are inclusive of the town population totals after 1870 since data is more readily available after that date.

The reader may be puzzled if he attempts to proof the population columns in this Appendix. A mixture of county, state, and national returns was used in each census year in order to achieve the broadest breakdown of population in the County. As a result of varying reports, the population totals compiled by the U. S. Census Bureau do not correlate with the figures recorded for each township. However, as it is impossible to correct a census error after so long a time, I have retained all the census figures as they were initially recorded to provide the reader with some idea of the approximate number and/or proportion of residents in the various areas.

APPENDIX B*

Foreign and Native Population Ranked by Number and Percentage of Total Population in Montgomery County (1860-1920)*

1860

Foreign Born Native (no exclusion of foreign or mixed parentage)

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------|-----------------------|
| 21 (100%) | 1235 (100%) | ----- | 1256 total population |
| 2% ----- | 98% ----- | | 100% |

1870

Foreign Born Native (native born, foreign parents included)

| | | | |
|------------|--|-------|-----------------------|
| | 1 Iowa (1641) 32% | | |
| | (other) Ill., Ohio, Pa., Ind., N.Y. (3617) 68% | | |
| 676 (100%) | 5238 (100%) | ----- | 5934 total population |
| 11% ----- | 89% ----- | | 100% |

1880

Foreign Born Native (after 1880, NB indicates fp, mixed, n parents)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Sweden (1254: 51%) | 1 Iowa (5670: 42%) |
| 2 England and Wales (380: 16%) | 2 Illinois (2098: 15%) |
| 3 Germany (268: 10%) | 3 Ohio (1430: 10%) |
| 4 Canada (183: 7%) | 4 Pennsylvania (865: 6%) |

APPENDIX B (Continued)

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5 Ireland (182: 7%) | 5 Indiana (830: 6%) |
| 6 Scotland (43: 2%) | 6 New York (799: 5%) |
| 7 Other (138: 7%) | 7 Other (1755: 16%) |
| 2448: 100% | 13447: 100% |
| | 15895 tp. |
| 15% ----- | 85% |

1890

| <u>Foreign Born</u> | <u>Native Born, NP</u> | <u>NB, Foreign or Mixed</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Sweden (1468: 60%) | 1 Iowa | |
| 2 E and W (336: 13%) | 2 Illinois | |
| 3 Germany (254: 10%) | 3 Ohio | |
| 4 Canada (118: 4%) | 4 Pennsylvania | |
| 5 Ireland (106: 4%) | 5 New York | |
| 6 Scotland (42: 2%) | 6 Indiana | |
| 7 Other (98: 7%) | 7 Other | |
| 2422: 100% | 10094: 100% | 3294: 100%---15886 tp. |
| 15% ----- | 65% ----- | 20% |

APPENDIX B (Continued)

1895

| <u>Foreign Born</u> | <u>Native Born, NP</u> | <u>NB, Foreign or Mixed</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Sweden (1653: 64%) | 1 Iowa (6509: 59%) | |
| 2 E and W (325: 12%) | 2 Illinois (1434: 13%) | |
| 3 Germany (263: 10%) | 3 Ohio (993: 9%) | |
| 4 Canada (108: 4%) | 4 Indiana (441: 4%) | |
| 5 Ireland (84: 3%) | 5 Pennsylvania (440: 4%) | |
| 6 Russia (38: 1%) | 6 New York (331: 3%) | |
| 7 Other (139: 6%) | 7 Other (884: 8%) | |
| 2610: 100% | 11032: 100% | 3477: 100%-17119 tp. |
| 16% ----- | 64% ----- | 20% |

1900

| <u>Foreign Born</u> <u>fp</u> | <u>Native Born, np</u> | <u>Native Born, f or m</u> <u>parents</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Sweden (1516: 65%) | 1 Iowa | 1 Sweden |
| 2 E and W (267: 11%) | 2 Illinois | 2 E and W |
| 3 Germany (241: 10%) | 3 Ohio | 3 Germany |
| 4 Canada (86: 3%) | 4 Indiana | 4 Canada |

APPENDIX B (Continued)

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 5 Ireland (80: 3%) | 5 Pennsylvania | 5 Ireland |
| 6 Russia (30: 1%) | 6 New York | 6 Russia |
| 7 Other (100: 7%) | 7 Other | 7 Other |
| 2320: 100% | 11383: 100% | 4282: 100%-17985 tp. |
| 13% ----- | 63% ----- | 24% |

1905

| <u>Foreign Born</u> <u>fp</u> | <u>Native Born, np</u> | <u>Native Born, f or m</u> <u>parents</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Sweden (1486: 67%) | 1 Iowa | 1 Sweden |
| 2 E and W (211: 10%) | 2 Illinois | 2 E and W |
| 3 Germany (167: 7%) | 3 Ohio | 3 Germany |
| 4 Canada (84: 3%) | 4 Indiana | 4 Canada |
| 5 Ireland (70: 3%) | 5 Pennsylvania | 5 Ireland |
| 6 Russia (60: 2%) | 6 New York | 6 Russia |
| 7 Other (116: 8%) | 7 Other | 7 Other |
| 2194: 100% | 10781: 100% | 4009: 100%-17021 tp. |
| 13% ----- | 64% ----- | 23% |

APPENDIX B (Continued)

1910

| <u>Foreign Born</u> <u>fp</u> | <u>Native Born, np</u> | <u>Native Born, f or m</u> <u>parents</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Sweden (1372: 64%) | 1 Iowa | 1 Sweden (1629) |
| 2 E and W (204: 10%) | 2 Illinois | 2 Germany (238) |
| 3 Germany (168: 7%) | 3 Ohio | 3 E and W (203) |
| 4 Greece (97: 4%) | 4 Indiana | 4 Ireland (82) |
| 5 Canada (75: 3%) | 5 Pennsylvania | 5 Canada (44) |
| 6 Ireland (60: 2%) | 6 New York | 6 Norway (44) |
| 7 Other (178: 10%) | 7 Other | 7 Other (1647) |
| 2154: 100% | 10563: 100% | 3887: 100%-16604 tp. |
| 13% ----- | 63% ----- | 24% |

1915

| <u>Foreign Born</u> <u>fp</u> | <u>Native Born, np</u> | <u>Native Born, f or m</u> <u>parents</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Sweden | 1 Iowa | 1 Sweden |
| 2 E and W | 2 Illinois | 2 Germany |
| 3 Germany | 3 Ohio | 3 E and W |
| 4 Greece | 4 Indiana | 4 Ireland |
| 5 Canada | 5 Pennsylvania | 5 Canada |

APPENDIX B (Continued)

| | | |
|------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 6 Ireland | 6 New York | 6 Norway |
| 7 Other | 7 Other | 7 Other |
| 1890: 100% | 10957 : 100% | 4414: 100%-17297 tp. |
| 11% ----- | 67% ----- | 25% |

1920

| <u>Foreign Born</u> <u>fp</u> | <u>Native Born, np</u> | <u>Native Born, f or m</u> <u>parents</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Sweden (1167: 72%) | 1 Iowa | 1 Sweden |
| 2 E and W (119: 7%) | 2 Illinois | 2 Germany |
| 3 Germany (87: 5%) | 3 Ohio | 3 E and W |
| 4 Russia (82: 5%) | 4 Indiana | 4 Ireland |
| 5 Canada (41: 2%) | 5 Pennsylvania | 5 Canada |
| 6 Ireland (29: 1%) | 6 New York | 6 Norway |
| 7 Other (: 7%) | 7 Other | 7 Other |
| 1618: 100% | 11554: 100% | 3821: 100%-17048 tp. |
| 9% ----- | 67% ----- | 24% |

*Derived from various census records and manuscript data. See listing of U. S. Government documents in Bibliography and Appendix A for specific sources.

APPENDIX C*

Percentage of Native and Foreign-Born Residents
1870-1915 by Township*

| | (1870) | | (1880) | |
|-------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Native | Foreign | Native | Foreign |
| Douglas | 94 | 6 | 85 | 15 |
| Grant t. | | | | |
| Washington | 75 | 25 | 69 | 32 |
| East | 97 | 3 | 92 | 8 |
| Villisca t. | 82 | 16 | 82 | 16 |
| Pilot Grove | 86 | 14 | 86 | 14 |
| Frankfort | 98 | 2 | 34 | 66 |
| Scott | 12 | 88 | 18 | 82 |
| Stanton t. | | | | |
| Sherman | 74 | 26 | 74 | 26 |
| Elliott t. | | | | |
| Stennett t. | | | | |
| Red Oak | 88 | 12 | 86 | 14 |
| Red Oak t. | 91 | 9 | 88 | 12 |
| Grant | 97 | 3 | 38 | 62 |
| Coburg t. | | | | |

APPENDIX C (Continued)

| | (1870) | | (1880) | |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Native | Foreign | Native | Foreign |
| Lincoln | 91 | 9 | 72 | 28 |
| Walnut | 64 | 36 | 64 | 36 |
| West | 72 | 28 | 72 | 28 |

APPENDIX C (Continued)

| | (1895) | | (1905) | |
|-------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Native | Foreign | Native | Foreign |
| Douglas | 55 | 45 | 80 | 20 |
| Grant t. | 86 | 14 | | |
| Washington | 67 | 33 | 67 | 33 |
| East | 83 | 17 | 79 | 21 |
| Villisca t. | 85 | 15 | 83 | 17 |
| Pilot Grove | 80 | 20 | 75 | 25 |
| Frankfort | 30 | 70 | 32 | 68 |
| Scott | 16 | 84 | 13 | 87 |
| Stanton t. | 11 | 89 | 13 | 87 |
| Sherman | 75 | 25 | 78 | 22 |
| Elliott t. | 80 | 20 | 77 | 23 |
| Stennett t. | 87 | 13 | | |
| Red Oak | 79 | 21 | 60 | 40 |
| Red Oak t. | 72 | 28 | 62 | 38 |
| Grant | 40 | 60 | 34 | 66 |
| Coburg t. | 72 | 28 | 79 | 21 |
| Lincoln | 36 | 64 | 40 | 60 |
| Walnut | 60 | 40 | 65 | 35 |
| West | 70 | 30 | 66 | 34 |

APPENDIX C (Continued)

| | (1915) | |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| | Native | Foreign |
| Douglas | 48 | 52 |
| Grant t. | 86 | 14 |
| Washington | 69 | 31 |
| East | 77 | 23 |
| Villisca t. | 82 | 18 |
| Pilot Grove | 76 | 26 |
| Frankfort | 32 | 68 |
| Scott | 26 | 74 |
| Stanton t. | 19 | 81 |
| Sherman | 80 | 20 |
| Elliott t. | 78 | 22 |
| Stennett t. | | |
| Red Oak | 61 | 39 |
| Red Oak t. | 71 | 29 |
| Grant | 42 | 58 |
| Coburg t. | 74 | 26 |
| Lincoln | 54 | 46 |
| Walnut | 57 | 43 |
| West | 67 | 33 |

APPENDIX C (Continued)

*Derived from John A. Hull, Iowa Historical and Comparative Census...(Des Moines, 1883), pp. 199, 150; Compendium of the Tenth Census...(Washington, 1883), pp. 136-137; Compendium ...Eleventh Census, Part I...(Washington, 1892), p. 145; Census of Iowa...(Des Moines, 1896), pp. 268, 55; report by Montgomery County Auditor to State of Iowa...Auditor's main vault, R. O., Iowa, dated 1904; Census of Iowa for 1910... Volume II, (Des Moines, 1911), p. 12-30; Census of 1910, Volume II...(Washington, 1913), p. 608; Census of Iowa for 1915...Volume II...(Des Moines, 1916), p. 437; miscellaneous reports in census file of Montgomery County Auditor, first floor, main vault, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa. Notice that the use of the letter "t" indicates an incorporated settlement area. Red Oak Township and town were computed through the use of the sample, and not by manuscript census examination.

APPENDIX D*

Population Gain by Percentage 1875-1926

| TOWNSHIP | 1870 | 1880 | 1885 | 1890 | 1895 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1926 |
|-----------|----------|------|----------|------|---------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| FRANKFORT | 75 | 80 | | 90 | | 1900 | | | |
| | (55%+) | | (8.4%+) | | (0%+) | | | | |
| SCOTT | 75 | 80 | | 90 | | 1900 | 10 | 20 | |
| | (12.6%+) | | (21.7%+) | | (1.2%+) | | (2.1%+) | (8.2%+) | |
| GRANT | 75 | 80 | | | | 1900 | 10 | | |
| | (15%+) | | | | | | (2.9%+) | | |
| RED OAK | 75 | 80 | | 90 | | 1900 | 10 | 20 | 26 |
| | (25.0%+) | | | | (2.9%+) | | (2%+) | (1.3%+) | (0%+) |
| LINCOLN | 75 | 80 | | | | | | 20 | 26 |
| | (6.3%+) | | | | | | | | (10%+) |

*Derived from U. S. Census records. See Appendices A and C for specific sources.

APPENDIX E*

Population Loss by Percentage 1875-1926

| TOWNSHIP | 1870 | 1880 | 1885 | 1890 | 1895 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1926 |
|-----------|------|---------------------------|---------|------|--------|---------|---|-------------------|------|
| FRANKFORT | | | | | | | 1800 → 10 → 20 → 26 (17.7%)-(10.01%)-(16.6%) | | |
| SCOTT | | | | | | | | 20 → 26 (6.9%) | |
| GRANT | | 80 → 90 → 100 | (12.8%) | | (6.7%) | | 10 → 20 → 26 (10.1%)-(7.9%) | | |
| RED OAK | | 80 → 90 | (10%) | | | | | | |
| LINCOLN | | 80 → 90 → 100 → 10 → 20 → | (9.49%) | | (9%) | (12.6%) | (9%) | | |

*Derived from U. S. Census records. See Appendices A and C for specific sources.

APPENDIX F*

Population Origins*

| | <u>1860</u> | <u>1870</u> | <u>1880</u> | <u>1890</u> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Canada | | | 183 | 118 |
| Sweden | | | 1254 | 30 |
| Norway | | | | |
| England | | | | 166 |
| Wales | | | 380 | 170 |
| Ireland | | | 182 | 106 |
| Scotland | | | 43 | 42 |
| Russia | | | | |
| Germany | | | 268 | 254 |
| Austria | | | | |
| Switzerland | | | | |
| Hungary | | | | |
| Greece | | | | |
| Denmark | | | | |
| Italy | | | | |
| Czechoslovakia | | | | |
| Belgium | | | | |
| France | | | 14 | 12 |
| Total foreign born: | 21 | 676 | 2448 | 2422 |
| Iowa | | 1641 | 5670 | |
| Illinois | | | 2098 | |
| Ohio | | | 1430 | |
| Pennsylvania | | | 865 | |
| New York | | | 799 | |
| Indiana | | | 830 | |
| (Scattered U. S.) | | 3617 | | |
| Total native born: | 1235 | 5258 | 13447 | 13426 |
| Native (foreign or mixed parentage: | | | | 3294 |
| Total Population of Montgomery County: | 1256 | 5934 | 15895 | 15886 |

APPENDIX F (Continued)

| | <u>1895</u> | <u>1900</u> | <u>1910</u> | <u>1920</u> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Canada | 108 | 49 | 75 | 41 |
| Sweden | 1653 | 852 | 1372 | 1555 |
| Norway | 38 | 11 | 19 | 12 |
| England | 159 | 80 | 114 | 66 |
| Wales | 166 | 70 | 90 | 53 |
| Ireland | 84 | 45 | 60 | 29 |
| Scotland | 34 | 17 | 23 | 18 |
| Russia | 38 | 17 | 45 | 82 |
| Germany | 263 | 135 | 168 | 7 |
| Austria | 4 | | | 10 |
| Switzerland | 13 | 7 | 11 | |
| Hungary | | 1 | | |
| Greece | | | 97 | 7 |
| Denmark | 16 | 7 | 15 | 23 |
| Italy | | | | |
| Czechoslovakia | | | | |
| Belgium | | | | |
| France | 17 | 7 | 9 | 11 |
| Total foreign born: | 2610 | 2320 | 2154 | 1618 |
| Iowa | 8451 | | | |
| Illinois | 1731 | | | |
| Ohio | 1129 | | | |
| Pennsylvania | 569 | | | |
| New York | 415 | | | |
| Indiana | 564 | | | |
| (Scattered U. S.) | | | | |
| Total native born: | 14509 | 11383 | 10563 | 15375 |
| Native (foreign or mixed parentage): | | 4049 | 3839 | 3821 |
| Total Population of Montgomery County: | 17119 | 17985 | 16604 | 17048 |

APPENDIX F (Continued)

*(Derived from John A. Hull, Iowa Historical and Comparative Census... (Des Moines, 1883), p. 217, p. 192; Compendium of the Tenth Census... (Washington, 1883), pp. 504, 419; Compendium of the Eleventh Census... (Washington, 1894), p. 628; Census of Iowa... (Des Moines, 1895), pp. 312, 206, 136; "Supplemental Statistics," 12th Census of the United States... (Washington, 1906), p. 1085; 13th Census (Vol. II) ... (Washington, 1913), p. 631; 14th Census (Vol. III)... (Washington, 1923), p. 334.)

The reader should not be surprised to find certain inconsistencies in this particular breakdown. As with Appendix A, we are at the mercy of the census takers of the past who often took great liberties. The incomplete reports of the latter, in addition to the divergent state and national figures, create an imprecise distribution of the ethnic origins of the County's residents, i.e., the Welsh population did not decline from 380 to 170 between 1880-1890; the Swedish population did not decline from 1653 to 852 between 1895-1900; the German population did not decline from 263 to 7 between 1895-1920. The value of this breakdown is in its reliable indication of the dominant Welsh and Swedish concentrations in terms of the total foreign-born community.

APPENDIX G*

Implicit Price Deflator for GNP*

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1874: 64.6 ^a | 1906: 53.8 | 1925:100.9 | 1943: 56.7 |
| 1884: 53.3 ^b | 1907: 56.0 | 1926:101.3 | 1944: 58.2 |
| 1889: 51.2 | 1908: 55.6 | 1927: 98.9 | 1945: 59.7 |
| 1890: 50.1 | 1909: 57.5 | 1928: 99.7 | 1946: 66.7 |
| 1891: 49.4 | 1910: 59.0 | <u>1929:100.0</u> | 1947: 74.6 |
| 1892: 47.6 | 1911: 58.8 | <u>1929: 50.6</u> | 1948: 79.6 |
| 1893: 48.5 | 1912: 61.1 | 1930: 49.3 | 1949: 79.1 |
| 1894: 45.5 | 1913: 61.5 | 1931: 44.8 | 1950: 80.2 |
| 1895: 44.8 | 1914: 62.1 | 1932: 40.2 | 1951: 85.6 |
| 1896: 43.7 | 1915: 64.1 | 1933: 39.3 | 1952: 87.5 |
| 1897: 43.9 | 1916: 72.3 | 1934: 42.2 | 1953: 88.3 |
| 1898: 45.2 | 1917: 89.1 | 1935: 42.6 | 1954: 89.6 |
| 1899: 46.7 | 1918:103.8 | 1936: 42.7 | 1955: 90.9 |
| 1900: 48.9 | 1919:106.4 | 1937: 44.5 | 1956: 94.0 |
| 1901: 48.5 | 1920:121.2 | 1938: 43.9 | 1957: 97.5 |
| 1902: 50.1 | 1921:103.3 | 1939: 43.2 | <u>1958:100.0</u> |
| 1903: 50.7 | 1922: 97.6 | 1940: 43.9 | <u>1958:101.6</u> |
| 1904: 51.3 | 1923:100.3 | 1941: 47.2 | 1960:103.3 |
| 1905: 52.5 | 1924: 99.1 | 1942: 53.0 | 1961:104.6 |

APPENDIX G (Continued)

1962:105.8

1963:107.2

1964:108.9

1965:110.9

1966:113.1

1967:116.3

1968:121.2

1969:127.7

1970:138.0 (November)

*(Derived from Economic Indicators, Government Printing Office, (December, 1970), p. 26; Business Conditions Digest (December, 1970), Bureau of the Census, GPO Series ES 1 #70-12, p. 98; Long Term Economic Growth, (1860-1965), GPO Series E 54-1, October, 1966, p. 200).

a(average for the decade 1869-1878)

b(average for the decade 1879-1888)

APPENDIX H*

The Basis for the Sample*

| | <u>Population</u> <u>1870</u> | <u>Population</u> <u>1875</u> | <u>Population</u> <u>1880</u> | <u>Sample</u> <u>x6</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Red Oak Township: | 3539 | 4484 | 4646 | 1314 |
| Red Oak City : | 1315 | 1823 | 3755 | 854 |

| | <u>Percentage</u> <u>of 1870</u> | <u>Percentage</u> <u>of 1875</u> | <u>Percentage</u> <u>of 1880</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Red Oak Township: | 36% | 29% | 28% |
| Red Oak City : | 65% | 46% | 22% |

*Derived from Census of Iowa...(Des Moines, 1905), p. 258-260; "Census File," Montgomery County Courthouse, Auditor's main vault, Red Oak, Iowa; Population Schedules of the Ninth Census of the United States: 1870, XXII: Montgomery County, Iowa, and Population Schedules of the Tenth Census of the United States, National Archives Records Service (Washington, 1967). See Bibliography for full citation.

APPENDIX I*

Sample Percentage of Native and Foreign-Stock Residents in
Red Oak Junction 1870-1920*

Percentage of Natives

| (Red Oak City) | (Red Oak Township) |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 17% Ohio | 24% Ohio |
| 13% Pennsylvania | 20% Pennsylvania |
| 13% New York | 19% New York |
| 6% Indiana | ----- |
| 5% Illinois | ----- |
| 3% New Hampshire | ----- |
| 13% (scattered) | 23% (scattered) |
| ----- | ----- |
| 70% Native | 86% Native |

APPENDIX I (Continued)

Percentage of Foreign-Stock

| (Red Oak City) | (Red Oak Township) |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 13% Sweden | ----- |
| 5% Germany | ----- |
| 5% Russia | ----- |
| ----- | ----- |
| ----- | ----- |
| ----- | ----- |
| 7% (scattered) | 14% (scattered) |
| ----- | ----- |
| 30% Foreign | 14% Foreign |

*Derived from History of Montgomery County, Iowa... (Des Moines, 1881), pp. 628-695; Compendium of the Tenth Census, Government Printing Office (Washington, 1883), p. 136; John A. Hull, Iowa Historical and Comparative Census, 1836-1880 ... (Des Moines, 1883), p. 550. Population Schedules of the Ninth Census of the United States: 1870, XXII, and Population Schedules of the Tenth Census of the United States, XXIV, on microfilm. See Bibliography for full reference.

Basing my sample on a cultural definition of "native" and "foreign" (See Chapter III, p. 64, Note 10), "foreign-stock" refers to both foreign-born residents and those residents with foreign parents who were indeed native Americans by birth, but who were yet "foreign" in terms of the cultural heritage of the dominant society. An effort was made here to create a sample which would closely approximate the actual native and foreign-born breakdown recorded by various official census bureaus. (See Appendix J.)

APPENDIX J*

Actual Percentage of Native and Foreign-Born Residents in
Red Oak Junction, 1880-1910*

| | <u>Percentage of Natives</u> | <u>Percentage of Foreign-Born</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1880 Census: | 76% | 24% |
| 1890 Census: | 82% | 18% |
| 1895 Census: | 71% | 29% |
| 1905 Census: | 62% | 38% |
| Average for 25 Year Period: | 73% | 27% |

*(Derived from Compendium of the Tenth Census, Government Printing Office, (Washington, 1883), p. 136; Compendium... Eleventh Census, Part 1... (Washington, 1892), p. 547; Census of Iowa: 1895, (Des Moines, 1896), p. 136; Population of 1900, U. S. Bureau of the Census, (Washington, 1901), I, 617; Census of Iowa: 1905, (Des Moines, 1906), p. 258; "Official Census Returns," Montgomery County Courthouse, Auditor's main vault, Red Oak, Iowa.

APPENDIX K*

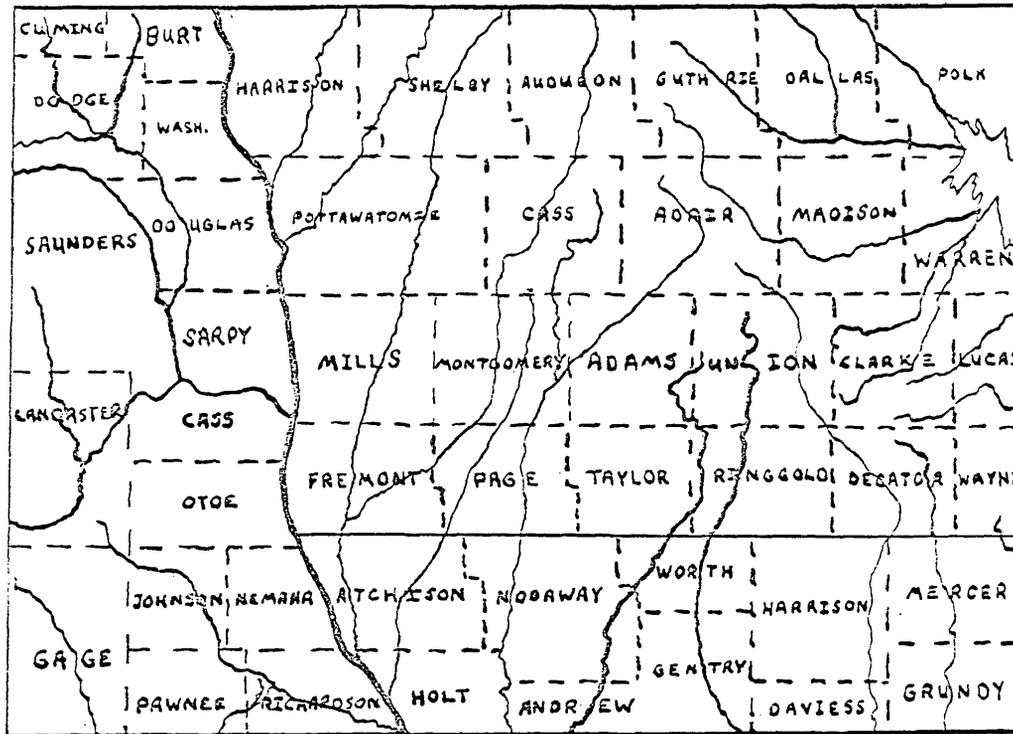
Economic Class Levels in Montgomery County, Iowa*

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| "Lower" ----- | "Middle" ----- | "Upper" |
| "Russiatown" ----- | "The Flats" ----- | "The Hill" |
| (No Probate) ----- | (\$6-10,000) ----- | (\$5 million) |
| | (\$10,000-20,000) | |

* Above is an idealized continuum encompassing the economic classes as they existed in Montgomery County, Iowa, in the period 1870-1920. I have used the terms "lower", "middle", "upper", and degrees up or down from the latter to roughly define the economic matrix of the society. No attempt has been made here to arbitrarily establish guidelines for any social class. On the contrary, the use of 1970 implicit price deflators (Appendix G) in conjunction with the excavation of probate and estate records revealed the majority of either "native" or "foreign" settlers in the sample reached the medium economic range of \$10,000-\$20,000 (1970). As a result, I have termed this group loosely as "the middle economic class". My strongest defense is my reliance upon Albert Blumenthal's own PhD. dissertation. Blumenthal himself delimited a triparte division of class in his own Mineville with an "Old Aristocracy," a "Marginal Middle Class," and a group of "Shack People." I have similarly adjusted my research to form another triparte division of economic class. Economic mobility and status mobility are definitely related, however; it is not the intent or purpose of this study to find that relation. That there does indeed appear to be a striking correlation between residential patterning and economic class level would seem to suggest this as a fruitful area for future study. See Blumenthal, Small-Town Stuff, 16.

APPENDIX L

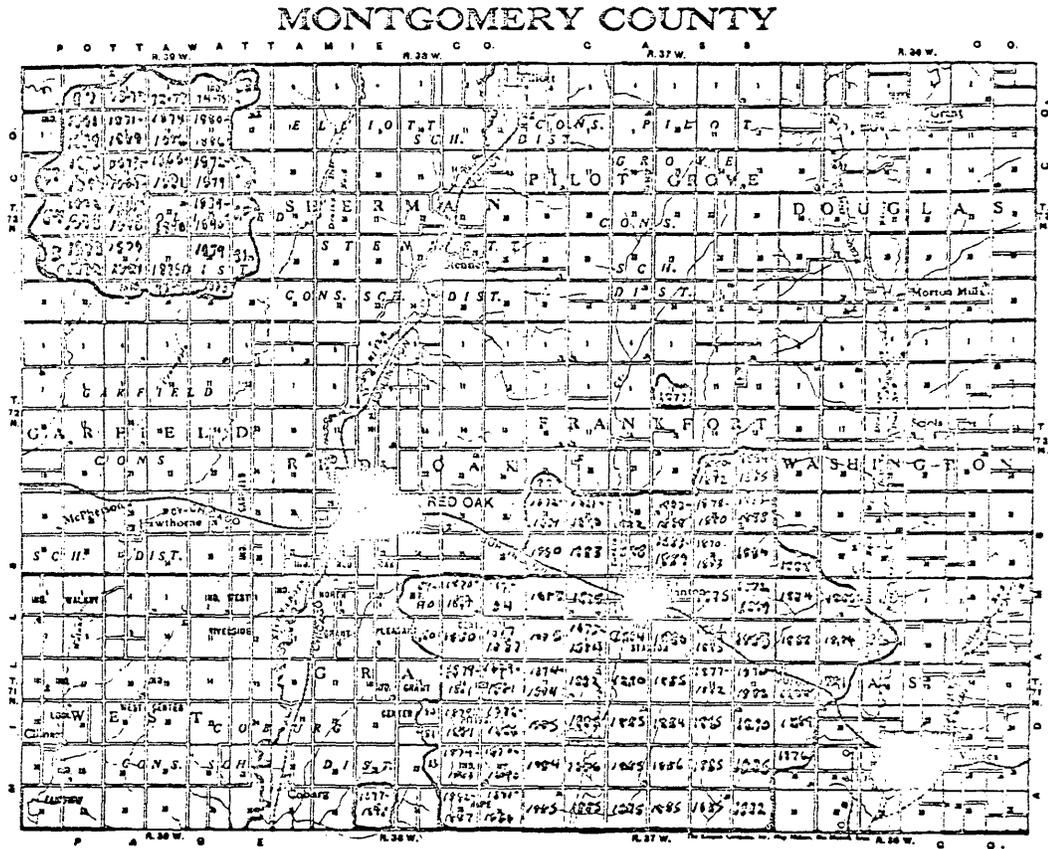
Montgomery County and
Neighboring Areas of Southwest Iowa



Derived from Rand McNally's New Cosmopolitan World Atlas
(New York, 1968), 92, 101, 103.

APPENDIX M

Montgomery County Ethnic Concentrations, 1870-1895



Derived from Montgomery County land transfer records and maps in the Auditor's Office, Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak, Iowa.

APPENDIX Q

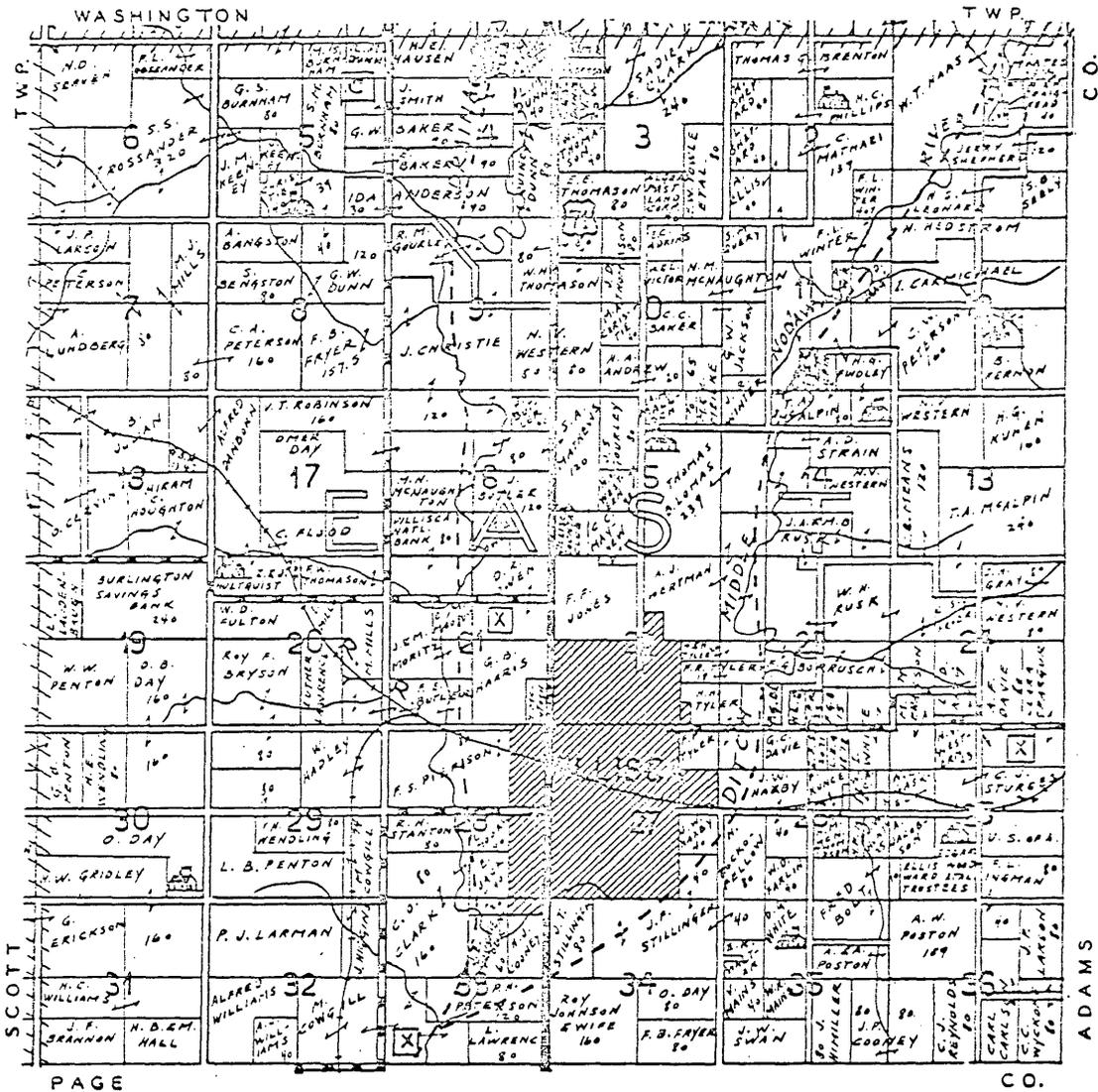
T.71N. GRANT TWP. R.38W. 10



Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1921), 10.

APPENDIX R

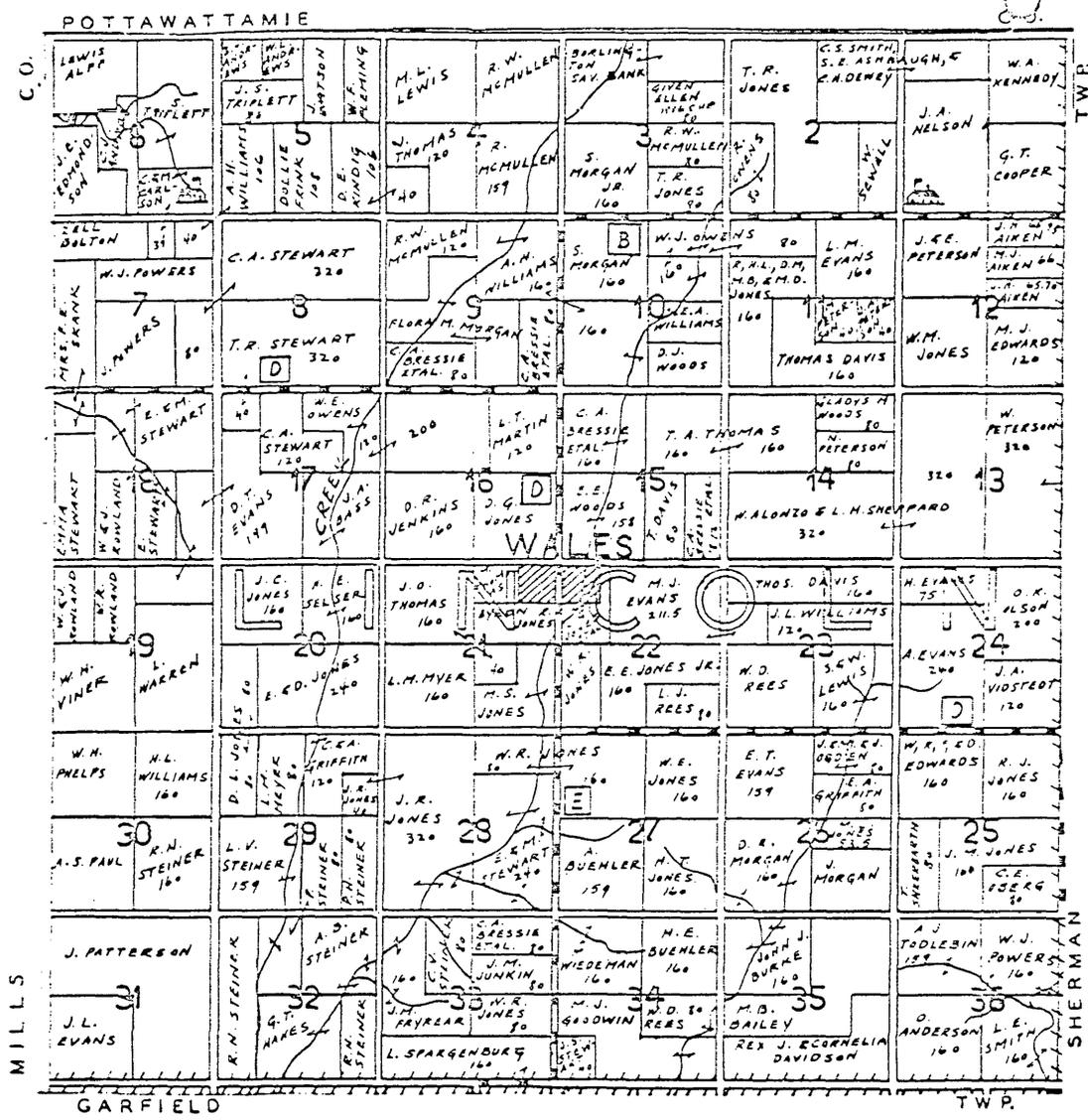
T.71N. EAST TWP. R.36 W. 12



Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1921), 12.

APPENDIX S

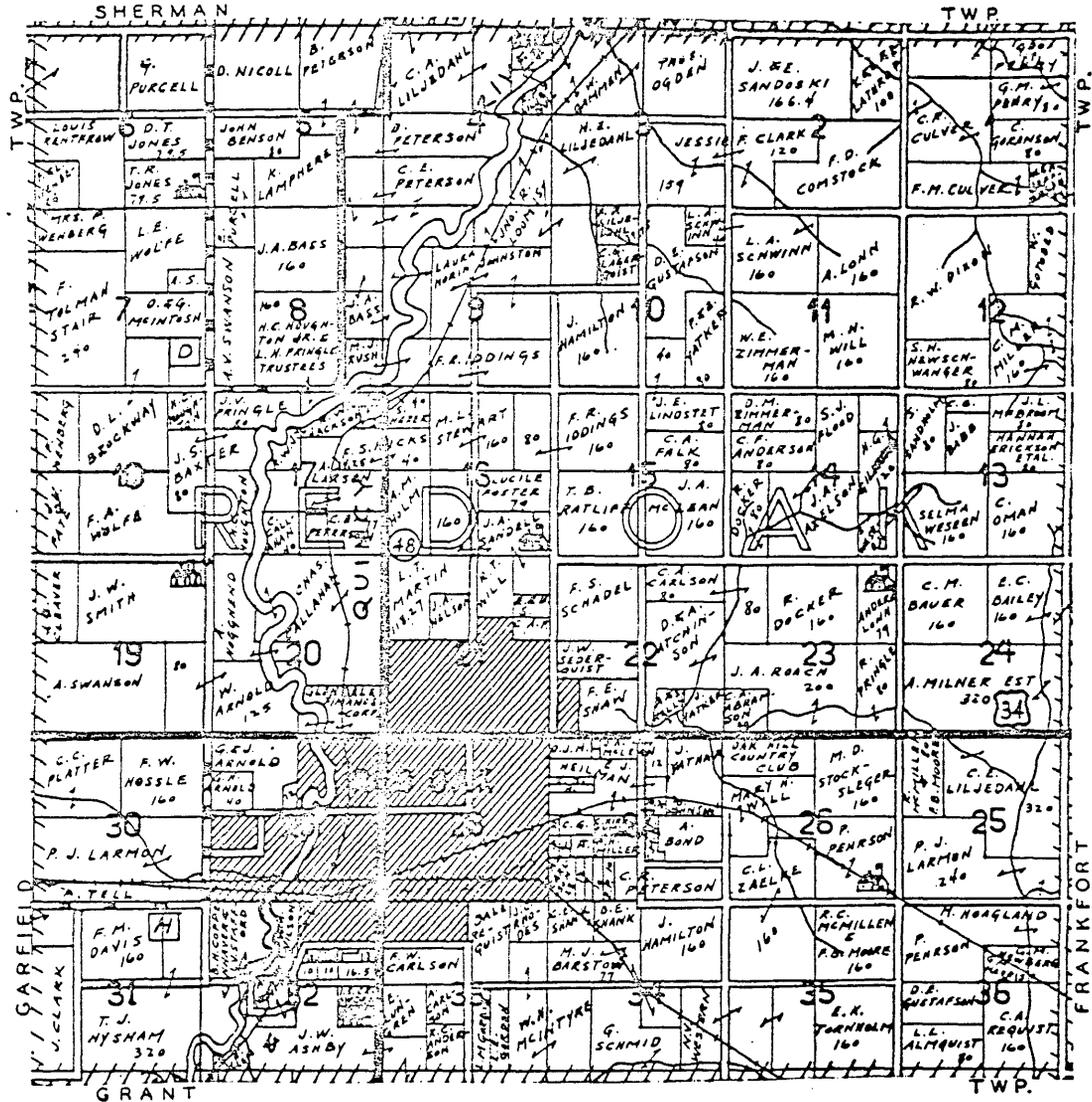
T.73 N. LINCOLN TWP. R.39 W.



Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1922), 1.

APPENDIX U

T.72N. RED OAK TWP. R.38W. 7

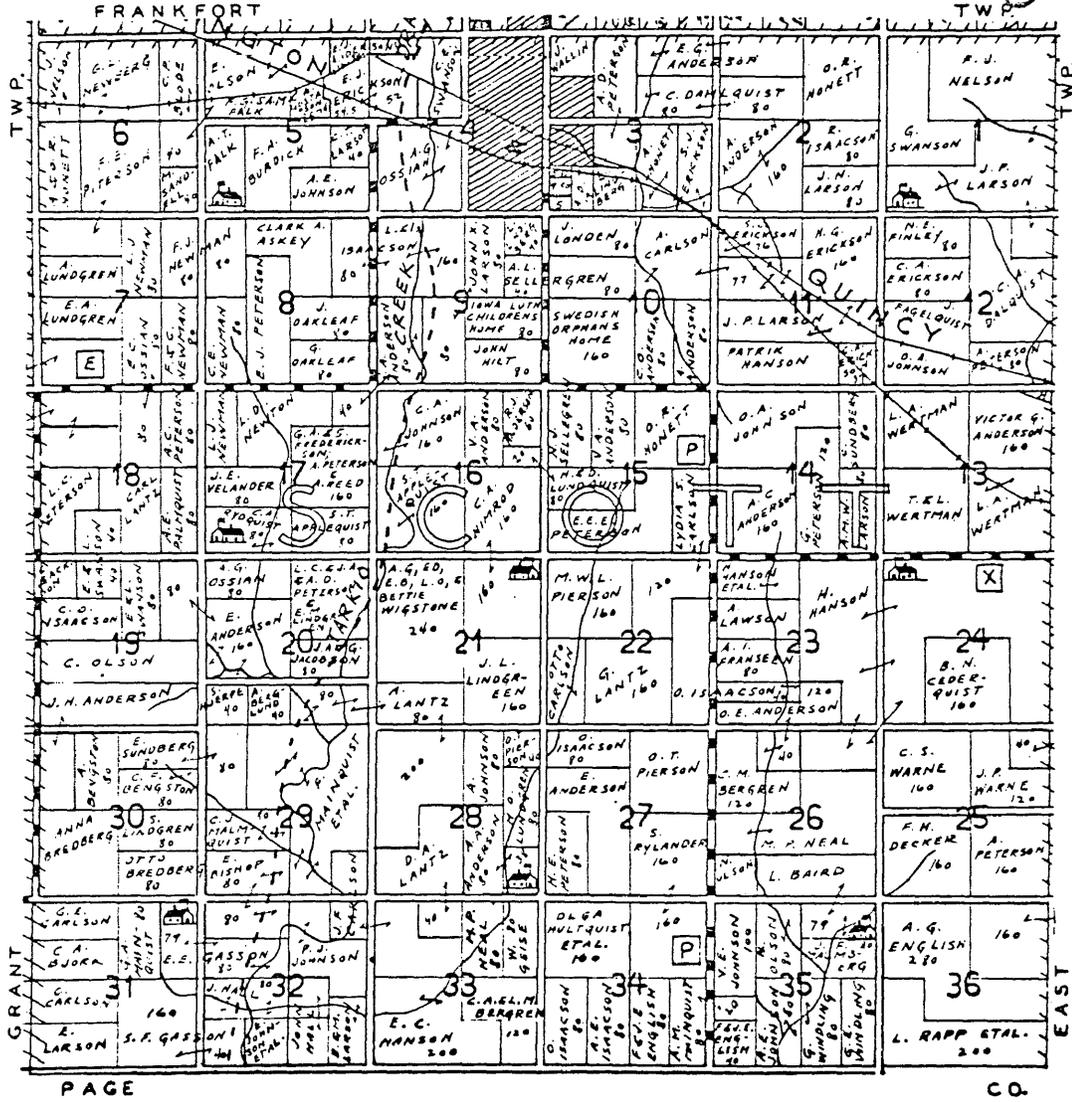


Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1921), 7.

APPENDIX V

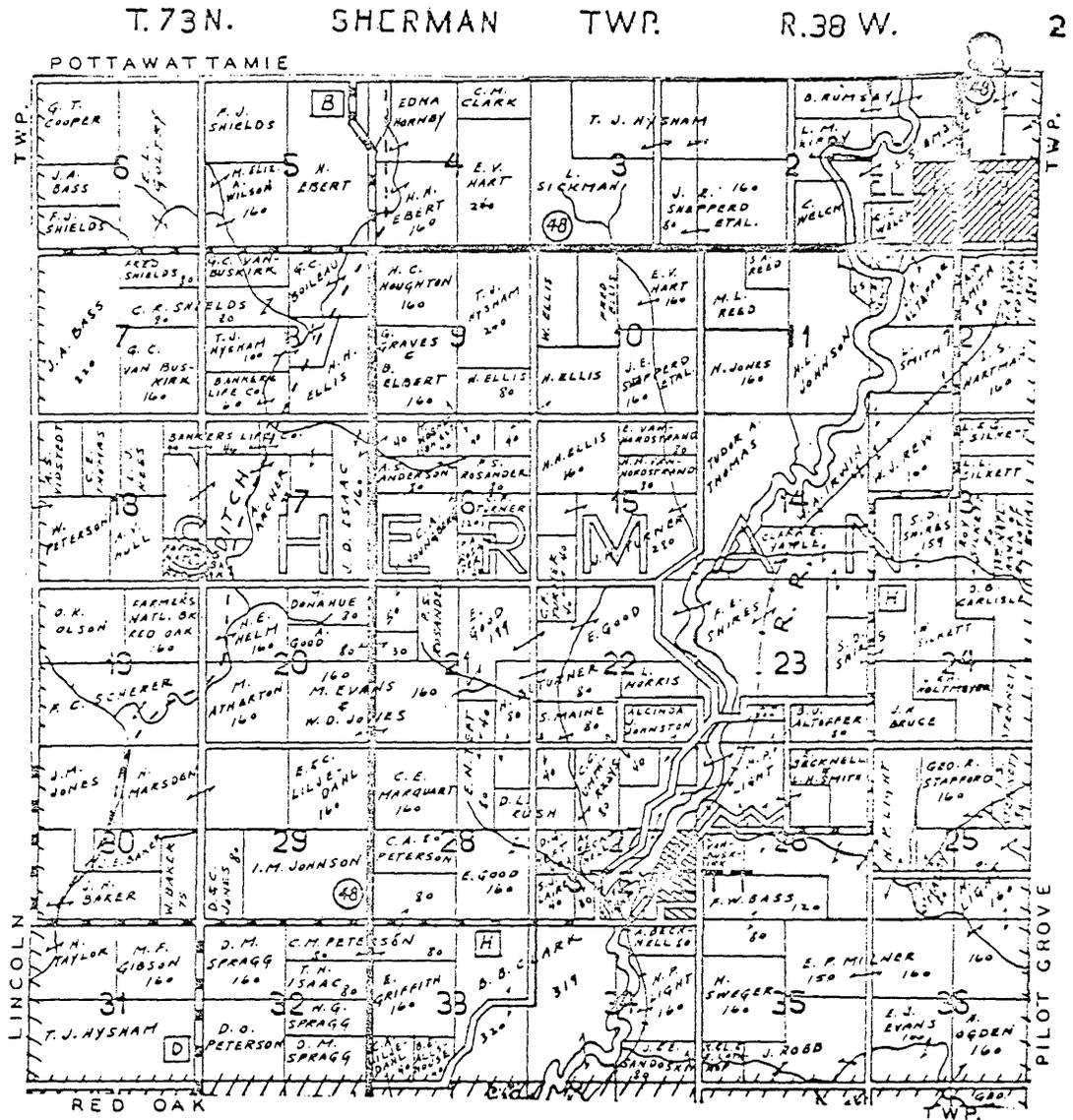
T.71N. SCOTT TWP. R.37W.

11



Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1921), 11.

APPENDIX W



Reproduced from Plat Book of Montgomery County (Red Oak, 1921), 2.

