

Marc Ferris, "The Workingman's Party of Hampshire County, 1811-1835" *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* Volume 18, No. 1 (Winter 1990).

Published by: Institute for Massachusetts Studies and Westfield State University

You may use content in this archive for your personal, non-commercial use. Please contact the *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* regarding any further use of this work:

masshistoryjournal@westfield.ma.edu

Funding for digitization of issues was provided through a generous grant from MassHumanities.



Some digitized versions of the articles have been reformatted from their original, published appearance. When citing, please give the original print source (volume/ number/ date) but add "retrieved from HJM's online archive at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/mhj/>."



The Workingmen's Party of Hampshire County, 1811-1835

Marc Ferris

Historians who describe the Workingmen's parties that surfaced in the northeast between 1827 and 1834 as class conscious "radicals" have been too eager to accept the movement's rhetoric at face value.¹ One must measure the public pronouncements of the first Workingmen's organization in Massachusetts, formed at Northampton in 1830, by the party leaders' private behavior. Clearly, this group was not the conduit of lower-class protest against the changes engendered by nascent industrialism. Rather, the Workingmen's Party in Hampshire County was a front for moneyed men without college connections to present themselves as the "people's" candidates. Superficially, party statements bristled with "radicalism," but ambitious entrepreneurs adopted seemingly explosive issues and rhetoric as a strategy to win elections and wrestle profits, prestige, and power from the county's lawyers.

Interpretations that portray the Workingmen's Party as evidence of emerging working-class consciousness often include the claim that the movement acted independently from the two major political parties of the Jacksonian era. In Massachusetts, the dominant Whigs battled the hapless Jacksonian Democrats, which regularized the struggle for office between competing groups of elites who dominated party organizations.² In Hampshire County, the Workingmen contributed to this political system, which crystallized after the November 1834 elections. The small cadre who led Hampshire

1. Sean Wilentz, Chants Democratic (New York, 1984), p. 195; Edward Pessen, Most Uncommon Jacksonians (Albany, 1967), p. 197; Helen L. Sumner, "Citizenship," in John R. Commons et. al., History of Labour in the United States (New York, 1918), I: 320; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Age of Jackson, (New York, 1945), pp. 32-33, 132-176.

2. Wilentz, Chants Democratic, p. 213; Ronald P. Formisano, The Transformation of Political Culture: Massachusetts Parties 1790s-1840 (New York, 1983), pp. 244, 268-343.

County's Workingmen's Party relied upon sweeping rhetoric, rowdy conventions, and safe and reliable issues to attract voters to the polls. They also blurred the distinction between parties, by exchanging personnel with the Democrats and the Whigs.

The Hampshire County group championed the causes of the region's often-ignored farmers and mechanics, and presented themselves as the true representatives of the downtrodden. However, the Workingmen's appeal to farmers and the issues they promoted were not new to the county's political discourse. One of the party's founders, the wealthy merchant and factory owner Thomas Shepherd of Northampton, had used a similar strategy to win elections for eight years before the appearance of the Workingmen's Party, and he incorporated these tactics into the Workingmen and eventually into the Democrats.

Thomas Shepherd's claim to speak for the "people" was dubious, since his father, the wealthy Hartford-born merchant Levi Shepard, had worked closely with Hampshire County "River Gods" Caleb Strong and Joseph Lyman to repel the farmer's revolt known as Shays' Rebellion in January of 1787. Shepard also developed the county's transportation improvements and business innovations, including the region's first canal in 1792 and the region's first bank in 1803. Spurred by a state bounty, Shepard built a duck-cloth factory in 1788, and became "Northampton's first industrialist." Levi Shepard was the region's pre-eminent non-native, who enjoyed favor from Hampshire County's aristocrats because he possessed liquid capital.³

After his father's death in 1805, twenty-seven year-old Thomas Shepherd probably assumed that he had inherited some political influence, at least in local affairs. Thomas maintained the store and built the family business into "Factory Village," the "first fully-developed factory on the Mill River." Shepherd was also one of the earliest American businessmen to import merino sheep, in an attempt to upgrade the wool supply. From his prestigious Round Hill mansion, Shepherd watched newcomers to Northampton rise in society as a result of their Harvard and Yale connections as well as their professional abilities. As early as 1806, Shepherd quietly began to

3. Shepherd Papers, Northampton Historical Society; James R. Trumbull, History of Northampton (Northampton, 1862), pp. 349, 429, 475-476, 576; Agnes Hannay, "A Chronicle of Industry on the Mill River," Smith College Studies in History (October 1935 to July 1936), XXI (nos. 1-4): 25-37.

organize merchants and entrepreneurs in political opposition to the county's entrenched lawyer-aristocracy.⁴

Shepherd challenged the region's powerful lawyers and professional men who jealously dominated Northampton's economic, social, and political institutions during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Northampton's most influential lawyers descended from the aristocratic "River Gods," who traced their lineage to the area's original settlers. Barristers controlled the (Calvinistic) First Church, the courts, the weekly *Hampshire Gazette*, and the Federalist Party, which exercised virtual political hegemony over the county. Hampshire County's aristocratic lawyers also possessed vast tracts of valuable and fertile land, intermarried with prominent family lines, and maintained connections with fellow Harvard and Yale graduates, including the state's most powerful political and economic leaders.⁵

Appealing to the majority of Hampshire County's voters and winning political office through elections was the most direct avenue to power for men like Thomas Shepherd, who met the state's property requirements for candidacy and aspired to rise in Northampton society. The other path to political office for non-professional men was to work hard for the opposition party, and hope to obtain an appointive office from either the governor or the president. Shepherd resented his subordinate status in Northampton society, which he first flouted by accepting Republican Governor Elbridge Gerry's appointment as county sheriff in 1811. Hampshire County's Federalists portrayed their Democratic-Republican rivals as "atheistic Jacobins," and referred to Gerry's ouster of long-standing Federalist

4. A. H. Cole, American Wool Manufacture (Cambridge, 1926), pp. 81, 233, 248; Margaret E. Martin, "Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley, 1750-1820," Smith College Studies in History XXIV (1938): 99-102, 176, 184-187, 193; Hampshire Gazette, April 23, 1806.

5. Caleb Strong was Northampton's most prominent citizen between the Revolution and his death in 1819. Joseph Lyman was the next most-revered "River God"-lawyer in the county. Except for Joseph Lyman's Agricultural Society, where Shepherd served on the "Standing Committee for Manufactures" from 1818 to 1820, Hampshire County's aristocratic organizations excluded Shepherd; James R. Trumbull, History of Northampton, pp. 593-604; Russell Walter Mank, Jr., "Family Structure in Northampton, Massachusetts, 1654-1729," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1975; Josiah G. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts (Springfield, 1855), p. 243; Papers of the Society for the Reformation of Morals, records of the directors of the Hampshire Bible Society, and the Secretary's Book of the Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin Agricultural Society, all in Forbes Library, Northampton.

appointees as the governor's "reign of terror." Shepherd accepted another controversial appointment before the decade ended. Acting as agent for the most despised Democratic-Republican, James Madison, Shepherd served as the county's Collector of the Direct Tax from 1815 to 1817. The next year, he added the abbreviation "Esq." to his name, and entered electoral politics as a candidate for state senator on the Democratic-Republican ticket, receiving only eighteen percent of the votes cast.⁶

Two subsequent events shaped Shepherd's political tactics. First, town patriarch and Federalist Party chieftain Caleb Strong died unexpectedly in 1819. Next, in 1821 a convention revised the state constitution to grant suffrage to all white male taxpayers. This gave Shepherd an opportunity to loosen the lawyers' stranglehold over politics, by catering to Hampshire County's newly-enfranchised farmers and mechanics, and by building a majority coalition of groups outside the Federalist Party mainstream. Caleb Strong's son, Lewis, a powerful Harvard-educated lawyer, guaranteed his political opponents a struggle by assuming leadership of Northampton society after his father's death.⁷

In the early 1820s, the principal instrument of Shepherd's goal of removing local lawyers from political office was the "Farmer's Ticket." Although he virtually formed the Farmer's Ticket, Shepherd never publicly associated his name with the group, thus freeing himself to run independently for state senator or congressman. During the early 1820s, Shepherd ran eleven times as "the People's Man" and the "anti-lawyer candidate." Shepherd's ticket first wooed votes in the spring of 1822 by calling on "the Yeomanry, the bone and muscle of the nation," to take "from off their own farms" two senatorial candidates "whose interests and feelings are in unison with

6. Hampshire Gazette, November 6 and 13, 1811; Shepherd Papers, Northampton Historical Society; Journal of Debates and Proceedings in the Convention of Delegates Chosen to Revise the Constitution of Massachusetts (Boston, 1853), p. 649; a freehold in one's "own right" of 300 pounds, or a "personal estate" of 600 pounds, qualified senatorial candidates; Hampshire County's arch-Federalists, particularly Caleb Strong, who helped organize the Hartford Convention in 1815, despised Madison for embroiling the nation in a war with England; Hampshire Gazette, October 20 and 27, and November 3, 1818; the Federalists presented Jacobins as "[monsters] more hideous and deformed than morbid fancy ever pictured on the mind of a fevered brain."

7. Hampshire Gazette, November 9, 1819; Henry Gere, Reminiscences of Old Northampton (Northampton, 1902), p. 27.

... the People." The next year, a handbill warned that "a powerful union of monied and professional gentlemen have heretofore governed the councils of our senate" and threatened to "destroy the republican simplicity of our institutions." Shepherd invited farmers to "put our hands on the plough and not look back till we have voted these gentlemen of the long robe from their seats in the senate." In the name of the newly-enfranchised farmers, the ticket complained that the Federalist-dominated state government wasted the taxpayers' money.⁸

Credibility problems plagued the Farmer's Ticket, as neither Shepherd nor his political allies were yeoman farmers. Merchant and bank investor Joseph Strong of South Hadley and Enfield lawyer Elihu Lyman were privileged first-family members who operated on the periphery of their eminent relatives' power. Another Shepherd cohort, Middlefield tavernkeeper-merchant and state militia General David Mack, Jr., inherited land and a homestead from his father, "the most prominent man during the first half century of [Middlefield's] existence." Between 1807 and 1826, Shepherd, Joseph Strong, Elihu Lyman, and David Mack initiated eighteen debt suits against Hampshire County yeomen. Farmer's Ticket candidates never enjoyed much support from the electorate because they stretched the truth too far.⁹ However, the group's rhetorical appeal to ordinary voters and claims to speak for "the people" made a significant impression upon county politics. All subsequent political opposition parties, including the Workingmen, built upon this formula.

The impact of the Farmer's Ticket was not confined to the county's political opposition. To counter Shepherd, Lewis Strong

8. Hampshire Gazette, March 20 and 27, April 3, 1822; April 2, 1823, and October 27, 1824; Shepherd's behind-the-scenes maneuvering was exposed in the Hampshire Gazette, March 20, 1822 and April 2, 1823.

9. Mary E. Sterngale and Henry S. C. Cummings, Jr., Middlefield History (n.p., 1985, in Forbes Library, Northampton), pp. 21-22; Edward Church Smith and Philip Mack Smith, History of Middlefield, Massachusetts, (n.p., 1924, in Forbes Library), pp. 97, 299, and 319; Lyman Coleman, Geneology of the Lyman Family in Great Britain and North America (Albany, 1872), p. 485; Benjamin W. Dwight, History of the Descendants of Elder John Strong of Northampton (Baltimore, 1984) II: 1137; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Boston, 1825) IX: 661-664; Hampshire Gazette, April 2, 1823 and March 16, 1825; Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Execution Book 4, p. 158; Execution Book 5, pp. 166, 182, 258, 370; Execution Book 6, pp. 173, 313, 424, 434, 519; Execution Book 7, pp. 118, 121, 193, 490, 525, 605; Execution Book 8, p. 51.

emphatically stressed his qualifications to represent the farming interest. Between 1824 and 1828, senatorial fields sometimes included nine contestants, only two of whom served. By necessity, a wide range of candidates adopted Shepherd's political tactics, and appealed to the broadest possible segment of the electorate. Springfield lawyer Samuel Lathrop's 1824 gubernatorial nomination was addressed to "brother farmers," and two years later the Federalists claimed that the "public good" required lawyer and Masonic Lodge Master Isaac C. Bates' election to Congress. In 1827, the lawyers promoted Bates as a "practical Farmer." Rhetorical battles between Shepherd's entrepreneurs and the lawyers, over which faction spoke for "the people," became part of Hampshire County's election ritual.¹⁰

Toward the middle of the 1820s, partisan political struggles abated as Hampshire County's prominent citizens and politicians developed the county's economy and infrastructure. Just as the county's politicians claimed that their private interest in getting elected benefitted the public, these men espoused the same philosophy to justify their responsibility for factories, banks, and the extension of the New Haven Canal into Massachusetts, a project that began in 1825. Thomas Shepherd's large investment won him a place on the canal corporation, where he served in a subordinate position to his political nemeses, including lawyers Joseph Lyman and Issac C. Bates, and Doctor Daniel Stebbins. In one of his public reports for the company, Shepherd presented the canal as a boon for "the whole population of New England," and he asserted that the waterway would "give profitable employment to the greatest number of people." Progress dragged, however, and the investors ultimately lost everything.¹¹

Between 1825 and 1828, Shepherd had ceased his independent bid for political office, but he again became disillusioned with the lawyers' leadership, especially after he lost his entire \$75,000 canal investment. In the spring of 1828, Shepherd took advantage of Andrew Jackson's political fortunes to revive the Farmer's Ticket and

10. Hampshire Gazette, April 2, 1823; March 31, 1824; November 1, 1826; and March 7, 1827.

11. Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, IX: 85; the Canal Company appointed Shepherd as an agent "to procure funds for the . . . survey" of the canal route; see Hampshire Gazette, April 20, 1825; Shepherd's report was printed in the Gazette, May 3, 1826.

Hampshire County's political opposition. Just as Shepherd promoted himself as the "people's man" to the county's voters, so did Andrew Jackson pose as the spokesman of the country's "common man." For this election Shepherd ran popular tavernkeeper Oliver Warner for senator, as "a practical Farmer," and revived his assault on the lawyers by adding that "the senate should not be filled with gentlemen of one profession only." The owner of the most famous hotel and saloon in western Massachusetts, as well as an investor in the canal and the Hampshire Mutual Insurance Company, Warner won a senate seat at the General Court, where he supported the National Republicans' "American System" of banks, internal improvements, and high tariffs.¹²

Maneuvering carefully through the county's hostile political climate, Shepherd and Warner clandestinely supported Andrew Jackson. Hampshire County's well-organized lawyers, now calling themselves National Republicans, controlled the region's two newspapers, the *Hampshire Gazette* and the newly-published *Northampton Courier*. Both papers relentlessly denounced Jackson and his allies, as did most of the Boston media. Anticipating the Tennessee general's election to the presidency, the lawyers called upon the county's voters to unite against the "crisis" and "imminent peril" that Jackson's victory represented.¹³

Shepherd recognized that Jackson had little appeal among Hampshire County's electorate, and through the spring 1830 elections he presented his political friends as "Farmer's Ticket" candidates. But Shepherd became permanently tarnished by his Jacksonian slant when he accepted the president's patronage appointment as Northampton postmaster in 1830, a position he held for the next eleven years. With his status as preeminent Democrat now public knowledge, Shepherd attempted to build a strong local party organization, and he sponsored the popular first-family descendent Chauncey Clark for register of deeds in March of 1830. Backing more than one candidate, Shephard also misrepresented a prominent Belchertown lawyer, Mason Shaw,

12. Hampshire Gazette, January 16 and April 2, 1828; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, IX: 85 and XI: 358; petition on file at the Massachusetts Archives; Henry Gere, Reminiscences of Old Northampton, p. 46; Gere asserted that Warner's name was "almost a household word" throughout Western Massachusetts, and that Warner "exerted a great influence in the community."

13. Hampshire Gazette, October 8, 1828.

whose "experience in Agriculture" Shepherd claimed, entitled Shaw to "a place on the Farmer's Ticket."¹⁴

The 1830 register of deeds contest permanently introduced to Hampshire County politics high-pitched partisan battles over the various political offices. The registry was a minor post, but candidates and their supporters went to great lengths to win. Hampshire's political opposition fervently pursued the office because the register served in the county courthouse, the lawyers' bastion, and because it was one of two elective county offices, the other eight being appointive. Calling himself the "voice of the Farmers in Northampton," Shepherd referred to the registry as "emphatically the Farmer's office," and he presented Clark to the county's yeomen as "one of their own class." Well-off since birth, Clark had inherited land and a homestead from his father, served as a business agent for his brother, Isaac, a prominent Northampton merchant, and signed the Hampshire Mutual Fire Insurance Company's petition to the General Court. In 1822, Clark had served as director of Caleb Strong's Bible Society.¹⁵

Hampshire County's National Republicans publicly denounced political factions, but "Judges, Sheriffs, and distinguished Lawyers" practically formed their own cabal by circulating a handbill throughout the county, to "secure the election" of Northampton's General Charles Hooker. Choosing from a field of eight candidates, about a quarter of the county's registered voters gave Hooker a plurality, and the election was rescheduled for May. This time Hooker outpolled Clark by a two-to-one margin, but he narrowly missed a majority. The election was rescheduled for September, when Hooker quietly obtained 740 votes to Clark's 210.¹⁶ In spite of the loss, under Shepherd a possibly successful county-wide political opposition had begun to emerge.

 14. *Ibid.*, March 10 and 24, 1830; Mark Doolittle, Historical Sketch of the Congregational Church in Belchertown, Massachusetts (Belchertown, 1852), p. 114; Shawn Bresnahan, Visions of a Time Past: Belchertown, 1790-1840 (Belchertown, 1983), p. 9.

15. Hampshire Gazette, March 31, 1830; Clark Genealogies, in Forbes Library, Northampton; Execution Book 8, Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, p. 623; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts XI (1831): 358, petition on file at the Massachusetts Archives; Records of the Directors, Hampshire County Bible Society, in Forbes Library; Hampshire Gazette, January 16, 1828.

16. Hampshire Gazette, March 17, 24, 31, April 7, 21, 28, May 5, 12, September 1, 8, 1830.

In the spring of 1830, news of the rapid proliferation of Workingmen's parties in New York State filtered into Northampton. Claiming to speak for the lower classes, the New York organization's approach meshed with Shepherd's Farmer's Ticket tactics.¹⁷ Because Shepherd and his followers relied upon the status quo for profits, stability, and stature, they adopted the Workingmen's guise to present themselves as genuinely distinct from the National Republicans, and to focus on relatively safe issues that they hoped would galvanize the voters without producing a true challenge to elite control.

In 1830, at a July 4 celebration, toasts rang out lauding "Farmers and Mechanics" as "the two pillars of strength and beauty in the temple of American Freedom." By September of 1830, the state's first Workingmen's organization, the Northampton Association of Farmers, Mechanics and Other Working Men, announced its existence. Four founders -- Thomas Shepherd, Chauncey Clark, town constable William W. Partridge, and "active, successful businessman" Theodore Sheldon -- outlined the organization's platform by delivering lengthy reports at weekly meetings. Shepherd's primary allegiance was to the Democrats. However, as dean of the county's political opposition, he helped organize the Workingmen to bombard the lawyers from as many angles as possible, accept the spoils of any Workingmen's electoral victory, and launch barbed anti-lawyer diatribes under the Workingmen's banner. Central to the Workingmen's platform was the party's opposition to imprisonment for debt, high governmental expenditures and salaries, and the compulsory militia system, all of which were stale issues that parties and candidates constantly relied upon to attract voters to the polls.¹⁸

To blunt the Workingmen's attack, the staunch National Republican *Northampton Courier* granted "cordial assent" to their rivals' principles. After lauding farmers and mechanics as the "bone and sinew of the state," editor Winthrop Atwill expressed his willingness to "lend our feeble assistance" to the Workingmen's cause. However, Atwill warned, "with political reformers and those who

17. *Northampton Courier*, May 19 and June 23, 1830.

18. *Northampton Courier*, July 7, August 4, 11, 18, 25, September 8, 15, December 8, 15, 1830, January 5, 12, 19, 26, 1831; Rev. Solomon Clark, *Antiquities, Historicals, and Graduates of Northampton* (Northampton, 1882), p. 195; Cornelius Dalton et al, *Leading the Way: A History of the Massachusetts General Court, 1629-1980* (Boston, 1984), p. 93; the *Hampshire Gazette*, November 4, 1812, carried a piece on wasteful public spending.

would breathe discord into this peaceful community, we have no fellowship or sympathy."¹⁹ The National Republicans censured the Workingmen's "proscription" of the lawyers, and debated the "Workies" over which party truly spoke for farmers and mechanics.

Since the Federalist Party was so powerful and cohesive, the Workingmen recognized the value of organization. Striving for respectability, in January of 1831 the Northampton Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Working Men began to correspond with other associations around the state. In March some of Shepherd's political allies organized auxiliary Workingmen's groups in the surrounding towns, and the Northampton movement mushroomed into the Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen of Hampshire County. The *Courier* afforded this group its "approbation," but warned about the large contingent of Jacksonians at the convention.²⁰

The Workingmen presented state government as the most effective regulatory panacea to the excesses of economic growth, and claimed that voting for their party's candidates would accomplish "all that the productive class ask or desire." For the 1831 spring election, the Hampshire County organization nominated for governor the state's first Workingmen's candidate, "prominent National Republican" Henry Shaw of Lanesboro. Recognizing the apparent contradiction, the party claimed that even though Shaw was "indeed a man of wealth and . . . high attainments," he was "politically a republican man." The Workingmen presented Shaw as the true representative of the farmers and mechanics, and they claimed that their candidate had "mingled with the people; he knows them, . . . and as a ruler should, he can feel for them." For state senate, the Workingmen endorsed Chauncey Clark and Ware tavernkeeper-merchant Joseph Cummings, a respected Congregationalist Church deacon and former National Republican, who "kept the only store" in town. The Workingmen scored modest victories, as Shaw did well countywide and Clark and Cummings were elected as Hampshire County senators.²¹ Political protest of

19. *Northampton Courier*, April 21, May 19, August 11, and December 15, 1830, January 12 and October 19, 1831.

20. *Northampton Courier*, January 19, February 2, 9, March 9, 1831; *Hampshire Gazette*, October 13, 1830.

21. *Hampshire Gazette*, March 9 and 16, and April 13, 1831; Ronald P. Formisano, *Transformation of Political Culture*, p. 226; Henry Gere, *Reminiscences of Old*

aristocratic rule in Jacksonian-era Massachusetts was not confined to the supposed spokesmen of the farmers and mechanics. The Antimasonic political movement that began in upstate New York in the late 1820s spread to the Bay State, as disaffected professional men who were not lodge members opened an Antimasonic front against the Boston Masons' hegemony over state politics. The surprise October 1831 Antimasonic nomination of Springfield lawyer Samuel Lathrop for governor derailed the politically inexperienced Workingmen's momentum in the county. Freemasonry was liberally represented in the Workingmen's leadership, who teamed up with local National Republicans to counter the Antimasonic threat. Notably, Workingmen's Party leaders Hiram Ferry, Benjamin E. Cook, William W. Partridge, and William W. Thompson all were Masons. Non-native professional men, including Dr. Daniel Stebbins and lawyers Charles E. Forbes and Isaac C. Bates, led Northampton's Jerusalem (Masonic) Lodge. Hampshire's first families had no need for Masonry's benefits, but they excoriated the attack on their eastern Massachusetts cronies and directed the county's defense against the "crisis" of Antimasonry. During this election, the National Republicans refrained from attacking the Workingmen and as a concession to their new coalition partners, the lawyers nominated Chauncey Clark and Joseph Cummings for the state senate, and they ran unopposed. Lathrop shocked the county's freemasons and their powerful supporters by winning every Hampshire County town but three in the gubernatorial race, but the Antimasons' statewide return was not as impressive, and National Republican Levi Lincoln was elected governor.²²

Another constitutional revision moved to November the elections for governor, senators, and representatives. In February of 1832, the various Workingmen's groups in southeastern New England federated into the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and Other Working Men, and they sought to organize a region-wide party structure to rival the National Republicans. The *New England*

Northampton, p. 126; by 1835, Cummings had returned to the Whigs: see Arthur Chase, *History of Ware, Massachusetts* (Cambridge, 1911), p. 119; *Hampshire Gazette*, March 12, 1828.

22. *Hampshire Gazette*, May 4, November 9 and 16, 1831; Amherst, Chester, and Pelham were the three towns Lathrop did not carry; *Northampton Courier*, October 12, 1831; Rev. E. B. Huntington, *A Geneological Memoir of the Lathrop Family* (Ridgefield, Conn., 1884), p. 185; "Records of the Masonick District in Mass., Comprising all the Lodges in the County of Hampshire," in Forbes Library.

Artisan, published in Boston by editor Charles Douglas, disseminated the party's views, which differed little from the Northampton Association's platform. The New England Association was a highly decentralized organization that met before elections to nominate candidates for governor, to appoint officers, to adopt the party's platform, and to release statements to the press. County and city workingmen's groups conducted business in a similar manner, and nominated candidates for local positions, mainly for the state senate.²³

In preparation for the November elections, Hampshire County's Workingmen's Party sent numerous delegates to the New England Association's August 1832 convention. The meeting voted William W. Thompson of Northampton into a leadership role, and Hiram Ferry, also from Northampton, served on the executive committee. The convention failed to nominate a candidate for governor and the Workingmen's assault was confined to local offices. The county-wide group nominated senatorial candidates Oliver Warner and Amherst's John Leland, who was heavily involved in local transportation improvements. Warner dropped out of the race and in his stead the Workingmen promoted National Republican nominee Eliphalet Williams, because of the "coincidence" of his "views with the Workingmen." Williams was the Northampton Bank's first president and a staunch ally of Lewis Strong. Williams was the treasurer of both the Hampshire Bible Society and the Hampshire Missionary Society, auditor of the Hampshire Education Society and the Foreign Missionary Society, and a collector for the Home Missionary Society for Hampshire County. For over fifty years, his father had been the First Church's ultra-conservative pastor, and the family lent its name to Williams College. This nomination further clouded the distinction between Hampshire County's politicians, and the better-organized National Republicans swept the county's gubernatorial, senatorial, and presidential races.²⁴

The May 1833 death of Register of Deeds Charles Hooker opened up the registry at a crucial moment. What started as an eight-

23. Schlesinger, *Age of Jackson*, p. 149, estimates that the *Artisan* had about one thousand subscribers; Cornelius Dalton, *Leading the Way*, p. 93.

24. *Northampton Courier*, August 29, September 19, October 3, 17, and 31, 1832; *Hampshire Gazette*, September 12, October 10, 17, and 31, 1832, and January 2, 1833; Stephen W. Williams, *The Genealogy and History of the Family of Williams* (Greenfield, 1847), p. 166; Frederick Rudolph, ed., *Perspectives: A Williams College Anthology* (Williamstown, 1983), p. 7.

man field was trimmed to three candidates, one each from the National Republican, Workingmen's, and Democratic parties, as no one received a majority. Supporters of Hadley's Giles Kellogg, the National Republican candidate, appealed to Hampshire County's partisans to "unite" behind the lawyers, but to no avail. The Workingmen backed Chauncey Clark, and called upon the "Farmers and Mechanics of the county" to "publicly avow . . . that a man is not disqualified for office by being one of the producing class." Meanwhile, Shepherd slightly shifted his tactics, as he promoted his new Democratic ally, Colonel William Swan, a Cummington merchant who had helped to form the hilltown's Workingmen's organization two years earlier. Shepherd cast Swan firmly in the Jacksonian mold, and called upon the "free and independent Yeomanry" to vote for "a brave and patriotic soldier." Again, since no one carried a majority, the election was rescheduled for November.²⁵

In June of 1833, as the Bank War rippled through Hampshire County politics, *Gazette* editor Sylvester Judd began keeping a diary. As a political insider, Judd occupied a unique position to observe the county's next three elections. The November 1833 contest marked a new plateau for Massachusetts' Workingmen's groups, as the movement began criticizing banks, insurance companies, and factories, decrying the unequal distribution of wealth, and conducting noisy and boisterous conventions. Chauncey Clark's pluralities in the register of deeds contest and the New England Association's first gubernatorial nomination emboldened Hampshire County's Workingmen, who, according to Judd, were "anxious to push their candidates." The National Republicans, the Democrats, and the Antimasons responded by naming their own candidates for governor.²⁶

Samuel C. Allen, the Workingmen's Party gubernatorial candidate, elicited the wrath of the state's power-brokers, including Hampshire County's aristocrats. A wealthy lawyer from Northfield, Allen had served the National Republicans in the United States Congress and the state senate in the 1820s. While the New England Association was meeting at Charlestown in late September of 1833, Allen wrote a letter to the *Boston Courier* that was designed to draw

25. *Hampshire Gazette*, May 29, June 12, and September 4, 1833; Helen H. Foster and William W. Streeter, *Only One Cummington* (Cummington, 1974), p. 348.

26. Sylvester Judd Notebook #1, November 4 and 7, 1833, in Forbes Library, Northampton.

attention to his availability as a candidate. Playing into the Workingmen's hands, Allen's letter boldly proclaimed that there were "two great classes in the community," the "producer" and the "accumulator," who had "a distinction of interests between them." On the surface, this doctrine directly challenged the National Republican position that a "harmony of interests" bound the state's social classes. But since he recognized that few voters would classify themselves as idle "accumulators," Allen's division was an attempt to build a majority by appealing to the broadest electoral segment. Allen also stated that society owed its "aggravations and its principal mischiefs to the perversion of governments," and offered the election of "republican" candidates to expunge the state's evils.²⁷

Annual conventions and Charles Douglas' Boston-based *New England Artisan* constituted the New England Association's only magnets, leading *Gazette* editor Sylvester Judd to claim that the party was "destitute of unison, system and organization." Allen's nomination was a somewhat desperate measure, since the Association had not lined up any candidates before the meeting. Northampton's Workingmen endorsed Allen's letter, renominated Eliphalet Williams and John Leland for the state senate, and again called for its committees to publish reports condemning "imprisonment for debt" and the "militia system." Predictably, the lawyer-dominated *Northampton Courier* questioned the Workingmen's claim that Allen was more of a people's man than the National Republican nominee, John Davis, and tried to co-opt the Workingmen by proclaiming that an end to the compulsory militia system "should now be agitated in good earnest" and that "imprisonment for debt is an iniquitous system."²⁸

The four-party race for governor further directed Hampshire County's political discourse toward the lowest common denominator, and attracted almost half the county's electorate. Workingman Samuel Allen gained a bare plurality in Northampton, probably because Northampton's William W. Thompson ran for Lieutenant Governor on the ticket, but lost county-wide. National Republican John Davis carried the state, followed by the Antimasonic candidate, John Quincy

27. *Hampshire Gazette*, October 27, 1824, October 8, 1828, October 15, 1829, March 30, 1830, October 9, 1833; *Northampton Courier*, July 21, 1830 and June 13, 1832.

28. Judd Notebook, October 11, 1833; *Hampshire Gazette*, October 16, 1833; *Northampton Courier*, October 23, 1833.

Adams. Allen received only six percent state-wide to finish third, while Democrat Marcus Morton ran last. The register of deeds race brought a plurality for Clark, and a December fourth rematch. Allen's scattered local victories and the Workingmen's ability to disrupt the National Republicans put Hampshire County's lawyers on the defensive.²⁹

Hampshire County's partisans fervently pursued the registry, as National Republican Giles Kellogg squared off against Workingman Chauncey Clark and Democrat William Swan. Thomas Shepherd, now claiming to speak for "Mountaineers" and "The Hills," bombarded the county with "papers, handbills and verbal speeches in favor of Col. Swan." A political rival wrote that "what appears to be a scream from the hills" in favor of Swan "is really a Northampton scream." True to his old political style, Shepherd also stated that "it seems to be right and proper, that the people should not in this case, as they usually do in others, seek their candidates among the lawyers."³⁰

Through the columns of their reliable sounding-board, the *Northampton Courier*, National Republican leaders ignored Clark and ridiculed Shepherd's campaign, claiming that "Register of Deeds electioneering . . . is beginning to excite as much political zeal and . . . importance as if the duration of the government depended upon the issue." Deploring factionalism, the lawyers asked "are the people of this county to be kept in agitation year in and year out in order to indulge the Jacksonian thirst for office?" At the next trial Kellogg, the National Republican standard-bearer, barely missed a majority after gaining 269 unanimous votes in Hadley, his native town. Workingman Chauncey Clark won the affluent towns of Northampton, Easthampton, and Southampton, and placed second. Swan dropped out of the race due to his poor showing in the first election.³¹

Since no substantive issues concerned the register's office, this race established partisan attacks on rival candidates and their supporters as a permanent feature of county elections. Although the *Courier* and the *Gazette* agreed to exclude partisan communications

29. *Hampshire Gazette*, November 13 and 20, 1833, Judd Notebook, November 7, 1833; Allen also carried Hatfield, the county's wealthiest town.

30. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1833.

31. *Northampton Courier*, December 11, 1833; vote totals for November 11 were 1,080 for Clark, 944 for Swan, and 649 for Kellogg; the December 4 runoff brought Clark 602 votes to Swan's 423, and Kellogg's 816.

from their editorial pages before the Christmas Day rematch, Kellogg's and Clark's supporters nevertheless conducted a high-pitched handbill debate. The Workingmen again adopted the anti-lawyer strategy. "Why," a December 23 handbill asked, "should the people of Hampshire select a Lawyer for an office, the duties of which may as well and correctly be performed by one of the yeomanry?" Also, the handbill emphasized that the register of deeds was "truly the farmers office," and asked whether the farmers had "become so submissive . . . that they will suffer themselves to be marked as a degraded caste?"³²

The National Republicans attacked the "underhanded attempt" to defeat Kellogg, and warned the "Yeomanry of Hampshire" to "Beware" of partisans who raised the Workingmen's banner in every election. The lawyers noted that when "the balloting [is] over, we hear no more of Workingmen until another election." Appealing for unity, Hampshire County's barristers urged voters to reject "men who have done so much to excite party spirit in a community where before there was quiet," and who created "prejudices among different professions and classes."³³

On Christmas eve, the night before the rescheduled vote, Sylvester Judd wrote that "those who are electioneering . . . are wide awake," as runners posted handbills and carried on a "great effort to get out the votes." Almost one-third of the county's registered voters participated, an unusually high turnout for a register of deeds contest. Two uncharacteristically large returns in Hadley and Amherst, where Kellogg had "powerful friends," helped the National Republican to bury Clark, by a vote of 1,439 to 896. "Due to the zealous efforts of the lawyers all over the county," Judd claimed, Kellogg "could not but succeed. The Workingmen are injudicious managers, and the lawyers can always succeed in breaking their ranks."³⁴ Not only did the Workingmen misrepresent Clark as a yeoman farmer, but they mistakenly relied upon the anti-lawyer formula, which had never

32. Handbill, "To the Electors of Hampshire County," in Northampton Historical Society.

33. Handbill, "Yeomanry of Hampshire, Beware," in Northampton Historical Society.

34. Judd Notebook, December 24, 1833; *Northampton Courier*, January 1, 1834; Clark's 896 votes was aided primarily by his large returns in the affluent towns of Northampton, Easthampton, and Williamsburg; Kellogg's 1,439 votes came primarily from his nearly-unanimous returns from Hadley, Amherst, and Ware.

brought repeated successes for the Farmer's Ticket, the Democrats, or the Workingmen.

In March of 1834 the New England Association splintered, as Boston-based artisans linked with the militant General Trades' Union movement, which eschewed politics in favor of strikes. Because their interests forbade them, Hampshire County's Workingmen could not follow such a lead. The New England Association's last meeting gathered in Northampton on September 10, 1834, with only fifty to sixty men present, most of whom were from Hampshire County. The assembly elected Oliver Warner as chairman and unanimously endorsed Samuel Allen's candidacy for governor. Later that evening, the county-wide meeting to nominate senators could only agree upon Southampton's Elisha Edwards, a temperance advocate, Congregational Church deacon, and a National Republican as late as October of 1832. In 1820, Edwards had served as solicitor and receiver for the Foreign Missionary Society, supported the "American System" in the General Court in 1828, petitioned the General Court in 1829 on behalf of the Hampshire Insurance Company, and was a committee member of the Sabbath School Union in 1830. Meanwhile, alarmed over the county's political atmosphere, Sylvester Judd wrote that "party spirit allows no man to be neutral, permits no man to act independently -- he who will not go with his party in all things is abused and vilified."³⁵

Judd loathed the "overbearing" lawyers and their "arrogant, domineering spirit in politics." In sympathy with the Workingmen, Judd wrote an editorial claiming to support the party's principles and practices. The lawyers "assailed" this piece, but still tried to recruit Judd to work against the Workingmen. Within a month, the lawyers again attacked Judd who, along with other local politicians, solicited Harvard-educated businessman and historian George Bancroft's political views and printed Bancroft's reply in the *Gazette*. This famous letter condemned the United States Bank and other "immense monied combinations. . . with power vast enough to convert the yeomanry of whole counties into a dependent tenantry." Bancroft also spoke out for "the greatest good to the greatest number" and "THE PUBLIC GOOD." Brazenly, for Hampshire County was the birthplace

35. Edward B. Mittleman, "Trade Unionism," in Commons, History of Labour in the United States, p. 379; New England Artisan, July 12, 1834; Judd Notebook, March 5, 1834; Hampshire Gazette, October 17, 1820, January 16, 1828, May 12, 1830, and October 31, 1832; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, XI (1831): 358, petition on file at the Massachusetts Archives.

of the late eighteenth-century class war known as Shays' Rebellion, Bancroft also stated that he feared "the whirlwind of popular frenzy far less than the dry-rot of luxury."³⁶

Bancroft's political opportunism is well-documented and, according to Sylvester Judd, Northampton's "purse-proud" lawyers denounced Bancroft's "hypocrisy, office-seeking, [and] preaching contrary to his practice." Judd conceded that there was "some ground for the charge of [Bancroft's] theory and practice being at variance." Bancroft had married into the Dwight family of Springfield "River God" descendants, invested large sums of money in banks all over the northeast and midwest, served on the aristocratic Hampshire Colonization Society's executive committee, and acted as a director of Lewis Strong's and Eliphalet Williams' Northampton Bank. He also served as a director of the Hampshire Temperance Society, with Elisha Edwards, Shepherd's old political ally David Mack, Jr., who had joined the Whigs, and Lewis Strong.³⁷

Hampshire's Workingmen cast Oliver Warner, Elisha Edwards, and Chauncey Clark in leadership roles for the upcoming November elections. Wary of Bancroft's "rich connexions," the Workingmen passed him over as their candidate for the House of Representatives and instead nominated Warner. The Workingmen again trotted out the anti-lawyer position and tried to pass off Warner as a yeoman farmer. The party's election tactics promoted Warner's qualifications as the foremost issue; policy statements served as bait to draw the voters to the polls. The Workingmen circulated a rhyme that revealed the group's reliance upon the same methods that Thomas Shepherd had initiated over a decade before:

We've sent to Congress lawyers, thirty years,
The fact should tingle in your very ears,
We then have the right to make a little panic,
And claim it for the farmer or mechanic.

36. Judd Notebook, September 10, 11, and 17, October 1, 8, 19, and 29, 1834; Northampton Courier, October 29, 1834.

37. Judd Notebook, October 8, 1834; Russell B. Nye, George Bancroft: Brahmin Rebel (New York, 1945), pp. 106-112; Lilian Handlin, George Bancroft: The Intellectual as Democrat (New York, 1984), pp. 146-173; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Boston, 1833), XII: 739; Hampshire Gazette, January 2, 1833.

And now to independent voters,
We the mouth piece of all true Workers,
Whose deeds are not done in a corner,
Present before you Mr. Warner.

"He holds his plough and gets his harvest in."
"In his whole life meekly rebuking sin."

To your unflinching votes we recommend him,
And hope to Congress, if you can, you'll send him.³⁸

The Workingmen conducted this campaign poorly, and a message prepared by Warner, Elisha Edwards, and *New England Artisan* editor Charles Douglas hastened the party's downfall in western Massachusetts. The report repositied the two-class division in society, opposed "Banking, Insurance, Factory, and all other incorporated monopolies," and referred to the factory system as "perhaps the most alarming evil which afflicts our country." With this statement, the Hampshire County Workingmen stretched the bounds of credibility and misrepresented themselves as opponents of industry. The Workingmen invited people to "look at the pale and dirty, and spiritless beings, as they pour out of the factory . . . at the sound of a bell," and to "see the lazy motion" of the operatives' "jaded limbs, and the motionless expression of their woebegone countenances." Just one week before the election, however, Oliver Warner had attended a "Woolgrower's Meeting," where he endorsed a strong system of manufactures. Also, Amherst's most prominent "Workingman," Asahel Thayer, was co-owner of the largest and most famous carriage factory in the country, which employed from 100 to 150 hands and relied upon an "incredibly detailed division of labor." Thayer was also "Master" of Amherst's Masonic Lodge.³⁹

The Whigs, as the anti-Jackson party now called itself, marshalled the party's full strength to defeat the Workingmen.

38. *Hampshire Gazette*, August 20, 1834; *Northampton Courier*, October 22, 29, 1834; Judd Notebook, October 15, 1834.

39. *New England Artisan*, October 25, 1834, carries the complete address; *Northampton Courier*, November 5, 1834; "Records of the Masonick District in Mass.," in Forbes Library; Stephen A. Aron, "Minds of Hands: Working People of Amherst in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," honors thesis, Amherst College, 1982.

Because Sylvester Judd refused to "put on the Whig collar" and allow the *Hampshire Gazette* to be used for the lawyer's "dirty work," the *Northampton Courier* carried the Whig diatribes. Of the Workingmen's address, one *Courier* editorial exclaimed that "a more foul libel and slanderous imputation against the daughters of New England could never be uttered." Other articles assailed Warner's hypocrisy. Lewis Strong warned the "Workies" against appealing to class antagonisms that were "at war with the first principles of society," and called their notions "wild," "absurd," and "truly infamous." Strong chided the Workingmen for jeopardizing both the lawyers' and entrepreneurs' interests by stirring the lower classes. Another Whig imparted "shame on the authors of such foul and wicked slander!" insisting that "The females who labor in factories are a virtuous and respectable and intelligent class." "Sidney" also announced that the Workingmen "are merely reviving the very doctrines of the Shays' rebellion," and warned Edwards and Warner of "the fate which that wretched demagogue met at the hands of the people." Finally, Sylvester Judd was also upset at the tenor of local politics. He refused to join the Workingmen for similar reasons, citing on October 16 that political conventions were "mere shams" and that "there is no honesty in the politics of this country; at least none in electioneering. It is all trickery of management." On November 5, Judd wrote that "the electioneering acts which I witness among all parties are detestable."⁴⁰

The Whigs also held large rallies in town to rival the Workingmen's gatherings. At their last rally before election day, prominent lawyers delivered "flaming speeches against Oliver Warner," and presented the Workingmen as "the tools of Boston infidels," a reference to the scandalous Boston Trades' Union and a Workingmen's statement about priests' "oppression." Judd claimed that "sophistry and declamation were never more successful" than at this Whig caucus, and the county's election results bore out his prediction. For governor, National Republican John Davis polled two-thirds of the vote, Whig General Court candidates defeated the Workingmen by the

40. *Northampton Courier*, October 15, 22, 29, November 5, 12, 1834; Judd Notebook, October 16 and 19, and November 5, 1834.

same margin, and William B. Calhoun humiliated Warner by a vote of 339 to 149.⁴¹

After this defeat many Workingmen, including Elisha Strong, Elisha Graves, Benjamin E. Cook, Nathan Storrs, and William W. Partridge, joined the Whigs, as did most Antimasons. However, Chauncey Clark, Oliver Warner, George Bancroft, and Hiram Ferry fused with Shepherd's Democrats and used handbills, rallies, and *Hampshire Republican* editorials to disseminate the party's views. The *Republican* rehashed the Workingmen's rhetoric and incorporated the party's majority-building tactics. Relying upon Shepherd's Farmer's Ticket formula, the paper pledged to lead the fight to "retrench the expenses of our state." Moreover, one letter from a "Working Man's Friend" claimed that the Democrats promoted the rights of "farmers and mechanics" against "the evil Whig banking system." In another letter, "A Working Man" called on "Farmers, Merchants, and Mechanics" to reduce state expenditures by driving "the Whig Lawyer drones from your halls of legislation," thus succinctly incorporating Farmer's Ticket and Workingmen's rhetoric into the Democrats. Disillusioned with the Jacksonian newspaper editor's role as political propagandist, Sylvester Judd sold the *Hampshire Gazette* and left the public spotlight to write history.⁴²

Hampshire County's voters never turned out in large numbers, nor did they consistently support either the Workingmen or the Democrats. The Whigs dominated county politics until the mid-1840s, controlled all other segments of Northampton society, and enjoyed connections with the state's most powerful and wealthy individuals. Since none of Hampshire County's "Workingmen" went to college, they were relegated to subordinate status in local affairs, but party leaders sought to emulate their political opponents by striving for respectability and distinction and by lusting after power and profits. Some leaders of the Workingmen, including Chauncey Clark, Samuel Parsons, and Elisha Strong, descended from Northampton's first families and retained membership in the First Church. Such lineage

41. Judd Notebook, November 4, 5, 8, 9, 1834; in their rhyme, the Workingmen asked Hampshire County's voters to "look at the men of the profession, Doctors and Priests -- their stern oppression;" *Northampton Courier*, October 29 and November 12, 1834.

42. Judd Notebook, November 12 and December 22, 1834, January 1 and 7, 1835; Gere, *Reminiscences of Old Northampton*, p. 62-63; *Hampshire Republican*, June 7, October 11, 18, November 1, 8, 15, 1837.

endowed Clark, Parsons, and Strong with wealth and property that distinguished them from the county's hill-farmers. Parsons, for example, inherited vast tracts of the most fertile land in the Connecticut River Valley, and was characterized as being "born with a silver spoon in his mouth." Others, including Benjamin E. Cook, Theodore Sheldon, and Elisha Strong, strove for honor and distinction through the state militia. The county's Masonic rolls and lists of local government and religious society personnel reveal that numerous "Workingmen" served under local lawyers and Congregationalist clergy.⁴³

The Workingmen's bank, factory, canal, and insurance company investments gave party leaders a direct interest in state-level political offices. Massachusetts' state government played an unusually dynamic role in the economy, and the lawyers helped each other by their control of what may be called "the system." At one point, the Workingmen called for the state to replace and administer the monopolies that had been granted to private companies, including an insurance company, for example. Such a program was not only a simplistic solution to a complex problem, but it would have transferred power from the lawyers to the Workingmen, had the challengers been able to win control over the General Court. Running the state government also meant that the governor could reward faithful partisans with the eight appointive offices in each county. As the result of a patronage appointment, Democrat-Workingman William W. Thompson earned about \$565 for taking the 1830 federal census in parts of Hampshire County. In such a light, the Workingmen's faith in the regulatory powers of state government, their desire to get out the vote, and their cries for "equal rights," takes on a new meaning.⁴⁴

43. Rev. Solomon Clark, Antiquities, Historicals, and Graduates, p. 132; Dwight, History of the Descendants of Elder John Strong of Northampton, Massachusetts, II: 1160; Massachusetts Militia Papers, in Forbes Library; "Records of the Masonick District in Mass.," in Forbes Library; Rev. Solomon Clark, Historical Catalogue of the Northampton First Church, 1661-1891 (Northampton, 1891), pp. 117, 138, 162, 169; R.S. Neale, Class and Ideology in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1972), pp. 30-31; in Neale's five-class model, the Workingmen's leaders included those from the middle-class and the middling-class, although many Workingmen were landowners and did ally themselves with upper-class values.

44. New England Artisan, October 25, 1834; Oscar Handlin and Mary Flug Handlin, Commonwealth, A Study in the Role of Government in the American Economy: Massachusetts, 1774-1861 (revised ed., Cambridge, 1969), pp. 51-202; Hampshire Gazette, April 28 and September 15, 1830.

It is impossible to know exactly how the Workingmen's Party would have behaved had it gained power, but the actions of many of the party's leaders contradicted their official press statements. For example, jewelers Nathan Storrs and Benjamin E. Cook played prominent roles in the Workingmen's party, yet they initiated three lawsuits in 1830 and 1831, each instructing the sheriff to "take the Body" of a debtor, "and him commit into our Gaol in Northampton," obviously conflicting with the party's stated goal of abolishing imprisonment for debt. Moreover, shortly after the Workingmen passed resolutions to "encourage economy . . . in . . . private expenditures" and to "suppress extravagance in following the fashions of the rich," Storrs and Cook advertised a new shipment of "Fancy Hardware, and Fancy Articles too numerous to mention." Also, printer Hiram Ferry owned "one of the few barouches," or carriages, in the county.⁴⁵ The most blatant example concerned the Hampshire Mutual Insurance Company. While the party's platform condemned insurance companies for "drawing a revenue from the calamities of the people," Chauncey Clark, Oliver Warner, and Elisha Edwards were three of the firm's original petitioners, and throughout the early 1830s Hiram Ferry served under lawyer Joseph Lyman on the company's board of directors.⁴⁶

Hampshire County's Workingmen's Party did go further to challenge the emerging order than other contemporary political organizations, but this was a tactic designed to attract votes. Economic innovation and expansion altered Hampshire County's home, field, and workshop life, but during the Jacksonian period the county never experienced open lower-class resentment, and the Workingmen overestimated the antagonism of Hampshire County's yeoman farmers toward the lawyers. By passing themselves off as men of "the people," the party's leaders misrepresented themselves. The leaders of Hampshire County's Workingmen's Party did more to

45. Execution Book 8, Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, pp. 512, 628; Book 61, Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, pp. 626; Hampshire Gazette, May 19, September 8, 15, 1830, February 16 and March 9, 1831, and July 4, 1832; Hiram Ferry's carriage is listed in his 1838 tax return, in Northampton Town Records, Box 5.74, Forbes Library; Gere, Reminiscences of Old Northampton, p. 26.

46. Northampton Courier, February 15 and December 19, 1832; Hampshire Gazette, December 17, 1834; Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, XI (1831): 358, petition on file at the Massachusetts Archives.

hasten than impede the growth of factories, creative financial corporations, and transportation improvements.

Many historians have been struck by the Workingmen's "radical" criticism of the industrial system, but such a characterization of Hampshire County's movement is unjustified. From his Farmer's Ticket through the Workingmen to the Democrats, Thomas Shepherd guided the political opposition against the county's powerful lawyers. After 1835, Whigs and Democrats tirelessly promoted their candidates as genuine representatives of "the people." Although they claimed to speak for the farmers and mechanics who were hit hardest by industrialism, most leaders of Hampshire County's Workingmen helped to forge the new industrial order. Other visible party members served in subordinate positions on elite organizations that sought to impose social control from above. Hampshire County's Workingmen also contributed to the two-party system, by holding raucous conventions, building a party structure that concentrated power in the hands of a small number of leaders, and deflecting the voters' attention from economic change and toward more mundane personal and party jealousies.⁴⁷

47. Judd Notebook, March 16, 1835, stated that Bancroft defeated Lewis Strong for town meeting moderator by seven votes, which was "extremely mortifying to the Whigs, and very gratifying to B. not because he wanted the paltry office, but because he had been so much abused by the Whigs."