Pittsburgh was agog Monday, July 31, 1848, when the news spread that an army of ax-wielding females had taken the Penn Cotton factory in neighboring Allegheny City by storm and routed the Sheriff and his posse and the Allegheny City police. Violence was not uncommon in any city in the 1840's, but large-scale labor violence perpetrated by women and girls was unheard-of in Allegheny County. The citizens of Pittsburgh and Allegheny City quickly took sides for or against these rioters who were fighting for the enforcement of a law limiting a day's work to ten hours. To understand this event, which had great political, social, and economic consequences, one must first look at the history of the cotton industry in Pittsburgh, the previous relations between capital and labor, attempts at organizing labor, and the genesis of the ten-hour law.

The development of a Pittsburgh cotton industry was largely the result of local demand rather than an organized effort to service a broader market or to make Pittsburgh a textile center. Manufacture of cotton cloth was begun in Pittsburgh in 1803 by Samuel Haslam of Bolton, England. Along with many other manufactories that sprang up across the nation in response to the War of 1812, the cotton industry experienced a devastating depression after 1815 caused by the dumping of British goods on the American market. By 1816 the cotton

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industry in Pittsburgh was practically ruined as it was in most places in America.¹

A 30 per cent duty on imported cotton levied by the tariff of 1824 furnished the incentive for renewal of the defunct industry. Particularly in Pittsburgh, where steamboat connection with the South resulted in a steady supply of raw cotton, the manufacture of coarse cotton goods seemed a profitable investment.² Whereas before 1824 the operatives of the mills had been mostly men and boys, women were for the first time given extensive employment in Pittsburgh in 1825, when the Phoenix Steam Cotton Factory enlarged its plant.³

Cotton manufacture at that time was still a better way to lose money than to make it, and the struggling factories changed hands often. From 1826 to 1836, as Lawrence Thurman has shown in his study of the Pittsburgh cotton industry, ownership, with the exception of the Phoenix Mill, passed entirely into new hands. Thus the cotton mill owners did not constitute a fixed oligarchy of established entrepreneurs, but instead were to some extent speculators, interested in short-term profits. Very often the cotton mill was one of an owner's many ventures, and seldom did it command his undivided attention. Some of the mills were not run continuously, but whenever good buys were made on a particular shipment of raw cotton.⁴

The Panic of 1837 caused a temporary slump in cotton manufacture, but the early forties saw a slow revival, and later in the decade the industry shared with glass manufacture a position inferior only to that of iron. From the viewpoint of Pittsburgh only, the industry seemed to be flourishing. The real problem was that changes in the scale of production on the national scene were eclipsing the orderly but slow growth of the Pittsburgh industry. For example, in 1848, the year of the riot, single factories were being built in New England that were twice as large as all seven Pittsburgh mills put together.⁵ Such large-scale production, coincident with the transportation revolu-

² Frank W. Stonecipher, "Pittsburgh and the Nineteenth Century Tariffs," WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, XXXI (September-December, 1948), 89.
⁴ Ibid., 28.
⁵ Ibid., 40-41; see also the Pittsburgh Gazette, August 12, 1848, in which a huge new factory being built in New England is discussed. It was twenty-two times as large as the Penn factory in Allegheny City.
tion, left little room for uneconomical local production, and the Pittsburgh mills went into permanent decline soon after the Civil War. Nevertheless, in 1848, they were still very much in business and were considered a vital part of the total economic life of the city. Besides producing much-needed textiles, the seven Pittsburgh and Allegheny City mills provided employment for 1,500 persons.

Providing employment did not necessarily mean providing a decent living, however, and many of the workers felt that their wages were too low and their hours too long. The factory owners themselves estimated that 5,000 people were deriving support from the wages paid to the 1,500 workers. Wages naturally fluctuated with the ups and downs of the economy, but most observers other than the workers, who had little basis for comparison, felt that wages were relatively high in the Pittsburgh cotton industry. Samuel Slater, when he toured the city in 1833, commented that all Pittsburgh industrial workers enjoyed high wages.

In 1848 men working in the Pittsburgh cotton factories could earn from $7.50 per week, boys from $3 to $4.50, women and girls from $2.50 to $6. This compared favorably with wages in cotton mills in other parts of the country, though very unfavorably with more skilled types of labor. The obvious discrimination against women and boys was not unreasonable since men generally did heavier or more responsible work and many were foremen or engineers. For one person, the pay no doubt represented a living wage, but unfortunately most of the workers had several people dependent on their earnings.

The figures provided by the manufacturers indicate that 3.3 persons were supported by each wage earner. If that wage earner happened to be a girl making $4 a week, poverty and privation were inevitable. A single male foreman with no dependents making $11 a week would be able to live fairly well. Thus the individual worker's feelings about his wage were determined largely by factors beyond the control of

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6 Factory Riots in Allegheny: Judge Patton's Charge to the Jury (Pittsburgh, 1849), 1. This pamphlet, published by the manufacturers, was issued in several different forms. The complete issue includes an introduction, transcripts of trial testimony, and Judge Benjamin Patton's charge to the jury. It will be hereinafter cited Factory Riots. A less complete version, without Patton's charge, has been published in Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, V (July, 1922), 203-211.

7 Ibid., 2.

8 Thurman, "Cotton Industry," 32.


10 Typical was Miranda Hollander, who worked in the mills and was the sole support of her widowed mother, two little brothers, and little sister. Gazette, January 18, 1849.
himself or his employer. This peaceful status quo might have continued if two factors had not combined to make an explosive situation. These were a banner year for the cotton manufacturers in 1847 and the passage in 1848 of a maximum hours law by the legislature of Pennsylvania.

Cotton manufacture had responded with the rest of Pittsburgh industry to the general rise in business activity caused by the Mexican War, but there is no complete explanation for the peculiar expansion of the industry in 1847. Thurman, in his study, suggests rapid local population growth as well as national growth as a partial reason. Perhaps, but this may have been a year which offered sudden opportunities to purchase raw material at cheap prices. In any case, a boom occurred, and the Penn Mill, built just the year before, employed 260 workers at 6,200 spindles in 1847 to produce 2,410,000 yards of cloth valued at $207,000. Established mills saw peak production and, no doubt, peak profits that year, and the workers were obviously well aware of boom conditions.

Labor agitation in Pittsburgh before the Civil War has not been studied, which makes generalization about it difficult. However, except for occasional strikes by artisans and skilled workers, harmonious relations seem to have prevailed until 1830. After that, strikes became more frequent. According to Leland Baldwin, "Waiters, stoncutters, stevedores, coal miners, glass blowers, boatwrights, printers, horse shoers, saddlers, tailors, ironworkers, and cotton mill workers at one time or another turned out for higher wages or to prevent their wages from being reduced." They were surprisingly successful in attaining their demands.

Violence, when it occurred, was sporadic, limited, and drew little attention. The methods used were walkouts or strikes and parading the streets, and the workers of Pittsburgh do not seem to have been too successful in forming enduring labor organizations. The strikes tended to be spontaneous, and their success can be attributed to scarcity of skilled labor rather than to good organization.

11 Thurman, "Cotton Industry," 42.
12 Ibid., 44; see also Erasmus Wilson, ed., Standard History of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Chicago, 1898), 242.
13 Leland D. Baldwin, Pittsburgh—The Story of a City (Pittsburgh, 1938), 225.
14 Pittsburgh bricklayers formed a union in 1841 when they were resisting a reduction in wages and demanding a ten-hour day. What became of it after that date is not known. Washington Globe, April 1, 1841, as quoted in John B. McMaster, A History of the People of the United States (8 vols., New York, 1914), VIII, 97.
The cotton mills had their share of these strikes. In 1843 the mill girls struck to prevent a wage reduction and won their battle. They shocked believers in female decorum by parading the streets with a banner inscribed with the Whig campaign promise of 1840, "Two dollars a day and Roast Beef." The girls were unsuccessful in 1845 when they struck for a ten-hour day. There is some indication of violence in this strike, but it was apparently quite limited in scope and was not regarded generally as serious. Unsuccessful attempts at organization were made in the cotton mills, according to Thurman, but the strikes and labor protest were largely unstructured in this period.

One institution that gave structure to the labor movement and also used it as a political device was the Democratic party. In Pittsburgh, as elsewhere, the Democrats sought to tap the vote of the growing urban working classes. Their aim was primarily political, and any structure and help they gave to the labor movement was largely an accidental by-product. The Pittsburgh Working Men's party of the 1830's is a good example of this.

The party was composed mainly of politicians and manufacturers, and very few workers evinced much interest in it. It was largely the work of professional politicians who felt that it would be advantageous to organize the workingmen politically, and its main purpose was to gain and control the workers' vote, a task at which it was unsuccessful. Lewis Peterson, owner of the Globe Cotton Mills, was quite active in the founding and activities of the organization.

The Democratic attempt to win the labor vote was resented by the better skilled artisans' organizations in Pittsburgh, who felt they were being used for political purposes. The Order of United American Mechanics announced in the Daily Dispatch that their meetings were every Wednesday evening at 8:00, cautioning that "No subject of a sectarian or political character shall be introduced into any meeting of this Council, nor shall any member make use of the Name of this Order in a political meeting." By the forties there were other groups to which labor could turn for support without being used. A group called the Friends of Societary Reform planned a Fourth of July banquet in 1848, at which the principles of the organization of labor

15 Baldwin, Pittsburgh, 226.
16 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
17 Thurman, "Cotton Industry," 45.
19 Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch, May 13, 1848.
were to be discussed, favorably one presumes. The old Diamond Market was a forum where labor and other agitators with radical theories could and did speak to the people. When one such person appeared in June of 1848, the Democratic Post condescendingly admitted that although his theories could not be admired, he did no one harm.  

Since 1840 the Whigs had made substantial gains in Pittsburgh, which partly explains the renewed Democratic efforts to win the working-class vote. There was no occupational difference between Whig and Democratic members of the legislature — neither group represented the unskilled factory workers. The local Whigs made political capital of the Democrats' professing great concern for the white wage slave, but lacking interest in the plight of the black slave.

The undaunted Democrats made a major effort to capture the workers' vote, nonetheless, by passing, in March, 1848, in the Pennsylvania legislature, a law making ten hours a legal day's work in textile factories. National agitation for this reform had begun in the 1830's, but had been submerged in the depression after 1837. That year Pennsylvania had sent a special legislative committee to investigate labor conditions in Pittsburgh, and it reported that laboring minors were abused and that hours were very long. In the same year, however, a bill to provide a ten-hour working day failed to pass the legislature.

In the early forties, the movement revived, and bills were introduced into many state legislatures. New Hampshire was the first to pass a ten-hour law in September, 1847. It received both praise and scorn from the various reformers who had argued for such a law and furnished the model for the law passed less than six months later by Pennsylvania. The chief complaint of reformers was that the law made ten hours a legal day's work unless a contract specified longer hours, and the provision for minors allowed the law to be ignored if their parents or guardians signed a waiver.

The agitation begun in Pennsylvania in 1837 had died down, but had been renewed in 1844 and 1846. Following New Hampshire's lead, in March of 1848 the legislature finally passed a ten-hour law.

20 Pittsburgh Daily Post, June 23, 1848.
22 McMasters, History, VIII, 97.
24 McMasters, History, VIII, 101; Commons, History of Labour, I, 536-542.
It provided that ten hours were a "legal day's labor in all cotton, woollen, silk, paper, bagging, and flax factories." No minor or adult could be required, under the law, to work more than ten hours per day, or more than sixty hours per week. The law, which was passed March 28, was to go into effect on July 4, 1848. A fifty-dollar fine would be imposed on manufacturers who did not obey. In addition, minors under twelve were forbidden to work in the factories altogether, a humanitarian gesture. The rest of the law was apparently only a paper concession to humanitarian and labor groups because it allowed minors over fourteen to work longer than ten hours, as the New Hampshire law had also specified, if their parents or guardians signed a special contract. The law did not specify at what age minors were no longer minors, but it was obvious to all that the law would be interpreted to mean that adults could work longer than ten hours under special contract. Actually, the law was quite a step for the time, recognizing as it did the interest of the Commonwealth in making the ten-hour day standard. But, given the lack of organization among the textile workers in Pittsburgh (labor organization in Philadelphia seems to have been stronger in general), the way was left open to major circumvention of the spirit of the act by the manufacturers.

The cotton manufacturers of Pittsburgh and Allegheny City knew full well that the Democratic politicians would make the most of the ten-hour law and would publicize it to the mill operatives. The owners realized that the law could cause strikes and labor troubles unless they could come to some kind of agreement with the workers before the law went into effect. Actually, Allegheny City was probably the community in the state most affected by the law, since many of the Philadelphia textile manufacturers had already been driven across the river to Camden by labor troubles. The owners felt that their only chance to survive was to head off the workers before they could strike.

At a meeting of the manufacturers held May 23, 1848, they expressed approval of the provision excluding children under twelve from the mills, but agreed that it was not fair to try to apply the law to older workers when other states had no such law. Thus they felt that they could not pay twelve hours' wages for ten hours' work, that the operatives would balk at a corresponding pay reduction, and that the only solution lay in making special contracts to preserve the

25 Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Passed at the Session of 1848 (Harrisburg, 1848), 278-279.
status quo as provided in Public Law 227, the ten-hour act. The employers' legal counsel concurred in this approach, and the problem was presented to the workers as a choice between reduced wages or special contract for the status quo. Many of them, according to the owners, saw the matter "in the proper light," and preferred the status quo, obviously the most acceptable solution to the employers since it meant more complete utilization of their costly machinery.

There were enough of the operatives, however, who were unwilling to go along with this plan to sabotage it. As the owners wrote later, these workers were "intimidated by bad counsel, and turbulent speeches," by agitators who sought to "coerce employers and fellow-operatives with threats and force." The owners, seeing their plans thwarted, found a logical alternative — a shut-out. Closing the mills would soon bring the workers to task, so the owners announced that on July 1 the mills would close for an indefinite period. If Pittsburgh newspapers were aware of these developments, they did not consider them newsworthy enough to include in their resumés of local matters.

After the closing of the factories on July 1, however, newspaper interest in the controversy rose. The Democratic Daily Post remarked acidly on July 6 that they had expected the manufacturers to oppose legislative interference to protect the bodies and souls of helpless men, women, and children from the "deathly clutches of these money grubs." Recognizing the defects of the law, the Post hoped that the workers might get it altered at the next session of the legislature, despite the fact that such bodies "have always been for the benefit of capital." A week later, on July 12, the editors waxed hotter on the subject. Though the operators would obviously suffer more than the owners, the Post encouraged the former to continue their strike for "social and political rights." In phrases strikingly

26 Gazette, August 3, 1848.
27 Factory Riots, 2.
28 Ibid.
29 As far as the Pittsburgh Daily Gazette was concerned, there was a good reason for this. From April, 1847, until July 1, 1848, the Whig newspaper was being edited by Erastus Brooks, who was more interested in national than local events. He found Pittsburgh dull, apparently, and spent much time in Washington, D. C.

On July 1, the very day the mills closed, David N. White, who had previously given up the paper for health reasons, took over the editorship again. White's interest in local affairs was great, and the Gazette after July 1 gave the fullest reports of the strike and riots. Comparing it with the Post, the Gazette was conservative, but was undoubtedly the more outstanding piece of journalism. It had a bias without being unfair. J. Cutler Andrews, Pittsburgh's Post-Gazette (Boston, 1936), 121-133.
similar to the closing words of the *Communist Manifesto*, published the same year by Karl Marx, the *Post* declared that working people had little to lose and much to gain by holding out.

Meanwhile, the operatives were busily organizing their protest movement. Meeting in the Allegheny Market House, the mill girls were discouraged in their first attempts by the hooting, jeering, disorderly ruffians who commonly frequented the place. One of the rhymes shouted by the unsympathetic rowdies was:

*Cotton bumpers in a pen,
Never get out till nine or ten;
When they get out
They get buttermilk and sauer kraut.*

Numerous meetings were held throughout the month of July, at which eminent speakers (such as Captain Small of Philadelphia, a legislator who helped pass the act) debated the merits and demerits of Public Law 227. The situation became increasingly desperate for the unemployed workers, and at perhaps the most important meeting in July, on the night of Tuesday, the 18th, strong measures were taken to organize and give form to the workers’ cause.

The movement apparently had some organization because the first order of business that Tuesday night in the Allegheny Market House was the reading and adoption of the minutes of the preceding meeting by J. M. Bradley, Secretary, with President J. Moffet presiding. A committee headed by D. J. Smith had prepared a statement to be used by the group in seeking charity contributions from the community at large for the workers and their families. The statement pointed out the legal basis of their case (Public Law 227) and stated that they were being unjustly deprived of their “legitimate means of livelihood, and would appeal to the sympathies of a generous community for such aid as may enable them to withstand the injustices of their employers in endeavoring to exact from them more hours of labor in the close and imperfectly ventilated factories than they are constitutionally able to bear.” A committee of nine was appointed to

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30 *Post*, July 13, 1848.
32 This person may be James W. Moffitt or Robert Moffitt, his father. Both were carpenters and had moved to America from Ireland in 1846. They then lived in Allegheny City for two years, moved to Philadelphia until 1862, when they moved back to Allegheny City. The younger Moffitt was twenty-four at the time of the riot. The fact that they left the city in 1848 is suggestive. A. Warner, *comp.*, *History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania* (2 vols., Chicago, 1889), II, 613.
solicit donations from the people of Pittsburgh and Allegheny City.\textsuperscript{33}

The practical business out of the way, Smith and a Mr. Miller addressed the operatives on the nature of the law. As Miller retired from the floor, the Honorable Charles Shaler offered to speak extemporaneously to the workers. What had drawn this dean of the Pittsburgh legal community to the meeting is not known. He was a Democrat, however, and the Democrats were interested in the working-class vote.

Charles Shaler, a Yale graduate, had been admitted to the Pittsburgh bar in 1813 and had been president of the Court of Common Pleas from June, 1824, to May, 1835. After holding the highest county judicial office, Shaler retired to an illustrious and prosperous private practice. He was renowned and respected throughout the county, and his appearance before the striking operatives must have surprised and awed them.\textsuperscript{34}

His off-the-cuff address on the advantages and disadvantages of the ten-hour law must have been favorable to the workers’ cause, for it was greeted with enthusiastic applause by the assembled operatives. Shaler’s espousal of their cause in this peaceful stage of the protest movement had significant meaning in light of later events.

Moffet then harangued the crowd on the necessity of standing by their rights, and the meeting was adjourned until the following Saturday, July 22, at 8:00 in the evening. All those in favor of the law were cordially invited to attend. In other words, no hecklers allowed.\textsuperscript{35}

The operatives met on Saturday as scheduled, and friends of the ten-hour law, undaunted by a driving summer rain, produced a record turnout at the Market House.\textsuperscript{36} This and the meeting the following Wednesday, July 26, were mainly for the purposes of securing donations for the workers’ families. By the 26th, it was obvious that the public was not going to respond to their pleas. Almost no money had been raised during the preceding week and a half.\textsuperscript{37} Privation due to unemployment threatened to continue, and some of the less militant

\textsuperscript{33} Pittsburgh Daily Commercial Journal, July 21, 1848.
\textsuperscript{35} Commercial Journal, July 21, 1848.
\textsuperscript{36} Post, July 25, 1848.
\textsuperscript{37} Post, July 27, 1848; Commercial Journal, July 27, 1848.
operatives were signing contracts to return to work on the owners’ terms. Opposition to the workers’ cause was growing in the Whig and independent newspapers, which had earlier in the month shown little interest. To quote the *Daily Commercial Journal*, the contest between labor and management was “becoming warm.”

The argument of the opposition press was well summarized by the Pittsburgh *Daily Dispatch* (which described itself as “An independent Newspaper, not neutral”) on July 21, 1848. The *Dispatch* claimed that any man had the right to work longer than ten hours if he wished. No law which interfered with bargains between citizens was, according to the paper, a wise one. Attacking Public Law 227 as “a good topic for demagogues,” the *Dispatch* further maintained that it was not right, as the workers demanded, to pay twelve hours’ wages for ten hours’ work.

The demagogic activities of the Democrats through the *Post* were cited by John E. Parke in his *Recollections* as a major factor in causing the riot and prolonging the strike, but the press devoted little space to the operatives’ meetings, compared with that given the subject in the month following the riot. The press was probably an insignificant factor in causing the riot. Far more important was the defection of some of the girls to the manufacturers’ camp, probably prompted by desperate financial straits. The hostility toward this group by the organized workers was compounded by the refusal of the owners to deal with agents of the workers, but only with the operatives themselves.

The owners well realized the temper of the organized portion

39 John E. Parke, *Recollections of Seventy Years and Historical Gleanings of Allegheny, Pennsylvania* (Boston, 1886), 79.
41 The owners as a group seem to have been upperclass businessmen. Both Harvey Childs and Pollard McCormick were bank directors in addition to being mill owners. The most famous mill owner was James Kennedy Moorhead (1806-1884), who had made his fortune as a speculator-pioneer in canal building and commercial telegraphy. In 1840 he established the Union Cotton Mill, which burned nine years later. A Democrat in 1848, he represented Pennsylvania in the United States Congress in the Civil War. Asher Isaacs in *DAB* s.v. “Moorhead, James Kennedy.”

John Arbuckle and his two sons, all Scottish immigrants, worked in the 1830’s as mechanics in the Hope Mill. Surrupitiously they used their time to manufacture machines designed by the father for a mill of their own. When discovered, they were discharged, but two years later they joined with Charles Avery, philanthropist and educator, to form a mill company. Arbuckle and Avery, the firm which resulted from this combination, was bought out by Josiah King and Isaac Pennock in 1846. This little story
of their former employees, and most feared violence or retaliation of some kind if they tried to operate their mills with those girls who wished to return to work. The owners of the Penn factory in Allegheny City, Robert T. Kennedy, John T. Logan, and Harvey Childs, decided to try it anyway. They believed that any violence or disturbance that might occur could be effectively handled by the civil authorities of Allegheny City and County. According to the owners, threats had been made by the organized workers which justified requesting John Forsyth, High Sheriff of Allegheny County, to be on hand the day the factory reopened. After completing the necessary contracts with the girls who wished to return to work under the old system of twelve hours, the Penn Mill announced it would open on Monday, July 31, at 5:00 in the morning.42

As the girls responded to the factory bells that morning they were greeted by several hundred striking workers, mostly women, who jeered at them and called them "white slaves." 43 Also present were a detachment of Allegheny City police sent by the Mayor, Henry Campbell,44 at Kennedy's request. The County Sheriff, John Forsyth, was not yet there, but as the crowd was content to hiss and yell as the girls entered the plant, it seemed unlikely that he would be needed. During the next two hours, the crowd outside the plant grew ominously larger, including many who were not workers in the mills.45 As Mary Fulton later testified in court, they "went there to see the fun." 46 They were not to be disappointed.

By 7:00 there were not more than forty-five girls at work in the factory.47 Kennedy was on hand at 5:00 and for two hours flitted in and out of the factory, apprehensive of trouble. At 7:00 the machinery was stopped and the girls went out to breakfast, then returned again to the accompaniment of hooting and cat-calls. After 7:00 the throng outside the yard fence grew even more rapidly than before. If the

merely illustrates further the cutthroat nature of the textile business, the rapid changes of ownership, and the difficulty of generalizing about the mill owners. Story of Old Allegheny City, comp. WPA Writer's Project (Pittsburgh, 1941), 64-65.

42 Factory Riots, 2-3.
43 Ibid., 3.
44 Henry Campbell, born in 1803 of hotel-keeper parents in Pittsburgh, had been a partner in a glass company before becoming mayor of Allegheny City. He was particularly plagued during his term by the problem of keeping law and order in a city filled with drifters on their way to the gold fields of California. Story of Allegheny, 124.
45 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
46 Gazette, January 18, 1849.
47 Gazette, January 17, 1849.
crowd had remained small, no riot would have occurred. But by mid-morning there were approximately 1,500 persons in the noisy assembly.48 Then, a few individuals began to throw stones, eggs, potatoes, and mud over the fence at the factory. Perhaps it was started by young toughs, but soon little girls, women, and men were doing it, and the police had to act. The Allegheny City police knew many of these people and appealed to them individually to leave or to stop throwing things, but to no avail. The police were so outnumbered that to make arrests would have been impossible, yet no violence was perpetrated against them by the crowd. At 8:00 A.M. Kennedy’s apprehensions caused him to send for Sheriff Forsyth to bring a posse.49 Meanwhile, the leaders of the strike were making speeches to the crowd. Arthur Kirk stood in front of the office deprecating the cotton mill owners and enumerating the rights of the operatives.50 Likewise, George W. Gungle, a recognized leader of the movement, harangued the assembled workers from 8:00 until 10:00 A.M.51 Gungle exhorted the girls to stand out for their rights, promising to divide his last dollar with them if they did. However, he warned them not to commit any outrage or violence — if they did, he threatened to withdraw his support.52 Kennedy, standing nearby, felt that Gungle’s words were calculated to excite the throng, and they undoubtedly had that effect. Although he committed no violence, one witness saw him carrying a board.53 By 10:00 Gungle was aware of the explosive nature of the situation and, fearing responsibility for what might happen, he went home. There he grumbled to Mrs. McMillan, a neighbor, that it was “better for the girls to work 14 hrs than raise riots.” He told his wife not to allow their fourteen-year-old daughter Letitia, who had worked at Blackstock’s Mill for four years,54 to go near the Penn Mill, since he would be held responsible if there was a riot. Safely ensconced with his family in his home, Gungle hoped to ignore the catastrophe that seemed brooding.55

By 10:00 Kennedy also realized that the situation had become more dangerous, and he reasoned that the girls who were working

48 Factory Riots, 4.
49 Ibid.
50 Post, January 17, 1849.
51 Gazette, January 16, 1849.
52 Factory Riots, 3.
53 Post, January 17, 1849.
54 Post, January 18, 1849.
55 Gazette, January 18, 1849.
would not be able to get out and into the factory again without incident. He dispatched a messenger to have dinner brought to the factory for them.\footnote{Factory Riots, 4.} To his relief, one may imagine, Sheriff Forsyth arrived between 9:00 and 10:00 with a posse composed of Pittsburgh police. Unfortunately, this was not the pacifying element it was supposed to be, as the posse was from out of town (Allegheny City was not part of Pittsburgh) and it was composed largely of Irishmen.

Shouts of “damned Irish” and “imported Irish” arose at once and angry men complained that the Sheriff had no right to bring in outsiders. The hostility which had previously been directed toward the operatives (now safely behind locked factory doors) suddenly was directed toward the police, not only the new arrivals from across the river, but also the Allegheny City officers. One of the Sheriff’s posse, a man named Bougher, said that if he were Sheriff, he would “drive that mob to hell in a minute.” One of the crowd replied that if he tried it, the strikers would ride him and the Sheriff both into the river.\footnote{Ibid., 5.} Such exchanges as this hampered the efforts of Allegheny police officers like Joseph Scott to keep peace. Scott knew Gungle and many of the rioters personally; they were his friends and neighbors.\footnote{Post, January 18, 1849.} His sympathies were with their cause, though his duty might be to try to keep them from doing damage to property or violence to other persons. The arrival of the Pittsburgh police enraged the mob and rendered useless Scott’s efforts to appeal personally to the rioters.

Meanwhile, the girls inside the factory were fanning the flames by hurling bobbins and abusive language from the second story windows.\footnote{Gazette, January 18, 1849; Factory Riots, 3.} The mob began to try to get into the factory yard, which was protected by a board fence and strongly barred gates. Women and girls pushed against the front and rear gates, and some even chopped at them with axes.\footnote{Factory Riots, 3-5.} A small boy slipped through a hole in the fence in hopes of letting the crowd in. Kennedy, walking in the yard then, grabbed him (he later testified it was to protect him from danger\footnote{Gazette, January 18, 1849.}), took him up to his office, questioned him for a while, then let him go.

\begin{itemize}
\item[56] Factory Riots, 4.
\item[57] Ibid., 5.
\item[58] Post, January 18, 1849.
\item[59] Gazette, January 18, 1849; Factory Riots, 3.
\item[60] Factory Riots, 3-5.
\item[61] Gazette, January 18, 1849.
\end{itemize}
Rumors suddenly swept through the crowd that Kennedy had kidnapped the youth and had him bound hand and foot in his office. The outcry was vicious. The situation at about 11:40 was tense and would break into a full-scale riot with the addition of the right spark. At 11:45 Kennedy supplied it.

Kennedy had been viewing the growing crowd with increasing alarm and wished above all to disperse it. He struck upon a simple plan — he instructed his chief engineer, John T. Logan, to release some hot steam into the yard, thus making a great noise and perhaps frightening the strikers away from the gates. At 11:45 a.m. Logan did as he was told. By a mischance of fate, there was a hole in the fence near the spot where the steam escaped from the factory, and hot water, steam, and mud were spewn upon a great many people outside the yard. A little girl was scalded, and many people had their clothes utterly ruined.

Deputy Joseph Scott was among those hit by the steam; he stood in his sopping clothes, the mud smoking on his hat, and declared that if Kennedy did that again he would leave. The story of the scalded girl spread, and at that moment Kennedy completed his image to the crowd as a wicked monster by appearing at the fence brandishing a rifle. This was the signal for general pandemonium and cries of vengeance.

The crowd redoubled its efforts to break through the gates. More “young amazons” wielding axes appeared. The purpose of the mob, to remove the girls from the factory, was not forgotten, but it was now compounded with the desire to retaliate against the deputies, the factory, and its owner, Robert T. Kennedy. Hugh Armstrong shouted that they would tear down the factory if any more water was thrown. Joseph Scott took an ax away from a girl who was chopping at the gate, and Armstrong told him to give the ax back or he would knock his brains out. Scott handed the ax to Allegheny’s mayor, Henry Campbell, who had appeared on the scene, and Armstrong tried to make good his threat by hitting Scott on the head with a stick. John Wagly, another Allegheny policeman, was spied by two young men, one of whom said, “Here is one of them d——d sons of b——s, let us kill him”; then hit him on the head with a board.
causing a bloody wound; the other blinded him with a cinder.66

Meanwhile, the yard gate was about to give way, and the posse inside the yard prepared to resist the onslaught. The mob formed ranks, with the women in front. One of the men shouted, "Now, men!" The crowd responded with a cheer, someone yelled, "Give 'em hell," and the charge was on. The weakened gate broke, the outnumbered posse ran for their lives, and the mob was at last in control of the inner yard.67

The leader of the strikers at this point was a man named William Kinsloe, who had no compunctions about labor violence as did Gungle. He urged the mob, which now had Kennedy's hat on top of a pole, on into the yard where they began to tear at the doors of the factory itself. The posse had regrouped and resolved to get the working girls out without injury. They mustered some support among the more reasonable members of the crowd, and a line was formed from the back door of the factory to outside the yard. Just as the front door gave way to the attacking crowd, the girls were hustled safely out the back door, pelted only with shouts, scoffs, and jeers.68

The angry crowd poured into the mill and began throwing stones, mud, and anything they could lay their hands on at the machinery and the few remaining unbroken windows. They would not accept Kennedy's protests that the girls were gone, and they pushed and struck him. A deputation went upstairs to make sure the girls really were gone. They were, of course, and the riot had achieved its primary objective. But it was by no means over.69

The mob continued to berate and attack the police officers and posse. Sheriff John Forsyth was beaten severely about the face and head, wounds which bled profusely and might have been serious had not Dr. J. P. Gazzam happened by and dressed them. A pair of well-dressed, respectable-looking young men, not connected with either group, but merely passing by, were pelted mercilessly with mud by the rioters. One, smoking a cigar, was unperturbed and walked calmly and deliberately on, mud dripping from his fine clothes.70 Daniel Bossier, who likewise had no connection with the controversy, arrived carrying a revolver. Probably mistaking him for a policeman, the mob began

66 Ibid., 3; Gazette, August 1, 1848.
67 Commercial Journal, August 1, 1848.
68 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
69 Factory Riots, 4.
70 Commercial Journal, August 1, 1848.
attacking him fiercely. The posse rescued him and put him in the watch house to save his life.  

A hunt soon began for the engineer who had let off the steam. A German tailor, mistaken for the engineer, was chased by the mob, beaten, and stoned, until the posse also rescued him and put him in the watch house.  

When John T. Logan, the engineer (and part owner of the mill), was discovered, he received his share of blows on the head and body. Yet some people in the crowd maintained their senses. When deputy Joseph Scott was knocked down, Robert Vance, a rioter, said sympathetically that it was hard to be an officer. However, he advised Scott not to return the blow or he might be seriously hurt.  

The mob remained in possession of the mill until about 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon. After 1:00, however, the worst of the violence was over. From then on, they milled around in the streets, “regaled with an occasional harrangue by their leaders, and one or more fights.” By late afternoon the crowd had dispersed, so that the weary deputies could lock up what was left of the Penn Cotton Mill of Kennedy, Childs and Company.  

Tuesday, August 1, the Pittsburgh newspapers were full of conflicting accounts of the events of July 31. Rumors of severe injuries and deaths were followed by thrilling blow-by-blow descriptions of the action. Editorial comment, except by the Gazette, was slight, but anti-Democratic and independent papers registered disapproval. The Daily Commercial Journal wrote “we offer no comments — the law was broken — we state the facts.” The Gazette reported that the factories were quiet but pointed out that many operatives were willing to return to work, “were they not prevented by the triumphs of the mob spirit.” The Daily Dispatch’s evening edition summarized the positions of the morning prints. The editors criticized the Post for not taking a stand against the rioters, berated the Commercial Journal for its fence-straddling, and lauded the Gazette for its firm anti-riot stand. The Dispatch itself, obviously disapproving of the affair, expressed hostility toward the workers and asked rhetorically where this sort of violence would stop.

71 Gazette, January 16, 1849; Factory Riots, 3.
72 Gazette, January 16, 1849.
73 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
74 Gazette, January 16, 1849.
75 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
76 Factory Riots, 3.
Public opinion, influenced by the tales of scalding water thrown by Kennedy, his use of the posse and police against honest citizens, his kidnapping of the little boy, and his brandishing a gun, and by the desperate plight of the workers themselves, seemed to be squarely against the owners. For days thereafter, as the mill owners walked the streets of Pittsburgh, they were pelted with stones and rotten eggs, thrown by wives and daughters of the city's industrial workers and by anyone else who wanted to get into the act.

The operatives gathered in the Allegheny Market House on the evening of the riot where Kinsloe, their new leader, and other men addressed them. A committee of two males and two females was appointed from each factory to "wait upon the proprietors of all the factories for the purpose of an amicable settlement of existing difficulties." The Gazette reported that this was done at the suggestion of some of the owners. The operatives must have appointed nonworkers to the committees, however, because throughout the month of August, the manufacturers steadfastly refused to deal with any other party than the girls themselves. The operatives protested that if the owners wished to settle with them, they must contact their representatives. Thus one of the crucial issues involved was owner recognition of the employee organization which was led, apparently, by men who did not work in the mills. The manufacturers felt they could handle the girls — they were not so certain about firebrands like William Kinsloe.

Not all of the agitators were men, however. A beautiful, dark-eyed, pale, well-built Kentucky girl with long, flowing tresses, identified only as "the unknown" was one of the most ardent defenders of the ten-hour system. This young lady attended all the meetings of the operatives and was said to have a strange control over the girls, directing their movements, yet not indulging in any illegal acts herself. She was reputed to be quite intelligent, but her identity and motivation remain obscure, since she was said not to be an operative herself.

By Wednesday, August 2, a newspaper battle was on. The Daily Commercial Journal believed that the girls who wished to work had a right to do so and thus should have been protected by the authorities at all costs. The Journal of August 4 printed a letter purportedly

77 Gazette, August 1, 1848.
78 Gazette, August 17, 1848.
79 Post, August 19, 1848.
80 Henry Mann, ed., Our Police (Pittsburgh, 1889), 81.
written by a "mechanic," who favored the ten-hour system, but not "Trade Union Societies."

The Gazette of August 3 drew hard and fast lines. In an editorial titled "The Factory Question," it was stated that the operatives were being unreasonable, and that the only result of their actions would be to discourage new capital and to drive out present capital. They must, believed the Gazette, make up their minds to submit to the owners or find other employment. The ten-hour day was very desirable, but only if it was universal. The paper proposed that the new law go into effect when all other states agreed to enact similar laws.

This was one of the major issues in the dispute. A statement by the manufacturers printed simultaneously by all Pittsburgh papers (including the pro-labor Post) expressed the same concern. The manufacturers could not pay twelve hours' wages for ten hours' work and still compete with mills in other states where the twelve-hour day was standard. Their backs were against the wall, and they had only three choices — special twelve-hour contracts, reduced wages for ten hours, or closing the Pittsburgh and Allegheny City mills.81

When the strikers complained of the printing of the manufacturers' statement, the Gazette replied on August 5 that it was a paid advertisement, and offered to give the workers equal space free. The Whig paper told the operatives that it was their right to demand a five-hour day, but it was not in their interest to do so. Neither was it in their interest to pay attention to the orators who "nightly declaim to you" on the evils of industrial slavery.

The Democratic Post attacked the manufacturers' position vehemently, charging that most owners made 52 per cent profit on their investment. Thus even a reduction of 17 per cent, which would be caused by a ten-hour day at full pay, would still leave them enough to live.82 The Gazette of August 8 disputed the 52 per cent profit margin, stating that profits were so low that a 17 per cent reduction would put all the mills in the red, forcing them to close. On the 17th, the Gazette printed a statement by Charles Avery of the Eagle Mill that profits for 1847 were a mere 11 per cent.

Saturday night, August 5, the operatives met in the Diamond Market House. The meeting was also attended by mechanics, artisans, and interested citizens of both Allegheny City and Pittsburgh. The moderate leader, Moffet, made a speech of some length in which he

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81 Post, Gazette, Dispatch, Commercial Journal, August 3, 1848.
82 Post, August 5, 1848.
defended the ten-hour law and the rights of the operatives, but deprecated violence. He was followed by other speakers, among them a mechanic named Morehead, who said about the same thing. Violence would not occur again that year, but that of the previous Monday was forgotten by no one.

Meanwhile, extensive efforts were being made by Mayor Campbell and the Allegheny City police to arrest and prosecute the more conspicuous of the riot leaders. On Monday, August 7, the Select and Common Councils of Allegheny City responded by voting $1,000 for the arrest and conviction of the rioters. It was simultaneously announced that Mayor Campbell would receive information at his office and that arrests were already being made. Most of those arrested were immediately released on bond supplied by friends, but one fifteen-year-old girl was determined to be a martyr and went to jail rather than allow herself to be bailed out. The fact that her bail was $300 indicates that the workers had access to money for emergencies and the support of some substantial and responsible citizens.

The Post on Wednesday the 9th took up the Gazette's charge that the workers' attitude would cause capital to flee the city by noting that one or two hundred cotton mill girls had left the city and many others had sought other employment. The preceding Monday had provided an example of how helpless the owners were without the workers. James Gray's Allegheny Cotton Factory had announced that operations would begin at the usual time, 5:00 a.m., on Monday. The Gazette reported on Tuesday that the mills opened again without disturbance, a candidate for understatement of the year. The bells rang out that morning, but no girls came to work. The owners and foremen then made an attempt to run the machinery themselves, but gave it up after five hours. The Post gleefully reported the failure of "the five hour system." The implication was clear — if five hours' work at the machines tired the owners, ten was more than enough for fourteen-year-old girls.

The owners did not give up, however, and enough girls showed up at three factories Wednesday morning for them to start work. A mob soon gathered at Blackstock's Mill and moved on to Gray's Allegheny

83 Gazette, August 7, 1848.
84 Commercial Journal, August 5, 1848.
85 Post, August 5, 1848.
86 Gazette, August 14, 1848.
87 Gazette, August 8, 1848.
88 Post, August 9, 1848.
Mill, where they had the fun of pelting Colonel Gray with rotten eggs as he went to work. Some of the Allegheny Mill girls, fearing violence at the hands of the mob, went home. The crowd then went on to the Starr Mill, but did no damage and soon dispersed.\(^{89}\) By the time the crowd had reached the Starr Mill, the adults had become bored and slipped away and the "mob" was a crowd of noisy children led by an eighteen to twenty-year-old girl, whom the Gazette dubbed "silly," and noted was under bail from the previous riot.\(^{90}\)

That night a solidarity meeting of the operatives was held at the Allegheny Market House as usual, and the Democrats, who had previously sent orators and observers to the meetings, came out in full force and seemed to take over the meeting and make it into a political rally.\(^{91}\) Edmund Snowden, a young Pittsburgh lawyer, a Mr. Hamilton, and a Mr. Mitchell, all Democratic candidates for office, presented "frothy" speeches in favor of the ten-hour law. One of them, according to the Gazette, even gave quasi-approval to violence as a weapon.\(^{92}\) The Post made great capital out of the fact that the Whigs were not represented at all,\(^{93}\) and the Gazette called the Democratic candidates "heartless demagogues." The Gazette criticized also the speech of one Mr. Watson, who attempted to show the operatives that all sympathy for them lay with "patent Cass Democrats." The Whig print delighted in calling attention to the inconsistency of opposing industrial slavery while supporting black slavery.\(^{94}\)

The Gazette continued to try to frighten the workers back to their jobs. It reported that the Penn factory had shipped $30,000 worth of raw cotton on to Philadelphia rather than risk manufacture in Pittsburgh\(^{95}\) and announced on the 15th of August that the manufacturers had met and resolved to close the factories until spring "in consequence of the mobocratic action of the workers."\(^{96}\) The crowning touch came on August 16 when it was announced that the manufacturers had appointed a committee to investigate new sites for mills in West Virginia. They were likely, the paper felt, to leave Pennsylvania for good.

The immediate cause of these announcements was another mob

\(^{89}\) Post, August 10, 1848.
\(^{90}\) Gazette, August 10, 1848.
\(^{91}\) Gazette, August 14, 1848.
\(^{92}\) Gazette, August 11, 1848.
\(^{93}\) Post, August 10, 1848.
\(^{94}\) Gazette, August 11, 1848.
\(^{95}\) Gazette, August 12, 1848.
\(^{96}\) Gazette, August 15, 1848.
which gathered on Monday morning, August 14, by the Allegheny City mills. At an operatives’ meeting the previous Saturday night the leaders had called a meeting for Monday morning at 5:00 A.M. Since the mills were still struggling along with partial crews, many people thought a demonstration was planned and showed up to watch. As it turned out, no one was there but the people who had come to watch, and the “mob” was “cruelly disappointed.” To the owners one mob looked like another, however, and their announcement about closing down and seeking other sites was further prompted by the events of Monday, August 14.

The striking workers were, by mid-August, becoming anxious to return to work under any conditions, but were prevented from so doing by the previously mentioned impasse concerning de facto recognition of the laborers’ organization. The manufacturers continued to receive the girls individually and to give them contracts, but would not deal with any third party. The leaders of the striking workers demanded that the owners contact William Brown, chairman of the committee of correspondence, in order to work out a settlement. There is evidence, though biased, that the workers’ organization resented the political football the Democrats were making of their movement and that they felt the Democrats were using them.

By the third week in August, the remaining strikers and their organization seemed ready to capitulate. Early in the week the Starr Mill offered to open with a ten-hour day with a proportional reduction in wages, and even the pro-labor Post advised the girls to accept the offer. Wages would inevitably go up in the future, and the Post now felt there was no necessity for conflict between capital and labor.

Wednesday evening, the 23rd, the operatives met to consider the proposal, and even William Kinsloe advised acceptance. Two other leaders, Kerr and Boyd, concurred, and only a few dissidents were reported still likely to hold out. The Post the next day suggested that the Starr owners should be encouraged, since they had

97 Commercial Journal, August 14, 1848.
98 Post, August 15, 1848.
99 Gazette, August 17, 1848.
100 Post, August 19, 1848.
101 The Gazette, August 23, 1848, reported that some of the operatives had expressed this feeling to the editors.
102 Post, August 23, 1848.
103 Gazette, August 24, 1848.
104 The Starr owners were Messrs. Voeghtly, Hunter, and Myers. Nicholas Voeghtly, born in 1798 in Switzerland, had immigrated to the United States in 1822. He and his brothers were industrious and clever business managers
wanted to institute the ten-hour day all along, but were prevented by a combination of the other proprietors. The operatives of the Allegheny Mill, realizing this, had planned to prosecute the owners for conspiracy and had appointed a committee to employ counsel and to prepare the case.¹⁰⁵

More contracts, all involving either a ten-hour day or a twelve-hour day combined with a five-day week with reduced wages, were signed by the operatives during the latter part of the week. The Gazette announced happily on Saturday that all workers would return Monday under the ten-hours-with-reduction system, adding the comment that the latest operatives’ meeting was confined to members of their own class and “we did not venture to intrude, even for the purpose of taking notes.”¹⁰⁶ The Post was equally pleased with the results of the past week, writing, “Thus have the girls gained victory No. 1!” The paper was certain that wages would be raised before long.¹⁰⁷

By Monday it was apparent that both the Post and the rival Gazette were overoptimistic. A fair number of girls stayed away from work and held a meeting at 10:00 a.m. at which they vowed never to work for reduced wages. The Gazette thought these stragglers would capitulate in a day or two;¹⁰⁸ the chagrined Post had no comment. Both seemed to have forgotten that the owners had been willing to accept the ten-hour day with reduction all along (though preferring the status quo) and that the workers had steadfastly rejected both proposals all month. Little wonder then that the “stragglers” failed to regard the reopening of the mills as “victory No. 1.”

The uneasy, short-handed operation of the mills continued into mid-September. The intransigents had apparently bolted from the organization, since the operatives met on Monday night, August 28, to thank Captain Small (state representative from Philadelphia who helped pass the ten-hour law) for his efforts, and also to thank Mr. Hunter and Nicholas Voeghtly of the Starr Mill for breaking down and were able to acquire several factories and a great deal of land.

About 1840 he and two of his brothers built and operated a cotton mill in Allegheny City. A Whig, then a Republican, Voeghtly became a wealthy capitalist, but his German Lutheran background seems to have given him a humanitarian’s view of the workers’ plight. After the trial of the rioters in January, 1849, he stated publicly, “When we can’t pay our girls a living share of our profits, we’ll stop the mill.” Post, January 23, 1849; Boucher, Pittsburgh and Her People, IV, 433-444.

¹⁰⁵ Post, August 24, 1848.
¹⁰⁶ Gazette, August 26, 1848.
¹⁰⁷ Post, August 26, 1848.
¹⁰⁸ Gazette, August 29, 1848.
the proprietors' combinations.\textsuperscript{109} The whole controversy, which had filled the newspapers for one solid month, disappeared almost as suddenly as it had begun.

The \textit{Gazette} reported on September 12 that the workers struck again for more pay and better working conditions and the owners had closed the mills indefinitely. The whole problem had ceased to be first-rate news, however, and one can only assume what happened between mid-September and early 1849 when the mills began operating at full speed again.\textsuperscript{110} Most likely, there were repeated attempts at operation with partial crews, strikes, and shut-outs. However, it is certainly possible, as the lack of comment in the newspapers indicates, that the mills remained closed for five or six months.

The political implications of the riot and ensuing conflict between capital and labor were interesting and complex. The Democrats, who had worked hard to gain the workers' vote by sending representatives to speak at their meetings, by supporting the workers' cause valiantly in their press, and by attempting to convince the workers that the ten-hour law was their measure, hoped to reap corresponding benefits at the polls in the October elections. This issue was particularly attractive to them since it enabled them to avoid the touchy tariff and slavery issues. In Allegheny County at least the ten-hour law seemed to be the main issue.\textsuperscript{111}

The Whig press was compelled to take a strong stand against the law, stressed its unfairness to local capitalists, and appealed to the farmer, whose long day made the law seem ridiculous. The Whig acting governor, William Johnston, however, who saw the folly of antagonizing the workers, strongly supported the law and advised other Whig candidates to do the same, thus robbing the Democrats of an issue. In fact, Johnston, who had become acting governor on July 9, when the ailing Democrat Francis Shunk had resigned, could have put the election off until the following year, yet chose to have it October 10, 1848, when the passions aroused by the riot and the law were still raging.\textsuperscript{112}

Johnston tried hard, but failed to dissuade Ner Middleswarth, Whig candidate for canal commissioner, to give up his stand against the ten-hour law. Middleswarth was from the German community in

\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Post}, August 30, 1848.
\textsuperscript{110} Boucher, \textit{Pittsburgh and Her People}, I, 509.
\textsuperscript{111} Mueller, \textit{Whig Party}, 166.
Union County where a day’s labor was accepted by all as being from daylight to dark, and he stubbornly refused to say anything favorable on the subject.\textsuperscript{113} In the colorful campaign that preceded the election, the Democrats addressed large audiences of workingmen in both Allegheny County and Philadelphia, stressing Middleswarth’s opposition to the ten-hour law when it had been passed the preceding spring and his continued attacks on it since.\textsuperscript{114}

The veteran campaigner Middleswarth’s defeat in the October election is regarded by most analysts as the result of the refusal of most factory workers and free-soil Democrats to support him. It was estimated that he lost the votes of six hundred factory workers in Allegheny County alone.\textsuperscript{115} Johnston, who favored the law, was elected governor. The Whig candidates, on the whole, had followed Johnston’s lead in not allowing the Democrats to make an issue of the law, and the Democrats were not able to make any large gains as a result.\textsuperscript{116} As a political ploy, the Democratic attempt to gain the workers’ vote, except in the case of Middleswarth, was unsuccessful. They did not, by any means, give it up.

Immediately after the election, interest turned to the prosecution of the rioters who had been arrested, which was to come up in the current session of the Court of the Quarter Sessions of Allegheny County. The presiding judge of the court, Judge Benjamin Patton, had a respectable legal career as U.S. District Attorney of the Western District of Pennsylvania behind him when he took over the judgeship vacated by the venerated Charles Shaler in 1839.\textsuperscript{117} In Patton’s years on the court he had not made himself beloved and was considered severe and arbitrary by some persons.\textsuperscript{118} He was known to be particularly opposed to riots or mob action of any kind, and it could be guessed what kind of treatment would be accorded the mill hands and their leaders in his court. Consequently, many leading members of the Pittsburgh bar volunteered their services for the defense of the rioters.\textsuperscript{119}

The owners, or at least some of them (the owners of the Starr

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.; Mueller, Whig Party, 157; McClure, Old Time Notes, I, 177.
\textsuperscript{116} Commons, History of Labour, I, 243.
\textsuperscript{117} Eastman, Courts and Lawyers, III, 621-622; McFadden, A Chronological Table, 3.
\textsuperscript{118} Warner, History of Allegheny County, I, 254.
\textsuperscript{119} Parke, Recollections, 80.
factory, headed by Nicholas Voeghtly, steadfastly refused to co-operate with the other owners, and did so again in this instance), contributed funds to support a vigorous prosecution. Foremost among the responses to their call for legal aid was that of the newly formed firm of Shaler and Stanton, comprised of the loved and respected Charles Shaler and a brilliant younger lawyer named Edwin M. Stanton, later to achieve fame as Lincoln's Secretary of War.

Following the death of his first wife in 1844, Edwin M. Stanton had become a veritable legal machine, driven by a kind of power lust. He came to Pittsburgh in 1847 and joined the aging Shaler in law practice. Stanton had a reputation for being a vicious fighter in court, particularly in the cross-examination. According to Stanton's biographer, Benjamin P. Thomas, two cases were responsible for his quick rise to legal eminence in the late forties and early fifties, the famous Wheeling Bridge case and the prosecution of the cotton mill rioters for the owners.

On October 27, 1848, the case was given to the grand jury, whose duty it was to determine if a true bill of indictment could be brought against the rioters, and the jury was to report in a month. Meanwhile, the docket of attorneys both for the defense and the prosecution was growing. The prosecution had Shaler, Stanton, Thomas J. Bigham, and James Callam. Callam was a younger man, admitted to the bar in 1843, but little else is known about him.

Thomas J. Bigham is better known. Born in 1810, he was called "Thomas Jefferson" by his law classmates, and was beginning his career as a power in Pennsylvania politics in 1848. A Whig, then a Republican, he was an active abolitionist — his home was a refuge for fugitive slaves. In 1848 he had just returned from a term in the United States House of Representatives. Thus on the prosecution side were one legal patriarch and two ambitious, capable young lawyers, both destined to achieve greater fame. Stanton and Shaler were both Democrats, Callam's politics are unknown, so only Bigham

120 Post, January 23, 1849.
121 Benjamin P. Thomas and Harold M. Hyman, Stanton—The Life and Times of Lincoln's Secretary of War (New York, 1962), 59-60; Chapter III "On the way up" discusses Stanton's legal career in Pittsburgh in detail.
122 Quarter Sessions Docket, Allegheny County, October, 1847-January, 1849, 456.
123 McFadden, A Chronological Table, 13.
124 Bigham later went on to serve in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 1851 to 1864, and then in the Pennsylvania Senate from 1865 to 1867. He also founded the Pittsburgh Commercial Journal. Twentieth Century Bench and Bar of Pennsylvania (2 vols., Chicago, 1903), II, 857; John W. Jordan, Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography (30 vols., New York, 1914), I, 139-143.
was open to charges of political motivation in the prosecution of the rioters.

The defense, able but not so distinguished as the prosecution, can more clearly be seen to have been operating in a political context. Colonel Samuel W. Black, admitted to the Allegheny County bar in 1838, a local hero because of his exploits as a lieutenant colonel in the First Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers in the war with Mexico, had been very active in the Democratic party. He addressed the meetings of the operatives often in July and August and was a favorite with the mill girls.125

Another member of the defense team who was active in the workers' meetings was Harry M. Kennedy, a young lawyer of poor health who had been admitted to the bar in August, 1847.126 Edmund Snowden, already mentioned, was no stranger to the factory workers and had been present at the candidates' meeting at which violence had been condoned and the workers had received the full support of the three Democrats present. It is interesting to note that he had studied under Benjamin Patton's son and had been admitted to the bar in 1845 on the motion of Charles Shaler.127

Cornelius Darragh, graduate of the Western University of Pennsylvania, had been a member of the Pennsylvania Senate and the United States Congress and was a "typical Western Pennsylvanian of Irish ancestry" and a Democrat.128 If he addressed any workers' meetings, the newspapers did not report it. The fifth member of the defense team was James M. Sawyer, about whom nothing is known except that he was admitted to the Allegheny County bar on April 9, 1842.129 The defense was thus involved politically more than the prosecution and represented, on the whole, a younger group of men, mostly Democrats. The array of legal talent on each side promised one of the most exciting and interesting trials in county history. Rarely did the legal community as a whole come out in such force for the defense or prosecution of anything.

The grand jury was not ready to report on November 27, so the case was postponed one week until December 4, 1848. To no one's surprise, the grand jury, before a crowded gallery, returned a true bill for several types of riot against sixteen persons, five of whom were

125 McFadden, A Chronological Table, 12; Post, August 30, 1848.
126 Twentieth Century Bench and Bar, II, 859; Post, August 1, 1848.
127 Twentieth Century Bench and Bar, II, 856.
128 Ibid., II, 828; McFadden, A Chronological Table, 10.
129 McFadden, 12.
young women. Robert Vance, Charles Lindsay, George Cannon, Robinson Maniford, Washington McKelvey, Joanna Brown, Miranda Hollander, Mary Lynch, Rosetta Richards, Sarah Stewart, Thomas Love, James McKelvey, Samuel Hughes, and George W. Gungle were present to be charged. Arthur Kirk was indicted but did not appear. How William Kinsloe escaped indictment is a wonder. Perhaps he had left the jurisdiction. When the court inquired who was for the defense, Colonel Black called out, “The whole of the Bar and one or two from Mercer,” bringing down the house in laughter.

The indictment was the occasion for another pro-worker statement by the Post, which asserted that if the rioters violated the legal rights of the owners, the owners “violated the social rights of the operatives.” The violence of July 31, 1848, was simply the instinctual rising of the masses against tyranny. The Post felt riots would be avoided in the future not by punishing the cotton mill rioters but by political reforms which would ensure equal rights.

Before a courtroom packed with interested spectators, the trial opened in Judge Patton’s Court of the Quarter Sessions on Monday, January 15, 1849. Immediately Sawyer, Bigham, Callam, Black, and Shaler began a legal battle over the attempt of the defense to quash the indictment, again on strictly technical grounds that the attorney-general had not signed it, that only one list of jurors was prepared instead of the prescribed two, and that the sheriff and the commissioners had not been sworn. The bickering was intense, and Judge Patton soon tired of it, ordered the attorneys to put the problem in writing, and adjourned the court until 2:00 P.M.

When the court reconvened, Judge Patton overruled the defense, and the trial went on. James Callam, junior member of the prosecution team, made the opening speech for the Commonwealth in which he charged that riot was incipient treason against the state. Then Edwin M. Stanton called Allegheny deputy Joseph Scott to the stand. Scott was a strange witness for the prosecution to call because, though he told every detail of the riot, his side comments were friendly to the rioters. He often mentioned how one or another of the defendants had co-operated with him in trying to halt the disturbance. Under cross-examination by Black, Scott revealed his conviction that if the water

130 Quarter Sessions Docket, 456.
131 Gazette, December 5, 1848.
132 Post, December 6, 1848.
133 Gazette, January 16, 1849.
had not been thrown by Kennedy and Logan, no serious violence
would have occurred.\footnote{134 Ibid.; Factory Riots, 3.}

Tuesday morning the prosecution brought Robert T. Kennedy,
owner of the Penn Mill, to the stand. One of the main points was,
quite naturally, the letting off of the steam and water. Kennedy ad-
mitted it, but claimed it was only for the purpose of scaring the mob,
not to hurt anyone. He denied any knowledge of children being
scalded. Colonel Black asked him a number of questions about the
proprietors' meetings before July 1, in an effort to play up the con-
spiracy charge. Kennedy stoutly maintained that they closed only be-
cause the contracts had not been signed. When asked how he expected
to frighten those outside the fence by throwing water into the yard,
Kennedy replied, "If you'd been there, you might have been frightened,
for it makes a great noise." \footnote{135 Post, January 17, 1849; Gazette, January 17, 1849; Factory Riots, 4.}

The afternoon session brought out an interesting case of an owner
who did not want to be associated with the prosecution of the case.
Isaac Pennock, co-owner of the Eagle Cotton Mill, testified under
cross-examination that he had "not contributed anything toward the
prosecution of this case." \footnote{136 Post, January 17, 1849.} His partner, Josiah King, was one of
the owners who had contributed funds to pay Stanton's expenses.\footnote{137 Harry K. Siebeneck, "Pittsburgh's Civil War Fortification
Claims," Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, XXVII (March-June, 1944), 5.}

Eliza Deary, a fifteen-year-old girl who had worked in a mill for
two and a half years, was called by the prosecution in an attempt to
gain the jury's sympathies. She told how Mary Lynch, one of the de-
fendants, had cursed at her for working and how the other girls had
thrown mud at her on the day of the riot.\footnote{138 Post, January 17, 1849.} If she did not weep on the
stand, the effect was the same. This move was probably made to
counteract the possible effect on the male jury of the five very
attractive young defendants. The Daily Dispatch noted this danger,
calling the girls pretty, "too much so, perhaps, for a gallant jury." \footnote{139 Dispatch, January 18, 1849.}

Wednesday morning the defense opened its case with the young
lawyer Alfred B. McCalmont,\footnote{140 Alfred Brunson McCalmont (1825-1874), admitted to the Bar in 1847, was a
graduate of Dickinson College. He was an Assistant United States
Attorney-General from 1859 to 1861. Twentieth Century Bench and Bar,
II, 859.} who had joined the defense since
December 4, making a stirring speech. He then proceeded to call

\footnote{134 Ibid.; Factory Riots, 3.}
\footnote{135 Post, January 17, 1849; Gazette, January 17, 1849; Factory Riots, 4.}
\footnote{136 Post, January 17, 1849.}
\footnote{137 Harry K. Siebeneck, "Pittsburgh's Civil War Fortification Claims," Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, XXVII (March-June, 1944), 5.}
\footnote{138 Post, January 17, 1849.}
\footnote{139 Dispatch, January 18, 1849.}
\footnote{140 Alfred Brunson McCalmont (1825-1874), admitted to the Bar in 1847, was a graduate of Dickinson College. He was an Assistant United States Attorney-General from 1859 to 1861. Twentieth Century Bench and Bar, II, 859.}
the defense witnesses. The defense realized that the fact that there had been a riot and that the defendants had participated in it was not open to challenge. Thus the only hope was to convince the jury of the good conduct of the defendants, to build sympathy for them as individuals, and to prove that there would have been no violence had not R. T. Kennedy ordered water thrown on the mob. Nearly a score of witnesses swore that they knew this or that defendant for so many years and that he or she was a peaceful, industrious citizen.\textsuperscript{141}

Mary Fitzgerald was called to testify that she had seen the little girl who was scalded and had been scalded herself. Mary Fulton was called to discredit the prosecution's witness, Eliza Deary, who she said had used abusive language from the factory windows. Joseph Randolph was describing the water-throwing incident under oath when a juror stood up and began asking him questions. The judge quickly suggested, no doubt to the delight of all present, that the jury should keep out of the court proceedings. The crowds in the courtroom continued to be large and curious, and neither side lost the opportunity to perform for them.

Jacob Whitzel, Mary Fulton, and Joseph Scott all affirmed their belief under oath that no riot would have occurred except for the unfortunate water incident. Scott was asked by the defense if he knew whether George W. Gungle belonged to any church. Stanton objected at once to this attempt to provide a character witness. He told Judge Patton that "If being a member of [a] church can be considered evidence of innocence, then it is evidence of guilt not to be a member!" Judge Patton sustained.\textsuperscript{142}

The attempt to build Gungle's character and to prove that he had counseled against violence in his speeches was one of the major efforts of the defense. A number of witnesses were called to prove that he was home when the riot occurred, had advised the girls against violence, and forbade his own daughter to take part in the affair. The daughter, Letitia, was brought into the courtroom, where the defense pointed out that she had worked in Blackstock's Mill the last four of her fourteen years. Next day, however, the \textit{Daily Dispatch} noted that she had such a sweet face and was "the very flower of health in her soft rosy cheeks, although, as she testified she had been in a factory from the age of ten,"\textsuperscript{143} implying that factory life could not be so bad. The crowning

\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Post}, January 18, 1849; \textit{Gazette}, January 18, 1849.
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Gazette}, January 18, 1849.
\textsuperscript{143} \textit{Dispatch}, January 18, 1849.
touch of the defense’s case came when Mrs. Calhoun testified that “Manda” Hollander, one of the pretty female defendants, was the main support of her widowed mother, two little brothers, and little sister. It was the intent of the defense to promote the idea that only a heartless jury could convict such a girl. Wednesday afternoon the defense rested.144

Standing tall, with graceful bearing, Charles Shaler looked the part of the venerable legal patriarch on Thursday morning when he rose to make the closing arguments of the prosecution. His long, white beard reinforced the image of a sage about to deliver the truth. He was known to be brief, cogent, clear in his arguments to the court, and florid, eloquent, and occasionally witty or sarcastic in his remarks before juries, and he did not disappoint the spectators.145 The intensity of his feeling against the rioters can surely be traced in part to his early espousal of their cause and their subsequent rejection of lawful means. The events of July 31, 1848, “were the riotous proceeding of a mob, bold, desperate, and bloody,” according to Shaler. Both he and Stanton, who delivered a lengthy and “eloquent” speech in the afternoon summing up the prosecution’s case, stressed the legal character of the owners’ and the contracted workers’ positions. The issue was not, according to Shaler and Stanton, the ten-hour law, but was the question of the rule of law or of mob. In a free government, where the people make the laws, there was no excuse for the latter. The rioters should have made full use of the normal legal procedures of “petition, address or remonstrance to the Legislative authority.” The clinching point, directed at the defense’s attempts to play upon the sympathies of the jury to regard the female defendants as women, was that when females engage in mob violence, they forfeit “all title to consideration of pity.”146

The defense’s closing arguments were fragmented and diverse compared to the closely knit, cohesive position of the prosecution. Seeing the strong case the prosecution had made, each of the defense attorneys ended with a special plea for the acquittal of his own particular clients, skirting the basic issues. Sawyer, however, did “abuse liberally the owners of the factories.” Harry Kennedy, speaking for his clients, maintained that throwing eggs and stones was child’s play and not a riot in any sense of the word. Colonel Black made what was described by the Gazette as a brilliant address in favor of his clients,

144 Gazette, January 18, 1849.
145 Eastman, Courts and Lawyers, III, 620-621.
146 Factory Riots, 7.
Stanton wound up the prosecution's case for the "supremacy of law," and the case was over except for the judge's charge to the jury and the jury's decision.147

From 9:00 to 10:00 Friday morning, Judge Benjamin Patton, noted neither for brilliance nor erudition, delivered one of the most learned speeches, if not the most learned, he ever made. Complimenting the zeal and unsurpassed ability with which the case had been conducted by counsel on both sides, he pointed out to the jury and to all present that this trial must have another purpose than merely deciding the case in point. Indeed, he went on, "from the research and profound talent — lessons can be learned about the duty of the Citizen."

Turning then to an elaborate description of the legal definition of what constitutes a riot, he declared that even if people meet for a lawful purpose, "It is a riot if they proceed to commit unlawful acts." Similarly, refusing to assist the Sheriff in quelling a riot, giving moral support in any way, by word, signs, or gestures, made one liable to prosecution under the law. Nor did having left an assembly that later committed a riot free one from responsibility, according to Patton.

Patton echoed the words of Shaler and Stanton that there was no excuse for taking the law into one's own hands in a "free country, where the people are the sovereign power," and where one can look "to the law alone for the redress of all grievances." He did not believe that the Penn owners had violated the law, but even if they had, the law provided penalties and legal recourse. The question of the expediency of a ten-hour law was irrelevant. He himself highly and heartily approved the object of the framers of the law, and "would rejoice to see the hours of toil and labor reduced, so that the operatives might have more time for recreation, and for moral and intellectual improvement." He declared also that "it is an amelioration demanded by the spirit of the age."

Yet all that was immaterial to the question of a destructive and bloody riot, one which saw axes "wielded by female hands." The defendants talked of vindicating the majesty of the law by their actions, but this was, in Patton's words, "a mockery." He reviewed in great detail the events of July 31 and asked, if this was not a riot, what was? Patton mentioned the scalding of the little girl, the kidnapping of the little boy by Kennedy, but dismissed these as insufficient provocation for the acts of July 31.

Patton discussed the "extreme anxiety of the framers of our
constitution to provide for the peace and safety of the citizens, and to
protect them in the enjoyment of those fundamental rights — the
rights of person, reputation, and property." A bloody code had re-
placed this principle and "the reign of this bloody code lasted for one
whole day." The defense's attempts to prove the good character of
the defendants had been successful, Patton thought, but this con-
stituted an aggravation of the offense rather than an excuse. As for
the females involved, when their conduct was inconsistent with "delicacy
and modesty" they forfeited all claim to special consideration. Patton
finally instructed the jury to apply these principles to the evidence
presented and to decide the defendants' guilt or innocence. The in-
structions concurred on every point with the arguments of the prose-
cution and left no doubt in the jury's mind what the judge was
asking them to do.148

Yet the jury was out for nine hours. When they reported at 7:00
that evening, they had convicted thirteen of the defendants, including
all the girls. However, George W. Gungle, Arthur Kirk, William
Thompson, and Robinson Manifold were acquitted.149 John Parke, in
his Recollections, believed that seven of the eight [sic] convicted
rioters fled bail and thus could not be sentenced. He claimed that the
one remaining defendant was sentenced to hard labor in the Western
Penitentiary for a term of years and later pardoned by Governor
Johnston, on the petition of the mill owners.150 Such an elaborate
story must have some basis in truth, but the docket of the Quarter
Sessions Court of Allegheny County indicates no final disposition of
the case, suggesting that all the defendants fled their bail. Also,
sentencing would have been immediate, and the newspapers for some
months afterward carry no mention of the sentencing.151

The day after the verdict was given, the Post strongly criticized
the heartlessness of the prosecution and of the court. It brought up the
case of Thomas Love, one of the defendants who had not had bail
and thus had remained in jail until he became deathly ill in November.
On November 27 Edmund Snowden had appealed for his release on
account of health, which was granted,152 but unfortunately he died
some weeks later. The Post claimed that he had been killed by the
prosecutor's oath that had put him in jail in the first place. The court

148 Factory Riots, 8-15.
149 Gazette, January 20, 1849.
150 Parke, Recollections, 80.
151 Quarter Sessions Docket, 456.
152 Gazette, November 28, 1848.
had also convicted Miranda Hollander, sole support of herself, her widowed mother, two brothers, and sister, for merely trying to assert the law of the legislature. The $50 fine or three months in jail, which would be imposed on her, would be terribly cruel. The court was willing to "Let her drink water instead of milk, or if need be let her drink the abundance of her tears. The children can go shoeless to the street and supperless to bed." 153

The Gazette responded with an anti-ten-hour editorial on the 23rd, but soon after the subject disappeared from the columns of the newspapers of Allegheny County. The national press took hold of the issue, however, and blew the story into great proportions. Early in January, the New York Globe suggested that the girls should be acquitted, since they had been sinned against rather than had sinned. Sarcastically, the Globe advised the owners to have the military ready, "otherwise the little boys and girls may be creating another disturbance." 154 A Philadelphia newspaper spoke of the owners' position as "a complete savagism, a stultified barbarity which the red cut-throats of Fort Duquesne never knew." It called upon the "man who keeps a slave pen in Baltimore to go to church next Sunday and publicly thank God that he is not a Pittsburgh factory-owner." 155

Aside from such exaggerated expressions of opinion in the heat of the argument, the whole affair left a feeling on both sides that Pittsburgh as a city had been hurt. Not only were the cotton mill owners looking for other sites, but skilled workers, tired of being oppressed by capital, were flocking off to the gold fields of California. The Post and the Gazette might disagree as to whose fault it was, but both agreed that the cotton mill riot of 1848 had helped immeasurably to worsen this situation.

The spirit of gloom must have increased when it became evident that, as Philadelphia and Delaware counties had been forced to pay the damages done by striking employees in 1848, so was Allegheny County to be held responsible for the damages caused by the mob. 156 If these were small sums in 1848, the precedent set was to bring a tremendous burden upon the county after the great railroad riots of 1877. With the benefit of hindsight, Judge John E. Parke, who lived

153 Post, January 20, 1849.
154 As quoted in the Post, January 25, 1849.
155 As quoted in Thurman, "Cotton Industry," 53.
156 Thurman, 51.
through these events, wrote sanctimoniously in his *Recollections* that "They who sow the wind may reap the whirlwind." 157

The religious community itself, from the little evidence available, seems to have lacked any feelings of a social gospel stamp. The Reverend W. D. Howard, addressing the congregation of the Second Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh on August 3, 1849, just three days past the first anniversary of the riot, stressed that God's Goodness was expressed in the booming textile mills, and that the cholera epidemic then rampant was His punishment for the rebellion against His goodness. The spirit of insubordination was rife, according to Howard, and "order, property, virtue, life fall before it." Extravagant notions of liberty lead the employed to think they can "set at defiance the regulations of the employer." Given a choice between mob rule and a tyrant, Howard declared he would gladly pick the tyrant. 158

There were, however, many positive aspects of the riot, particularly in the reactions of public and the court, that contemporaries were unable to see. First, the decision of the jury, prompted by the judge's charge, asserted the right of females to be regarded before the law as equals with men. In the 1840's we have seen that the mill girls occasionally paraded for their rights, held meetings, and otherwise tried to make their grievances known, but the general public reaction was one of humorous derision and sarcasm. The very seriousness of Judge Patton's charge to the jury regarding the forfeiture of female rights by the rioters established beyond a doubt the girls' right to be taken seriously. 159

Furthermore, the riots established a tradition of female labor violence in Allegheny County, which outdid that of the rough-and-ready male. Slightly over a year after the trial of the rioters, another serious female riot broke out when the rolling mill of Gaff, Lindsay and Company hired scab puddlers from Philadelphia to replace striking Pittsburgh workers. The wives, mothers, and sisters of the workers gathered a mob and drove the husky strikebreakers from their jobs into the river. The men either would not or could not oppose the army of amazons wielding boards and cinders. 160

On July 7 of the same year, a fracas occurred between female

159 Patton's oration was issued as a pamphlet by the manufacturers, and the *Gazette* printed it January 22, 1849.
workers of the Eagle and Hope cotton mills, but was quelled before any serious damage was done. The reaction to female participation in these riots was intense, as it had been in 1848, yet if the girls thus forfeited their rights to consideration as females, they gained the rights, however dubious, of full-fledged citizens.

The court's enunciated doctrine of the supremacy of the laws is a familiar one, characteristic of conservative legal minds of that time. The position of the defense, during the trial, unfortunately did not compare in statement or coherence with that of the prosecution. However, the idea that the environmental conditions to which these workers were submitted had some bearing upon their guilt or lack of guilt deserves more credit as a precursor of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.'s, sociological jurisprudence. The Post took a strong stand on this issue consistently throughout the controversy, and considering the political inspiration of much of it does not completely eliminate its significance.

Measuring public opinion in a past age is next to impossible. Newspapers invariably reflect not popular sentiment so much as the opinions of their editors. But one can sometimes deduce things about popular opinion from the tone of editorials and news stories. It seems likely that the industrial proletariat was conscious enough of itself as a class to support the cause of the mill girls. Other groups, such as the ironworkers, offered to strike in sympathy with them, and the manufacturers could scarcely walk through the working-class sections without being pelted with mud, rotten eggs, or even stones. The girls themselves were conscious of being a class (in fact the riot was waged over the question of that solidarity), and were so regarded by other segments of society, particularly middle-class tradesmen, editors, and others.

The apparent hostility of skilled workers can be explained by the fact that they felt the prestige and respect of their own craft organizations were endangered by the planned, unpredictable assemblies of mill workers. The notable exceptions, of course, were the various mechanics who addressed the workers' meetings. The legal community and the newspaper owners were obviously split down the line. All but the most intransigent, however, expressed

161 Parke, Recollections, 81.
162 The Gazette editors complained on August 26, 1848, that an operatives meeting was confined to members of their own class and added, "We did not venture to intrude, even for the purpose of 'taking notes'."
belief in the principles of the ten-hour law. It was considered and proved to be politically dangerous to oppose it outright (witness Middleswarth's defeat), and many second- and third-rung Democratic politicians considered it valuable to become identified with it and with the workers' cause by attending and taking part in their meetings.

The upper classes, except for a few like Nicholas Voeghtly, tended to be opposed to both workers' organization and violence of any kind by them.

The Allegheny cotton mill riot of 1848 thus had the effect of beginning a tradition of labor violence in Pittsburgh (which was to erupt most noticeably in 1877 and 1892), launched the legal career of Edwin M. Stanton, and early crystallized public sentiment on the labor issue. It helped start the decline of the cotton industry in Pittsburgh and probably was responsible for the repeal, in 1849, of the ten-hour law that had caused it.\textsuperscript{163} It stands as the first major instance of labor violence in Pittsburgh.

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\item[163] Thurman, "Cotton Industry," 36.
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