

Robert J. Kolesar, "The Limits of Partisanship in Gilded Age Worcester: The Citizens Coalition" *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* Volume 16, No 1 (January 1988).

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@wsc.ma.edu](mailto:masshistoryjournal@wsc.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.wsc.ma.edu/mhj>.



## THE LIMITS OF PARTISANSHIP IN GILDED AGE WORCESTER: THE CITIZENS COALITION

Robert J. Kolesar

Between 1877 and 1884, the Republican state ticket failed to carry the city of Worcester only once. Yet during that same period, Worcester's Republicans elected only one mayor, for a single year, under the banner of their party. In state and national elections, the Republican party dominated Worcester throughout the late nineteenth century; but the social and economic development of the city made the bases of local politics quite different. In city elections, Worcester's Republican party was split along lines of class. Politically active Republican members of the elite, principally connected with large financial interests and concerned with maintaining support for active policies of municipal development, were not hesitant to forge alliances with Worcester's Irish Democrats in local elections. Their political accommodation -- the Citizens coalition -- dominated city politics from 1877 until 1884. Elite Republicans turned to the device of the Citizens coalition to nominate mayoral and aldermanic candidates outside normal partisan channels because of the difficulty of securing support for the further development of the city within the Republican party.

Immediately after the Civil War, Worcester had embarked upon a wide range of municipal improvements under Mayor James Blake. Blake had come to Worcester in 1852 to be the agent and superintendent of the Worcester Gas Light Company, and by the time of his election had acquired extensive business interests related to the continued growth of the city. Not only did he remain superintendent of the gas company throughout his mayoralty, he was also a trustee of the Five Cents Savings Bank, a director of the City National Bank, and a prime mover in the building of the city's earliest street railways.<sup>1</sup> Blake first won election not by detailing the broad range

-----  
1. Charles Nutt, A History of Worcester and its People (New York, 1919), III: 313. For a detailed discussion of municipal development policies, see Robert J. Kolesar, "Politics

of policies he was to pursue as a mayor, but by appealing to Republican partisanship. The election of Blake, his supporters said, was necessary to maintain the partisan identity of Republicans in municipal elections, to show the nation that the "Heart of the Commonwealth" was true to the Republican Party. On receiving the news of his election, Blake thanked his supporters for the honor, "but more especially that you have thus placed the Banners of Loyalty on the outer walls of the city, thereby vindicating its character, and ranking it, without qualification, among the republican cities of the Commonwealth."<sup>2</sup>

What Blake did not say, but what was most important about those "Banners of Loyalty," was that they allowed him to be elected mayor without speaking to local concerns, concerns on which there was no agreement within the Republican Party. For the most important source of dissatisfaction with the policies pursued by the Blake administration was in the Republican ward caucuses. In 1868, the caucuses nominated anti-Blake candidates for the city council in three of the five Republican wards, and elected enough delegates to the municipal convention to block the renomination of Blake. Blake's supporters refused to accept the result of the caucuses; charging that a "dark-lantern movement" had dominated them, they managed to dissolve the convention and to call a special meeting to renominate Blake. His supporters appointed a committee to return not only aldermanic nominations, as was the standard practice at municipal conventions, but to review the nominations made by the ward caucuses for the common council, in order "to secure harmony and efficiency." Their purge was successful. Not only did Blake win re-election unopposed, but "in every ward candidates were defeated who were supposed to be even in a moderate way opposed to the mayor or the liberal policy of the present city government."<sup>3</sup>

During the remainder of Blake's mayoralty, little opposition was voiced to his direction of the city's affairs. Democrats nominated only token candidates; voter turnout in the contested elections of 1869 and 1870 was little different than when Democrats had not run a candidate in 1868. The city's "influential business men and leading

---

and Policy in a Developing Industrial City: Worcester, Massachusetts, in the Late Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation, Clark University, 1987, chapter 3.

2. Worcester Spy, December 12, 1865; see also December 4, 9, and 11, 1865.

3. *Ibid.*, December 14 and 15, 1868. In 1867 Blakes' supporters had been forced to defend his record of municipal improvements against charges of extravagance and neglect of the interests of residents of the outlying sections of the city. See *ibid.*, November 21, 25, and 30, 1867, and December 2, 5, 6, 9, and 11, 1867.

citizens" took care to attend the Republican caucuses in "much stronger force" than had been their habit.<sup>4</sup> Blake and his policies drew strong support from the *Worcester Spy*, owned and managed by John D. Baldwin and his son from 1859 until the end of the century. Both the father and son were active in the Republican Party; the father served as congressman in the 1860s, the son served in a number of municipal offices as well as a term in the state legislature. The *Spy* was pleased to report in 1869 that in contrast to other cities, Worcester was "taking the matter [of municipal elections] very quietly . . . . Until the system of municipal improvements now in progress . . . is well advanced toward completion, we cannot dispense with the direction and impetus which he [Blake] gives to the city's affairs."<sup>5</sup>

Two weeks after Blake's election to a sixth term in December, 1870, he was injured fatally at the gas works. His death confronted Republican leaders with a number of distinct local political problems. Blake had attracted significant support from the Irish Democratic wards; the nomination in January of 1871 of Edward Earle, a member of the Society of Friends, alienated those voters.<sup>6</sup> Discontent with Blake's expansive -- and expensive -- municipal policies, evident in the 1868 Republican caucuses, still simmered as a potential issue. Furthermore, the weakness of the Republican vote in the state election of 1871 threatened Republican party-builders. In response to these pressures, in the December 1871 municipal election the Republican city committee attempted simultaneously to uphold partisanship, Blake's legacy of active policies of municipal development, and popular sentiment for fiscal retrenchment. Prior to the campaign, it was "well understood" that Earle would not be renominated. Resisting the idea of calling a non-partisan convention such as the one that had nominated Earle in January, the Republican city committee issued a blistering statement that asked "If able men are to replace those who are weak, can we not find them within our own ranks? If reform and retrenchment are required, must we entrust their accomplishment to the democratic rather than to the republican party?" But they refused to disavow Blake's legacy: past expenditures "may have been large," they conceded, "but the growth of the city has been correspondingly large." As their candidate for

-----  
4. Ibid., December 3, 1870.

5. Ibid., December 11, 1869. On the Baldwins and the *Spy*, see Nutt, *Worcester and Its People*, II: 1107-1108 and IV: 752-755.

6. *Worcester Evening Gazette*, January 24, 1871; *Worcester Spy*, January 24, 27, 30, and 31, 1871. On Earle, see Nutt, *Worcester and Its People*, IV: 603-604.

mayor, they nominated George Crompton, one of the city's wealthiest and most important manufacturers.<sup>7</sup>

The nomination of Crompton failed quite dramatically. Crompton lost the Republican wards by a margin of two to one, as nearly one-third more voters went to the polls than had gone in January. It failed because the partisan appeals of the Republican campaign badly misjudged popular political values. George Verry, who beat Crompton in every ward of the city, benefitted from the "covert personal attacks, the sneers at his social position, and the innuendos against his personal character, which were heard in conversation . . . ."<sup>8</sup> His election represented a strong popular protest against domination by "leading citizens" as well as by professional politicians. Verry spoke to traditional anti-party values which were held strongly among middle-class Republican voters. He intimated that Worcester's government was controlled by a narrow group of partisans: "As a republican," he bellowed when nominated, "I have no sympathy with this appeal. As a republican, I see no reason why the republican party should have exclusive control of the city government."<sup>9</sup> And his election he greeted as the repudiation of "that coterie composed principally of a few lawyers, and first rate politicians who have set themselves up as the gods of republican political idolatry." On the night of his election, great bonfires throughout the city celebrated the breaking of the "ring."<sup>10</sup>

Stung by Verry's capitalization on popular resentments of privilege, Republican partybuilders needed to find a mayoral candidate who could appeal to their natural mass constituency, the native-born middle class. In 1872, in a smoothly orchestrated operation, they maneuvered the nomination of Clark Jillson through lightly attended ward caucuses that voted on ballots which contained only the name of Jillson.<sup>11</sup> Clerk of the police court since 1860, Jillson had first come to Worcester in 1845. Born in Whittingham, Vermont, he had run away from home as a youth to live with his

-----  
7. Worcester Spy, December 2, 5, and 8, 1871.

8. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1871.

9. *Ibid.*, December 6, 1871.

10. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1871.

11. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1872; see also December 4, 1872 and the comments published two years after Jillson's first nomination that in 1872 "a few gentlemen met together and talked over the situation, a man for reform being wanted. They selected Clark Jillson." *Ibid.*, December 16, 1874.

uncle in nearby Charlemont, Massachusetts. In Worcester, he had learned the machinist's trade, worked in several of Worcester's machine-shops, and registered patents for several inventions. But Jillson never enjoyed great success; his patents were apparently appropriated by others, and Jillson was reticent in asserting his rights, his memorialist later explained, "based partly upon a lack of self-confidence, partly upon a timidity which checked him from engaging in a long and costly battle with rich and soulless corporations, but mostly . . . from his indifference to a success and wealth that was to be fought for in the gutter of the courts. His own words were -- 'They have stolen by machine, but thank God I can live without it; I'd rather live a quiet life than undertake a life-long fight in hope of dying rich.'"<sup>12</sup> The middle-class appeal of Jillson worked sufficiently well in 1872 to elect Jillson, as well as the Republican aldermanic ticket. Given the stimulus of the state-wide Democratic victory the following year and a marked increase in the number of votes cast in the Democratic wards, he narrowly lost re-election. But in both years Jillson maintained Republican strength in the Republican wards, which had been lost in 1871.<sup>13</sup>

Republican strategists in 1874 made a bold move to counter the growing mobilization of Irish Democratic voters by appealing directly to the anti-party sentiments of the native-born middle class. Jillson, for the third time, was unopposed in either the Republican ward caucuses or the municipal convention.<sup>14</sup> But the day after being tendered a unanimous renomination, Jillson declined it, "for reasons which commend themselves to my own judgment." Within a week, Jillson and a new aldermanic ticket were nominated on an "Independent Reform" ticket. By election day, 3,008 signatures had been published. A number of political factors were involved, including the disruption of the convention by an attack on Jillson that implied he was tied too closely to party-builders to carry out reforms of governmental procedures, and the nomination of a weak aldermanic

-----  
12. Henry L. Shumway, Memorial of Clark Jillson, in Clark Jillson Papers, box 2, Worcester Historical Museum; Nutt, Worcester and Its People, III: 167-168.

13. Worcester Spy, December 10, 1872, November 25 and 26, and December 10, 1873; Worcester Evening Gazette, December 9, 1873; Worcester Daily Press, November 18 and 22, and December 4 to 10, 1873.

14. Worcester Spy, November 28 and December 3, 1874. See Adin Thayer's remarks about Democratic mobilization of foreign-born voters, in *ibid.*, December 15, 1875.

ticket by the convention. But most importantly, it allowed Republicans to appeal to middle-class anti-partyism.<sup>15</sup>

The transformation from Republican to "independent" was completed by "independent" caucuses which renominated virtually every candidate who had been nominated previously by the Republican ward caucuses. As the Democratic press graphically reported, "the 'Independent' banner suspended across Pearl Street is typical of the independence of the movement it represents. To one approaching it in the twilight, it appears fairly independent; but upon closer inspection the ropes become visible, and it is seen to be supported on the one side by the post office building and upon the other by the Republican headquarters."<sup>16</sup> The machination of the Independent Reform nomination was so successful in mobilizing middle-class voters that it was repeated in 1875, equally successfully. Its party-building utility was clearly apparent when the Jillson victory celebration that year wound its way through the streets on election night, stopping at Adin Thayer's residence on Cedar Street, where Thayer, one of Worcester County's most important Republican party-builders, presented Jillson. They each received three cheers from the boisterous crowd.<sup>17</sup>

Jillson appealed to a broad range of values which rejected the priority of continued development of the city. As mayor, he asserted that the municipal government's duties to promote the physical development of the city had been finished. In 1875, supporters of the "independent" Jillson campaign forthrightly asserted that Worcester's growth had been too rapid. The executive committee of the Independent Reform ticket, the Republican vehicle, based its final election appeal on the need to reduce the city debt in order to retain capital investment in the city. No longer was it to be city policy to lead municipal development, as it had been under Blake; instead, city policy under Jillson was to be protective of what already existed.<sup>18</sup> Not surprisingly, elite Republicans found both Jillson and

-----  
15. Ibid., December 4, 5, 9 to 11, and 14 to 16, 1874; Worcester Daily Press, December 3 and 14, 1874.

16. Worcester Daily Press, December 12, 1874; see also December 10, 11, and 14, 1874; Worcester Spy, December 15, 1874.

17. Worcester Daily Press, December 9, 1875; Worcester Spy, December 15-16, 1875. On Thayer's role as a party-builder, see Richard E. Welch, Jr., George Frisbie Hoar and the Half-Breed Republicans (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 72-74; and George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York, 1903), I: 289-304.

18. Worcester Spy, December 7 and 11, 1875.

his policies distasteful. In 1872, there had been enough dissatisfaction to lead to a walkout in one ward caucus and the abstention of over half the delegates in another. The *Spy* that year rather pointedly refrained from endorsing his candidacy even after he was nominated.<sup>19</sup> And the *Spy* gave, at best, only half-hearted support to Jillson's policies, denying that fiscal retrenchment meant "that the city is to stop all expenditures except such as is absolutely necessary for keeping the municipal machine in motion," but acceding to the sentiment that "extreme parsimony, for a time, might be useful."<sup>20</sup>

While Jillson had served party-building efforts well, his mayoralty repudiated active policies of municipal development, policies which elite Republicans desired. Searching for a way to avoid nominating Jillson again in 1876, the Republican city committee approved an ingenious plan to bypass the regular Republican caucuses by placing ballot boxes at the Republican headquarters. Party leaders worked for the nomination of Elijah B. Stoddard, a lawyer and banker well-connected within Worcester's elite, and chairman of the Republican city committee. But Stoddard failed to win; nearly two thousand Republicans cast ballots, many more than anticipated. Stoddard was bested by J. H. Walker, who in 1874 had stormed out of the municipal convention after deriding Republicans for their attention to politics rather than to reform of the procedures of municipal government. Walker's nomination, reluctantly ratified by the city committee, left the Republican leaders badly divided. Jillson's supporters felt betrayed, while Republican leaders were in the unhappy position of supporting a political maverick whom they had no real desire to see become mayor.<sup>21</sup>

The disruptions within the Republican party were caused by the contrary aims of different groups within the party. Elite Republicans were most interested in rekindling active policies of development. Middle-class Republicans did not share that goal; their interest in Republicanism was its affirmation of their own identity and protection from social and economic change. Party-builders concerned themselves primarily with the impact of local elections on the solidification of partisan loyalties. The strategy the Republican party in Worcester pursued in local elections in the 1870s attempted to

-----  
19. Ibid., November 27 and December 4, 1872.

20. Ibid., December 3 and 15, 1874.

21. Ibid., November 28 and 29, December 4, 5, and 7, 1876; *Worcester Daily Press*, December 7, 9, 11, and 12, 1876. Walker received 794 votes, Stoddard 728, and Jillson 458.

mediate between these contrary aims. Party-builders most needed to mobilize middle-class Republicans, but as they followed tactics designed to do that, they lost the support of the elite. The abortive attempt to nominate Stoddard as the Republican mayoral candidate in 1876 showed their recognition of that problem. Democrats capitalized on the troubles of the Republicans, and in 1876 elected Charles Pratt mayor on a Democratic ticket. Democrats exploited Walker's foibles -- his boasting, his affectations of superiority, his self-admitted penchant for being a "bull in a china shop," and his record of paying low wages to workers while lecturing them on "the exact number of cents upon which he thinks a workingman ought to be able" to live -- not only to rouse their own constituency, but also to trumpet the extensive business interests of Pratt. Pratt's victory at the polls in December of 1876 was relatively narrow. It followed the basic pattern of partisan division that had held since 1872; he won because the split in the Republican party depressed turnout in the Republican wards. But that pattern was shattered the following year.<sup>22</sup>

As mayor, Pratt won the support of the Republican elite. He did so by reaffirming the city's policy of supporting development and by carefully refraining from actions that might alienate potential Republican supporters. He pushed for the completion of the island sewer project, which had been delayed by Jillson, and on that matter drew praise from both the Republican *Spy* and the Democratic *Daily Press*. Rather than engage in a wholesale reshuffling of the police force along partisan lines, he added new positions in order to retain Republican officers while rewarding his own Democratic supporters. In November, elite Republicans spearheaded a petition campaign for Pratt's reelection, by-passing both the Republican and Democratic parties. The campaign was so successful that no regular opposition was fielded by either party. In both the Republican and Democratic city committees, partisans were strong enough to prevent Pratt's endorsement, but not strong enough to nominate candidates in opposition to him.<sup>23</sup> Again in 1878, Worcester's "best citizens" called on Pratt to stand for re-election. The Republican city committee deemed it inexpedient to oppose him, and neither did the Democrats

-----  
22. Worcester Daily Press, December 9, 1876; Worcester Spy, December 13, 1876. For a description of the meanings Republican partisanship held for different social and political groups, see also Paul Kleppner, The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1979), esp. pp. 76-94.

23. Worcester Spy, November 22, 23, and 29, 1877; Worcester Daily Press, November 22 and December 5, 1877; Worcester Evening Gazette, December 10, 1877.

offer an opponent. The *Spy*, as it had ten years earlier under the Blake administration, reported with evident pleasure that "the current of city politics flows on smoothly . . . the voters of the city have already made up their minds and do not need either persuasion or prompting."<sup>24</sup>

Such dissembling statements were, of course, self-serving: through Pratt, elite Republicans resurrected support for active policies of development by ignoring normal partisan channels and effectively depoliticizing the process of selecting the mayor. As had been the case under Blake, opposition to Pratt was half-hearted and incoherent. In 1877, the campaign of William Lincoln drew support from active ward workers of each party, but few others; in 1878, the Butler Club fielded William Dickinson, a Republican alderman, in order to hold their organization together in the municipal election. Neither Lincoln nor Dickinson was a serious candidate. Only the Republican Party could have challenged Pratt effectively, but the prominence of elite Republicans in the Pratt campaign made that impossible. In 1878, for example, Stephen Salisbury, Jr., chaired the meeting that selected the Pratt aldermanic ticket and was, as well, on the executive committee of the Pratt campaign.<sup>25</sup> Often a delegate to state and national Republican conventions, Salisbury's role in city politics showed both the deep interest of the elite in the governing of the city and their readiness to forge political coalitions outside the Republican party. By doing so, he continued and built upon the economic, social, and political connections bequeathed to him by his father, who had brought the Salisbury estate in Worcester into the industrial age by helping to lead Worcester's industrial progress: in the words of a local historian, he "erected many dwellings, factories and business blocks [on the family land], . . . thereby contributing greatly to the growth and prosperity of the city, and a proportionate increase in valuation to the estate." He succeeded his father as a director and later as the president of the Worcester National Bank and the Worcester County Institution for Savings, as well as being a director of the Worcester and Nashua Railroad. He also became a director of the Boston, Barre, and Gardner Railroad, and, at the age of twenty-eight, a trustee of the State Mutual Life Assurance Company. By the time of his death, his estate was worth between three and five million dollars. A leading member or trustee of virtually every important cultural and

-----

24. Worcester Spy, December 5, 1878; see also November 26, 1878.

25. Worcester Evening Gazette, December 7 and 10, 1877; Worcester Daily Press, December 8, 1877; Worcester Spy, December 7, 1877, November 23, 26, and 27, and December 10, 1878.

educational institution in the city, he served also on a number of the city's appointed boards and commissions, including those governing the parks, the city hospital, and the sinking funds.<sup>26</sup>

Coalition with Democrats in the Citizens movement for Pratt enabled elite Republicans such as Salisbury to lessen the influence of middle-class Republican votes in local elections. In the November 1878 state election, voters in Republican wards cast sixty-one percent of the votes in the city, but in the December municipal election, only fifty-six percent of the ballots were cast in the Republican wards. The utility of that strategy was reinforced dramatically by the results of the mayoral election of 1879. Pratt was not a candidate; Republican leaders nominated Elijah Stoddard, whom they had tried but failed to nominate on a partisan Republican ticket in 1876. Stoddard's supporters trumpeted his "larger and more varied experience in corporate and private business affairs than almost any other man in Worcester."<sup>27</sup> Although strong enough to push his nomination through a clearly divided Republican convention, they could not stop "the buzzing of talk at the street corners, in the cigar stores and restaurants, and other places where men do congregate" about Stoddard's "aristocratic" manners.<sup>28</sup> Frank H. Kelley capitalized on popular discontent and bolted against Stoddard. The Kelley campaign's showmanship -- the Worcester Brass Band played while portraits of Kelley and campaign squibs were exhibited to the crowd with a stereopticon the Saturday evening before the election -- spoke to popular apprehensions of "aristocracy" and "corruption." The excitement of a campaign that seemed to be a "revolution" against both political parties brought high turnout throughout the city, but especially in the Republican wards, where the number of votes cast was forty percent higher than it had been the previous year. Kelley forged his own coalition with Democratic politicians, and won the Democratic wards handily, despite the presence of a Democratic candidate, while only narrowly losing the Republican wards.<sup>29</sup>

-----  
26. Ellery B. Crane, ed., Historic Homes and Institutions of Worcester County, Massachusetts (New York, 1907), I: 7; Nutt, Worcester and Its People, I: 221-222. Salisbury served on the city council during Blakes' mayoralty, and between 1893 and 1895 he represented Worcester in the state senate.

27. Worcester Spy, December 5, 1879.

28. Worcester Evening Gazette, November 25, 1879; Worcester Spy, November 22, 1879.

29. Worcester Evening Gazette, December 1 to 4, 8, and 10, 1879; Worcester Spy, December 2 to 10, 1879; see also "The Commonwealth Club: Its Origins and History, Address at Its Twenty-fifth Anniversary, January 26, 1905, by S. Hamilton Coe," in

Elite Republicans drew a clear lesson from Stoddard's defeat: a Republican nomination was not an effective vehicle for advancing their agenda of positive, business-oriented and development-minded municipal policy. The working relationship with Democratic politicians that had served to advance that agenda during the Pratt administration needed to be reasserted. And it was under the Kelley administration. In 1880, the committee in charge of the Kelley re-election campaign included both ex-mayor Pratt and Stephen Salisbury. Again using the device of a Citizens petition, and again by-passing both party organizations, Kelley's supporters gathered so many signatures from Republicans, "not only prominent in position, but among the most liberal in furnishing the sinews of war in election campaigns," that the Republican city committee, as had been the case in 1877 and 1878 when Pratt ran for re-election with the support of elite Republicans, nominated no candidate in opposition to Kelley.<sup>30</sup> The following year, Elijah Stoddard finally was elected mayor; his "aristocratic" manners were apparently not as severe an encumbrance as a Citizens candidate as they had been as a Republican candidate. Again, there was no Republican opposition to the Citizens candidate; again Democrats supported the Citizens candidate, and again Stephen Salisbury and other prominent elite Republicans were among the most visible of the Citizens candidate supporters. Through the Citizens coalition, elite Republicans crossed lines of party, religion, and ethnicity in order to pursue the economic development of the city.<sup>31</sup>

By the mid-eighties, the temperance issue shattered the domination of the Citizens coalition. But the heightened political salience of the liquor issue bore close relation to the conflicts that had rent the Republican party in the 1870s. At a mass meeting of Republican voters in 1880, galvanized by temperance sentiment, rank and file Republicans tossed aside the injunction of the city committee not to nominate a candidate against Kelley; receiving a motion to appoint a committee to bring in a candidate with cries of "No, no, that is not what we came for!" they once again nominated Clark

-----  
Commonwealth Club: 1910, Charter, History, By-Laws.... (Worcester, 1910). Coe details the short-lived attempt of some Kelley supporters to establish a secret political organization. Within a year, the club had become purely social.

30. Worcester Evening Gazette, December 6 and 8, 1880; Worcester Spy, December 6 and 9, 1880.

31. Worcester Spy, December 3, 6, 10, and 12, 1881. See esp. John D. Washburn's call to order of the Citizens mass meeting in 1881, in *ibid.*, December 6, 1881. Washburn was a political lieutenant of Senator George F. Hoar. See Welch, George Frisbie Hoar, pp. 70, 72, 107.

Jillson for mayor.<sup>32</sup> Two years later, when Elijah Stoddard was running for re-election on the Citizens ticket, a temperance Committee of One Hundred captured the Republican caucuses and nominated Samuel Hildreth against Stoddard. Hildreth was on the boards of no banks or insurance companies; he had learned the trade of machinist in Worcester, and had worked at the trade for nearly thirty years before buying an interest in a factory. Neither did the aldermanic candidates nominated with Hildreth share the extensive economic interests of Republicans like Salisbury or Stoddard: John Brady was a master mechanic, Asa Burbank a jeweler, Charles Robbins a manufacturer of court plaster, and Dwight Smith a dealer in flocks and wool waste. Not only did "temperance Republicans" reject the subordination of "moral" issues to development and the political alignment of the elite with Democrats, they rejected the leadership of the elite.<sup>33</sup>

Hildreth was the only Republican elected mayor in Worcester between 1877 and 1884. He was nominated twice more, in 1883 and 1884, but elite Republicans successfully launched an assault on what they derided as the "know-nothing" element of the Republican party while simultaneously reinforcing their coalition with the city's Democratic leaders.<sup>34</sup> After 1884, an increasing number of political stresses, including the liquor issue as well as strains induced by Republican loss of the White House for the first time since the Civil War and increasing restlessness among Worcester's Democrats with the subordinate role in the Citizens coalition, forced elite Republicans to operate within the Republican caucuses. But only a thin veil was pulled over the uneasy and tempestuous relationship between elite and middle-class Republicans.<sup>35</sup> Elite Republicans joined Irish Democrats

-----  
 32. Worcester Spy, December 11, 1880; see also November 30 and December 1, 1880; Worcester Evening Gazette, December 7, 8, and 11, 1880.

33. Worcester Spy, December 2, 4, 8, 9, and 11, 1882; Nutt, Worcester and Its People, III: 139. See Kolesar, "Politics and Policy," pp. 159-180 for further analysis of temperance as a political issue and of the Committee of One Hundred. In 1881, Republican opponents of Stoddard did not coalesce, but a temperance "candidate," who posted notices in every ward disavowing his candidacy, received 1,295 votes in the Republican wards. See Worcester Spy, December 14, 1881.

34. Worcester Spy, November 20, 22, and 26, 1883, December 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 1883, November 21 to 23, and 25 to 26, and December 4 and 5, 1884; Worcester Evening Gazette, November 29 and December 1, 1884.

35. Worcester Spy, November 19, 21, 25 to 26, and 28, 1885, and December 1, 2, 4, 7 to 12, and 14, 1885; Worcester Evening Gazette, November 21, and December 14 and 16, 1885; Worcester Sunday Telegram, November 29, and December 6, 13, and 20, 1885.

in resisting a concerted campaign by middle-class Republicans to remove the superintendent of schools, Albert Marble, who determinedly pursued policies designed to accommodate the public schools to the city's Irish Catholics.<sup>36</sup> And they drew on the support of Irish Democrats in 1893 to secure a reform of the city charter that was designed to reduce the power of Republican aldermen, and behind them, of the Republican caucuses which the elite could not control.<sup>37</sup>

The issues of local politics -- sewers and streets, saloons and the police, the schools, and the structure of local government -- were issues that held importance to the lives of its residents, as well as to the development of the city. On each of these questions, the most significant political cleavage in the city was between elite Republicans, who desired the further economic and social development of the city, and middle-class Republicans, who resisted policies that threatened their role in the city. Unable to secure support in their own party, elite Republicans turned to Irish Democrats for support and generally received it. Partisanship alone cannot explain political alignments in Worcester, neither can class; nor can culture. In the developing industrial city, political alignments were structured in response to specific questions of public policy, policies which, in turn, had enormous impact on social relations in an increasingly heterogeneous industrial community.

-----  
See Kolesar, "Politics and Policy," pp. 70-74 for a discussion of continuing tensions within the Republican Party in the late 1880s.

36. Worcester Spy, November 27, December 1 and 4, 1889, November 9, and 13 to 20, 1890, November 21 to 28, and December 1, 4, 12, and 13, 1891. See Kolesar, "Politics and Policy," pp. 180-193 for further analysis and documentation of the school issue.

37. For further analysis and documentation, see Kolesar, "Politics and Policy," chapter 5.