

The African-American mining experience
in Illinois from 1800 to 1920

Section 1. Introduction and theoretical frameworks

In this paper I offer an historical portrait of five Illinois mining communities in which African-Americans worked during five different (but overlapping) time periods (see figure 2). My unit of analysis is the community, which is composed of the following six elements: (1) the black miner, (2) the black miner's family, (3) the white miner (if present), (4) the white mine owner/slave owner, (5) the mining technology, and (6) the labor organizations (if present). In addition to these constituent parts of the community, I will present and discuss the larger state and national context in which these communities existed. The analysis will thus flow from two directions: I will simultaneously analyze the interaction of these groups from within, and the state and national context from without, shaped the black experience in these communities.

In order to make sense of all these factors I will draw on a number of theoretical lenses. A brief sketch will be made of these different lenses and I will offer a synthesis of the lenses. This synthesized lens will be used throughout the paper to make sense of the black experience in the five mining communities under study.

A. The conception of community in mining towns

A great deal has been written on the black experience with regard to industry and industrial jobs, from the times of slavery into the Great Migration. On the whole scholarship in this vein has tended to focus on the city and urban identity.¹ In mining and the other extractive industries, however, the technology most often typically requires results in communities with relatively small populations. Since most mines can only support so much labor, mining communities tend to contain only so many workers as can work the mines. That being said, the jobs are unquestionably industrial in nature, making the black miner experience, at least in terms of community formation, of a different character than black urban industrial communities.

In addition, the post-extraction processing of primary resources from the earth tended to occur away from the mining community, especially after the development of steamboat and railroad modes of transportation. Mining areas across the U.S. during the nineteenth and early twentieth century generally had the following shape: a number of small communities based around a rich vein of a particular mineral and forming a network based on the railroad or steamboats.²

The small size of the communities, coupled with the mutually dependent nature of work in an underground mine, tended to create intimate connections among mine workers. Although racism existed in the five communities to be discussed in this study, black miners who worked side-by-side with white miners forged bonds that permeated not only labor relations but also community relations. By contrast, where black miners did not work with white miners color divisions were much starker both inside and outside the mines. What was critical for community formation, I will argue, was how technologies were used in the mines and by whom. If blacks and whites used the technologies together, this shared use translated to a shared community outside the mines due to the rural nature of the communities. If, however, blacks and whites did not use the mining technology together racist antagonisms were exacerbated since the smallness of the mining communities did not allow space for the creation of a ghettoized community in which black miners could escape the antagonism of whites.³

This is not to imply that shared work does away with racism. It simply suggests that mixed-

color communities, however contentious, form more easily in places in which black and white laborers share a class identity based on dangerous and low-paid work. That is, when it is advantageous for whites to bond with blacks around labor identity they will tend to do so; on the other hand, when it is advantageous to bond with middle-class whites against lower-class blacks, white laborers will choose that course of action.⁴ The argument, then, is that perceived economic advantage is the principal factor in action, and parsing out motivations from the historical record becomes the goal.

B. Labor studies and views of the black laborer

The study of black miners in terms of labor history overlaps with, but differs from, the consideration of community development. The major difference between the two theoretical lenses is that the former focuses much more heavily on ideas of proletarianization and class consciousness among workers, especially in organized unions, rather than beginning with a consideration of community formation.⁵

Labor studies as a field did not begin to consider the position of African-American working-class industrial laborers until the latter part of the twentieth century. August Meier and Joe W. Trotter in particular argued for a more nuanced view of the white supremacist nature of both capitalist owners and labor unions by way of critiquing authors such as Harold Gutman of the New Labor Studies.⁶ The subsequent generation of labor scholars went even further, insisting that the notion of proletarianization was misused in the black labor context. They stated that proletarianization, borrowed from the study of white European immigrants who had become a cohesive proletariat in the New World labor system, did not adequately describe the black labor experience.⁷ In the view of these scholars, black laborers were already proletariats before they moved into industrial occupations, and were acute and shrewd manipulators of a white supremacist system as they attempted to better their economic position in the northern industrial order.⁸ William P. Jones elaborates upon this idea in his study of black lumber workers in the South. He argues that proletarianization is not the right framework within which to examine these laborers, since “by the time they [blacks] arrived in [the north] they had been dealing with proletarianization for generations.”⁹ Jones, by returning to Marx and Engels’ definition of the proletariat as those “reduced to selling their labour-power in order to live,” contends that proletarianization had always been part of the black experience and did not come about as a result of the migration to the north. Instead, Jones turns to examining how blacks influenced (or tried to influence) the terms under which they sold their labor.

Using the framework of Jones, which he adopted from Trotter, then, one can examine black miners in the nominally northern state of Illinois by focusing on strategies of survival and adaptation, in which white-orientated labor unions and class solidarity represented one, but by no means the only, method utilized by black laborers in their struggle for a better life. Taking as a given that blacks were a proletariat during the time period in question, this paper will analyze the black miners’ decisions in light of the desire for economic advancement. Analysis will focus primarily on two phenomena: (1) the migration of southern blacks to the Illinois mining regions and (2) the response of enslaved (or recently enslaved) black miners to their situation in Illinois.

C. History

The two theories mentioned above are useful for making comparisons among the five case studies in this paper. However, the fact that each community was formed during a different time period,

in different places, necessitates that historical transformation itself be a lens through which the stories of black miners in Illinois are viewed. What was happening at the county, state, and national levels all influenced the black experience in many ways during the time periods under consideration.¹⁰

For example, blacks were brought to Gallatin County in southeastern Illinois because it was economically advantageous for the U.S. to mine the salt deposits there. In addition, the Jefferson administration saw the region as strategically vulnerable and felt an American presence needed to be established in short order as a counter to French and Native American interests. The importation of black slaves represented the best way to achieve these two goals. When factors changed owing to national trends, which will be explored later, the need for black miners evaporated.

Mining communities in the U.S., perhaps more than any other type of community, have been forced to adapt to change or have disappeared quickly due to the instability and vicissitudes of the mining industry. This was especially true in nineteenth-century Illinois, when the state was still by and large frontier and new communities were being formed, often completely based on mining. These communities, lacking local histories, were especially vulnerable to changes at the national level. History considered broadly, then, will be critical to understanding how these communities developed and either withered or survived.

Furthermore, the period spanned by the case studies—the nineteenth century into the early twentieth century—is long enough to allow for the construction of a social history. These five studies can be seen as microcosms of larger trends, in dialogue with and challenging what was happening at the state and national level.

D. History of technology

Finally, it is worth paying special attention to the history of technology within the broader category of history since changes in mineral processing and industrial processes in general greatly impacted the local experience of black miners. For example, the decline of the use of lead in making bullets in the latter part of the nineteenth century crippled lead-mining ventures in northwestern Illinois, leading to the mines' decline and the termination of one town's main industry. In the recent past, the abovementioned move to natural gas and "clean"-burning fuels has effectively crushed most of Illinois's coal-mining industry, even though Illinois possesses some of the largest coal reserves in the nation.

Three questions related to the history of technology will therefore guide our examination of the five counties: 1) What technological changes created the need for black miners at this time in this place? (2) How did the interface between man and technology in each of the case studies shape labor relations both among blacks and between blacks and whites? and (3) What technological changes caused mining industries to collapse, and how did the black community respond?

E. Conclusion and theoretical lenses

Having laid out the different perspectives which will be brought to bear on the material under study, it remains to knit them together. These lenses will be utilized simultaneously to better answer questions about the black experience in these towns. The theoretical frameworks can be summarized in the following diagram, which illustrates the forces shaping the black experience in these studies:

African-American miners

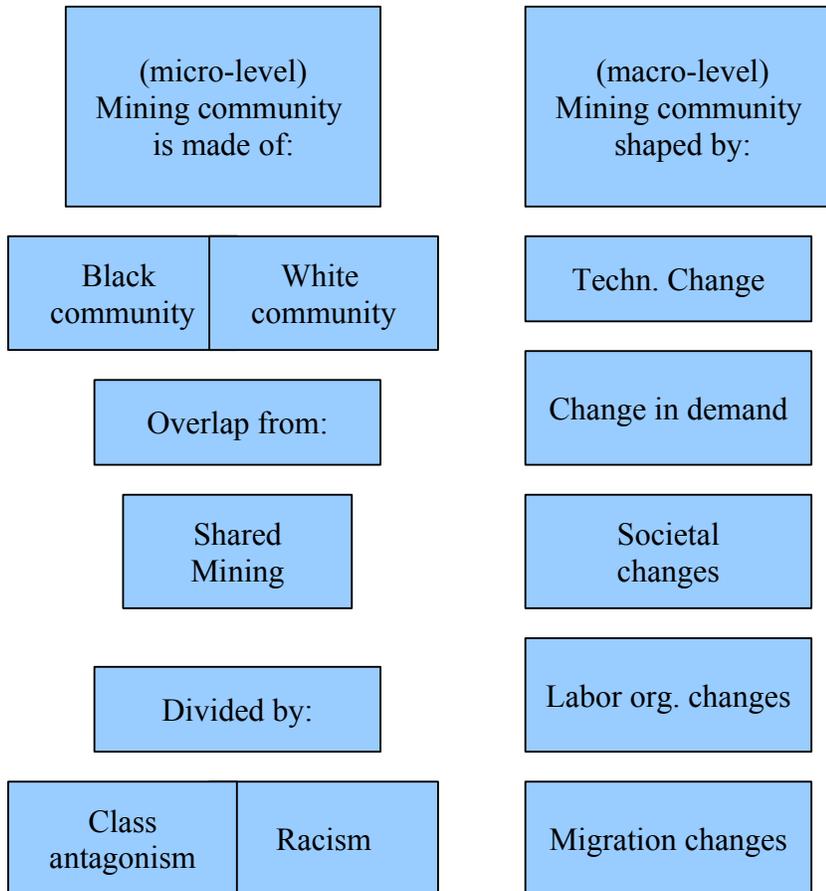


Figure 1. Although each of the communities under examination possesses a unique history, structure, and internal dynamic, the diagram on the left presents the broader factors that affected the black mining communities' experience in these places.

Section 2. Methods

The methods used to elucidate the black miner experience in Illinois will of necessity be heterogeneous. The U.S. Census is especially important for the quantification of the black and mining presence (but not the black miner presence) across the counties under study. That said, the census has its drawbacks, as it usually measured industry and ethnicity, but not ethnicity by industry, at least at the county level. Furthermore, the published census did not always release data on the township level in terms of ethnicity, at least during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To reveal the black miner experience at the community level it is therefore necessary to go beyond the census to more circumstantial evidence.

Newspapers have been another major source in this project. Although controlled by white interests, the newspapers from the different mining towns are often the main source of contemporary information.¹¹ Records of court cases are also valuable, but they are further removed from the actual events. One problem with both newspapers and court cases is that one must know what one is seeking for before beginning an investigation. To comb through forty years of newspaper microfilm and/or court cases in order to glean information on black laborers in a given community is a formidable task. As a result, my study is of necessity centered on major events and traumatic stories. It is important to note, however, that the mundane lived experience was most likely less dramatic than this analysis would suggest.

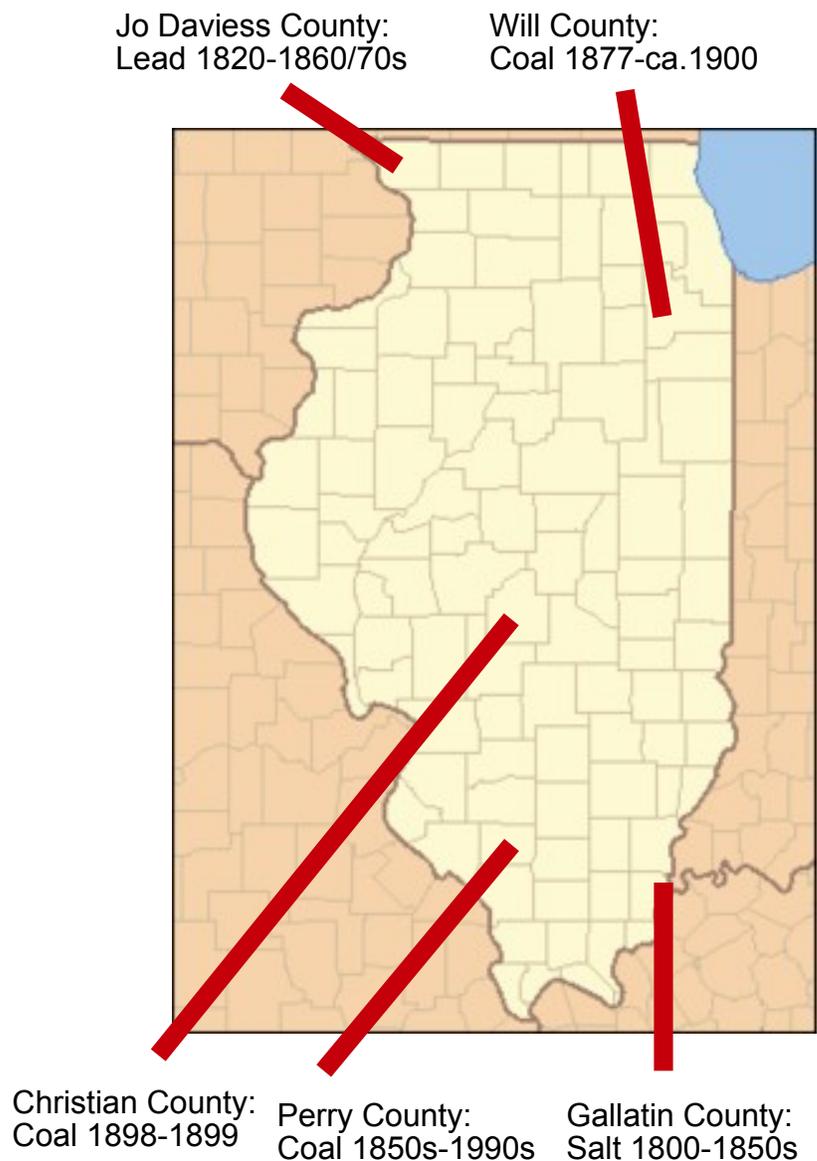
Even further removed, but still valuable, are first-hand accounts either written or recorded after the event. These include oral histories, memoirs, letters to newspapers and journals, and the like. Finding these sources, however, necessitates finding a link. It is possible to scan a town's newspaper broadly, but to find first-hand accounts additional information is needed, such as hints from local historians, citations in published works, or bibliographic information such as is found in library catalogs or indexes. These accounts are typically referred to as "finds" by historians and often come to light only after a considerable amount of detective work. Contacting local historical societies, libraries, and museums has been an essential element of this project's research process.

Given this study's goal of surveying five counties, the exhaustive digging required to unearth these "finds" has not been feasible. Rather, my hope is that this general survey and its observations will make the task of future researchers that much easier as they go looking for untapped sources. A more detailed listing of primary sources and suggestions for further research can be found in the paper's appendix. It would have been especially useful to find more black voices for inclusion in this narrative. Unfortunately, all newspapers in these areas were white controlled and operated. The census, in this time period, was also carried out almost exclusively by whites. Finding the voice and perspective of blacks in all of this has thus been a very difficult task. In general, I have relied on the citations of others in finding these voices. The exhaustive work necessary to make original finds is beyond the scope of this endeavor but should definitely be a future research project.

A final note on census data: all census data used in this paper came from the decennial census published by the U.S. government. This data was acquired either from the print copies held at the Government Documents Library at the University of Illinois or through the Historical Census Browser hosted by the University of Virginia Library.¹²

Section 3. County-level case studies

Figure 2 – The five Illinois counties under consideration in this study, together with the time periods in which large-scale mineral extraction in those counties involved significant numbers of African-Americans.



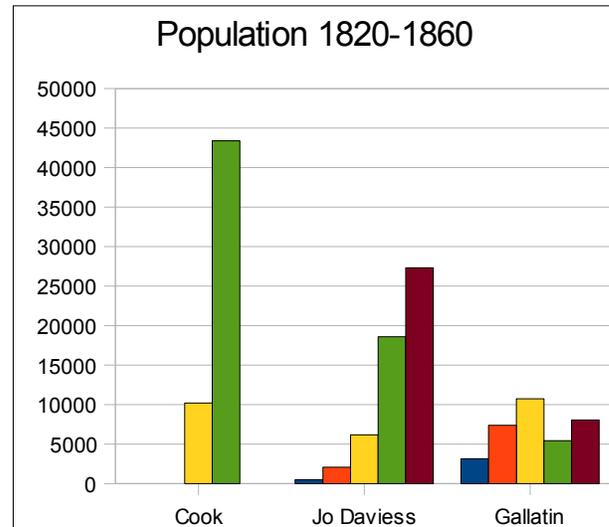
Part 1: Enslaved miners in the north

When the Illinois Country changed hands from the French to the English, approximately 900 of the 3,000 nonindigenous inhabitants were enslaved Africans.¹³ Most sources state that this proportionally large black population moved either to Missouri, Louisiana, or France following this transfer. It is unclear whether there existed any black population in Illinois between the years 1763 and 1800, or whether any maroon societies developed in the territory. In terms of the present study, such an investigation would be especially fruitful in terms of the histories of salt and lead mining, both of which were exploited by French and French creole interests prior to the expansion of the new U.S. state.¹⁴

By the time the U.S. state became acutely interested in developing the region, therefore, most of the European population was French. The early American presence in the Illinois Country, furthermore, in many ways mimicked the earlier French occupation in that through a series of loopholes and official indifference to the law slaves and slavery played an important role in the frontier area.¹⁵ Kentucky and Virginia pioneers, as a result, moved westward with slaves with them. Even more alarming, the U.S. government officially sanctioned slavery in the state-owned Gallatin salt works (see next section). However, later streams of migrants, especially to the north of the state, increasingly favored abolition. As a result, the early state of Illinois was divided over the institution of slavery, with northern migrants against and southern migrants for it. While this feud never came to a head as it did in Kansas, the institution of slavery in Illinois died a slow death as legislators on both sides skirmished over the issue. In any case, local law enforcement did nothing to enforce anti-slavery, especially in southern Illinois.

Mining, especially salt mining in the southern portion of the state, was intimately bound up with the issue of slavery. The official sanctioning of slave labor in the salt mines served as pretext for the tolerance of slavery throughout the state.¹⁶ Lead mining in the north, however, was less involved in this statewide debate. With a relatively steady influx of white seekers of fortune eager to mine in the northwest lead district, the black lead miners were seen as easily replaceable and thus less relevant in the new state's slavery debate.

Graph 1. Illinois population: note the 1860 population of Cook County (144,954) has been omitted to show comparisons



Early antebellum Illinois looked quite different from Gilded Age Illinois (considered in section 2). The state's population was centered in three main areas: (1) the lead mining district in the northwest, (2) the southern third of the state, and (3) the area around Springfield. Economically, the state was primarily dependent on mining, and secondarily on agriculture. The prevailing wisdom was that open prairie was unsuitable for agriculture, and as a result the central portion of the state was left relatively untouched during this period. With the approach of the Civil War, this paradigm began to change as Cook County and Chicago increasingly emerged as a population center (see graph 1).

County 1. Gallatin County

The new American state saw the salt mines in what is now Gallatin County as a critical resource and made it a priority to secure them. Prior to the arrival of the Americans in the early 1800s, indigenous peoples and subsequently French interests had for centuries extracted salt in the region. In 1800 John Coffee of Tennessee established the first American operation.¹⁷ While the exact number of workers on this early plantation remains extremely difficult to pin down, Jon Musgrave estimates that it was at minimum 100 and may have been as high as 820 by 1806. The vast majority of these workers were enslaved blacks.¹⁸ (For the black population in the county over time see table 1 below.) These numbers suggests that southern plantation society was being introduced wholesale to the Northwest Territories. In 1808 a traveler to the area noted that the salt works were providing salt for most of the mid-South region of the U.S.¹⁹ Settlement occurred at a breakneck pace in these early years; while most of the salt miners were enslaved blacks, free blacks also participated in the economy. A traveler wrote of a free black named Simon Cade who sold whiskey in Shawneetown in 1809.²⁰

Year	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890
Population	1000	2500	3155	7405	10760	5448	8055	11134	12861	14935
Black	100	300	486	452	305	353	426	612	675	661
Slave	90	275	468	260	29	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1. Population of Gallatin County in the nineteenth century. For an extended analysis of this data see text (source U.S. Census for 1820–1890; 1800/1810 data are estimates based on manuscript sources).

It is worth spending some time on the data detailing Gallatin County’s population. The U.S. Census did not publish authoritative data for these years, so estimates have been made based on manuscript sources (among them the previously mentioned letter from John Coffee). These estimates are at best rough. A further complication in the chronicling of demographic data for Gallatin County was the fact that the slaves who were brought in were officially considered leased property, that is, they were leased by Kentucky plantation owners to work in the Gallatin salt works. It is unclear whether the census recorded these individuals as being part of the population of Gallatin County. It is possible that the slave population may have been considerably higher if these leased slaves were added to the population. One final note concerning this data is that in 1820 approximately one-third of the black population in Illinois resided in Gallatin County.

During the early years most of the salt works in Gallatin County were actually owned by the federal government. They were leased to various individuals who operated them with slave labor. The lessees may have changed, but since the full management and labor apparatus remained regardless of lessee it can be surmised that these “indentured servants” (as they were known after the 1812 Northwest Territory legislation was enacted) were the property of the U.S. government.²¹ When the new state of Illinois drafted its constitution, slavery was outlawed, but indentured servitude and various other loopholes allowed the Gallatin salines to continue operating with slave labor.²² Details concerning the individual identities of these slaves and the lives they led can only be gleaned from scant reports of the few runaways. An 1820 runaway named Jacob fled the U.S. Salines and was pursued by the man who leased him (since all were still technically U.S. property)—both disappeared, presumably with the slave killing his master and taking to the forest.²³ In the same year, the *Shawneetown Gazette* reported on February 24 that a slave named Dick fled the salt works. Dick, before being moved to Gallatin County, had been a slave at lead mines in Missouri.²⁴

With the Illinois frontier closing and tension rising over whether Illinois would be a free or slave state, 1825 was set as the deadline for ending the use of leased slaves in the state's salt mines. This represented a pointed exception for the salt mines, as the importation of new slaves for the rest of the state was forbidden beginning in 1818.²⁵ National interests connected with the Gallatin salt mines forced the government to allow the mines to operate as they had in an effort to maintain their profitability. Commentators of the time felt that the cost of free labor, given the labor-intensive technological process involved, would render the mines economically unfeasible.

The exact method of salt extraction is unclear. However, from a number of sources the following portrait emerges: A 10-12 square foot shaft was dug about 50 feet into the loose soil, which being an artesian well immediately produces highly salty water. The initial method used by the Indians and French was simply to boil using wood this fast-flowing water so that the salt remained. However, as extraction increased, it became necessary to dig deeper to get to the very salty water. Digging down a further twenty feet through the clay, porous rock is encountered, which contains highly saline water. At this point a shallow hole is dug into the rock into which a bore is placed which will extend all the way to the surface. Artesian pressure forces the newly liberated salt water to flow to the surface in a manner analogous to how oil wells currently operate. As in oil mining, not all salt mines proved profitable. In some cases, miners would dig all the way to the rock only to find that water wasn't there. The second stage of extraction was boiling of the water to produce salt; this involved a complicated system of tubes and troughs which would transport the free-flowing water to areas in which it could be boiled. Most of this work was done with wood, (except for the boiling) which made the process extraordinarily labor intensive as wood quickly became degraded.

The 1818 constitution did not abolish slavery outright, but provided for its eventual phasing out. As a result slavery persisted in Gallatin County at least through the 1840s. The 1830 census taker unabashedly recorded 260 slaves in the county, in addition to 192 free black men and women.²⁶ The 1818 Constitution stipulated that masters would have access to their slaves' labor until those slaves passed away, so that it was possible for slavery to be perpetuated through the manipulation of birth records and/or the turning of a blind eye.²⁷

Although the salt mine interests failed to achieve their goal of amending the Illinois constitution to allow slavery to exist indefinitely, their proslavery position combined with the lucrative profits to be made from the salt mines caused slavery to go underground. The kidnapping of both slaves and free blacks became instrumental in the securing of the work force for the salt mines. In 1823, freeman Jack Butler and his family were kidnapped and shipped to the salt mines.²⁸ It is unclear whether or not he ever regained his freedom.

However, when it appeared that the legal sanction of slavery was coming to its end, many of the white supremacist proslavery parties refused to allow blacks in the state to gain their freedom. The kidnapping parties began attacking free blacks and sending them into the south for profit—a veritable underground railroad in reverse as described by Jon Musgrave.²⁹ The Gallatin County government, based in Shawneetown, did little if anything to stop these practices.

As 1825 and the official end of slave worker importation approached, the superintendent of the salt mines reported that there were still 136 black indentured servants engaged in the government's salt mines.³⁰ Blacks made up over four-fifths of the workers in the government mines. By this time a number of salt works not overseen by the government had also sprung up, mostly manned by slave

labor as well. The 1825 census, as reported in the local paper, recorded the presence of 176 male and 102 female slaves, plus 78 male and 53 female free persons, in the area of Shawneetown, the population hub around the salt mines.³¹ This was out of a population of approximately 4,500. In 1824, General Leonard White dispatched his own missive to the governor, arguing that the extraordinarily labor-intensive and demanding job of working the salt mines required slave labor.³²

It may have been that the most determined slave holders redirected their energies toward the kidnapping of free blacks to supplement the income that used to come from salt mine plantations. John Crenshaw, one of the major plantation owners around the salt works and one-time government lessee of the national salt mines, turned his back on the industry in 1825. As N. Dwight Harris and Jon Musgrave have documented, Crenshaw set about developing and operating a large-scale transportation system that shipped free blacks to slave states over a thirty-year period. This system was much larger and much better orchestrated than the piecemeal kidnappings mentioned earlier.³³ In this economic transformation, we see white men reacting to changes in an economic system that made the technological process of mining salt with enslaved black labor no longer economically viable. The result was a system, involving its own technology, wherein those same blacks, now free, were forcefully reinserted into slavery by being shipped to slave states.

Although Crenshaw left the salt-mining business, many of the other former plantation owners continued to mine salt with black labor by exploiting convoluted indentured servitude laws that enabled them to maintain the status quo (it helped that local law enforcement seemed to ignore these occurrences). An 1836 source noted that the Gallatin Salines were still producing “some hundred thousands of bushels of salt annually.”³⁴ This observer also included details on how the mining process took place: “it [salty brine] is obtained by penetrating with the augur a depth of from three to six hundred feet through the solid limestone substratum, when a copper tube is introduced, and the strongly-impregnated fluid gushes violently to the surface.” This source makes clear that miners were forced to dig deeper and deeper in order to find salty water, foreshadowing the eventual collapse of the salt mining industry in Gallatin County.

In the end it was not the end of slavery in Illinois, but larger economic and international forces that led to the demise of Gallatin County’s salt industry and its system of enslaved black labor. Newer and larger salt works in Pennsylvania, combined with U.S. involvement in Texas and the Mexican War, contributed to a population drain in the area that left the salt works largely abandoned and irrelevant by the end of the 1840s. The remaining blacks (at least those involved in mining) seized the opportunity to secure their freedom,³⁵ although the kidnapping of free blacks continued in the area until the Civil War. Interestingly, census data shows that while Gallatin County’s total population dropped sharply between 1840 and 1850, the black population actually rose in this time period. This fact illustrates that despite the risk of being kidnapped, the extreme racism of bitter whites angry about losing their slaves, and a collapsing economy, Gallatin County still represented a safe place for the black community compared to the surrounding slave states.

Furthermore, following the Mexican War and the collapse of the slave-based salt mining regime, blacks continued to work in the salt mines of Gallatin County. It is hard to find references to these black salt miners during this time period since Gallatin County’s prominence was greatly diminished. Nonetheless, their presence can be traced through the second half of the nineteenth century. During the 1870s one of the salt-mine operators, George W. Smith, noted that in order to evaporate the briny water to produce salt he depended on coke produced by “a huge ex-slave.”³⁶ Smith’s ex-slave

later put his coke-making abilities to use in the mining of coal as salt became less and less of an economically viable proposition.³⁷

County 2. Jo Daviess County

In Jo Daviess County as in Gallatin County, African-American slaves were among the first representatives of the new United States of America in an Illinois mining region. Another parallel with Gallatin County was that mining had been practiced in the area of Jo Daviess County for centuries. One of the first U.S. Geologists to survey the area, Henry Schoolcraft, reported in 1820 that in the tri-state (Iowa–Wisconsin–Illinois) lead-mining region there were “a number of traders ... constantly stationed for the purpose of supplying the Indians with merchandise, and purchasing their lead.”³⁸ This early mining economy grew out of the trade relationship involving a small number of French settlers and Native American miners, who had developed lead mining techniques over centuries—this economic structure was a modification and a logical outgrowth of the existing French fur trade economy of Ontario and Wisconsin. Although the French slightly altered the process of mining and production of lead by introducing smelting and European tools,³⁹ the mining was by and large done via the same methods Native Americans had always used, which involved female miners and male protectors. Since the number of Frenchmen was small Native American control of the lead mines was unchallenged until the arrival of the new Anglo-American citizens and their black slaves in the 1820s.

Just as the rush to the salines of Gallatin County was largely orchestrated by the federal government, so too was the lead rush in Jo Daviess County organized for national economic and strategic reasons. According to Thomas Forsyth, an Indian agent based first out of Chicago and later Rock Island, Illinois, President James Monroe sent a number of miners and soldiers to the area of the Northwest Territories that is now Jo Daviess County in the early 1820s to secure the land in the interest of the nation.⁴⁰ It has been estimated that around a total two thousand whites and African-Americans came to the region in the early 1820s (see table 2) and founded the towns of Galena, Mineral Point, Hardscrabble, and New Diggings.⁴¹ It is difficult to estimate, however, how many of these early miners were black and how many were white. One especially useful account in this regard is that of James P. Beckwourth, a free black who was one of the first black miners in the region. Beckwourth, who went on to become a Rocky Mountain adventurer, related the story of his life to Thomas D. Bonner in the 1850s.⁴² He had come to Galena with one of the first expeditions led by James Johnson in the early 1820s, which included approximately 100 men. In this early expedition, at least four were African-Americans, and Beckwourth was the only free black.⁴³

Year-JDC	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890
Black	15	75	144	218	178	92	56	58
Slave	10	42	10	0				
Total	1000	2111	6180	18604	27325	27820	27528	25101
Miners	200	325	546	478	443 n/a	n/a	n/a	

Table 2. The 1820 data is an estimate since no census taker came to what was then the raw frontier. The remaining data comes from the published U.S. Census.

In general, the arrival of blacks in Jo Daviess County occurred in a very different fashion than it had in Gallatin County. There blacks were imported wholesale to work the mines. Since it was thought the work was suitable only for black labor, there were no white miners. In the Jo Daviess County lead

mines, by contrast, the blacks who worked as miners were either simply brought along with their owners or voluntary migrants seeking fame and fortune in the frontier society. Furthermore, since the lead-mining economy did not depend on black labor, it was less of an economic burden for the slaveholders to simply free their slaves ordered to do so by the state (abolitionist fervor in the area added social stigma to slavery as well).

The basic process of lead mining involved either exploiting natural caverns within which lead veins appeared or using explosives to reach the lead veins. Lead veins are sinuous layers of lead found in stone strata in various rock formations, and are analogous to gold veins. Once the lead was identified a combination of scraping and explosions was used to liberate the lead from the strata. The lead was then shipped elsewhere for processing into everything from plates to bullets. The lead-mining district depended greatly on steamboat transportation, which took the cargo across the country and around the world.⁴⁴

The influx of the Anglo-Americans and their insistence on controlling the lead mines led eventually to the Black Hawk War, in which white interests consolidated their hold on the Indian mines and the lead they produced. The new white masters and their mixture of black and white indentured servants—of which the blacks were unquestionably slaves—appropriated both the lead and the mining techniques developed during the French-Indian period of mining.

The increased importance of lead mining for the U.S. was manifested in an increasingly vigorous trade apparatus centered out of St. Louis, Missouri. Through St. Louis, the lead trade was connected to the Eastern seaboard and as a result capital and manpower moved west to work the mines—a portion of this early labor force came from the southern U.S. and many of the workers were enslaved African-Americans.⁴⁵

Beckwourth reports relative autonomy and being able to freely associate with and befriend the local indigenous population, who showed him hunting spots and educated him in the culture of their society.⁴⁶ The experience of other blacks during the frontier period in Jo Daviess County is harder to describe but it is clear that the social and political climate differed greatly from that of Gallatin County. Prominent in the area were abolitionist settlers who sought to establish utopian communities in the free territories to the west. The Gratiots and the community they established at Gratiot's Grove exemplify this phenomenon. Arriving in the area in 1825, the Gratiots (originally from St. Louis) were American citizens who spoke French at home and were distinctively “old blood” with connections to the early fur trade, as opposed to the “new blood” represented by southern Anglo men like Johnson with their slaves and dislike of indigenous peoples. The Francophone community prevented the type of society which had developed in Gallatin from taking hold in Galena by forcing both the slave owners and the local government to give slaves and “indentured servants” a degree of autonomy, at least in public spaces such as the growing city of Galena.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the geographic distance of Jo Daviess County from any slave state made the establishment of a reverse underground railroad impossible.

It is true that the Gratiots with their Francophone abolitionist beliefs represented a demographically tiny segment of the growing Jo Daviess County mining society. A great deal of the newly arrived whites and blacks came from places such as Kentucky, Tennessee, and even southern Illinois. Swansea Adams, originally a salt miner from Gallatin County, was brought by his master, James Duncan, to Jo Daviess County to mine lead. As lead mining declined, his owner took him to St. Louis. Swansea, however, had made a significant impact on Galena society and locals pooled their

money to purchase his freedom and bring him back. All told, Swansea lived in the Galena area forty-five years, a period in which he went from being a miner to becoming, in effect, Galena's Water Department—daily he filled a two-wheel dray and peddled water on Main Street.⁴⁸

Swansea's story would suggest that black miners (and ex-black miners who moved to the city) were integral, accepted, and even beloved members of Jo Daviess County society. Another anecdote, however, suggests a very different reality for black miners. Walter Baker was a free black who mined his own lead vein just across the Mississippi River from Jo Daviess County in Dubuque, Iowa, in an area that has since become known as Baker's Mine. Baker fled white society and between 1850 and 1860 attempted to found a free black community in the east-central section of Jo Daviess County known as Equal Rights.⁴⁹ He was joined by Henry Smith, a former miner who became the community's preacher. The school of this black community still stands. That a number of blacks would feel the need to establish a separate community suggests that even though they were not subject to some of the more pernicious aspects of slavery (and ex-slave society) found in Gallatin County, they were still clearly second-class citizens.

The black experience changed dramatically following the end of the frontier period. The subsequent history of Jo Daviess County can be subdivided into the following three periods (1) the riverboat period, (2) the decline of lead mining, and (3) the move to agriculture. The first period brought many more blacks to the community, but few were involved in mining—they tended instead to work as stevedores or in other menial positions around the community of Galena. It was during this time that a distinctively black community grew up in Galena, which eventually led to the establishment of black churches, a black school, and black barbershops. In this black society, preachers and barbers were the elites.⁵⁰ This largely self-organized black community served as a stop on the underground railroad for many years.⁵¹ Although blacks continued to work as miners in this period, they were increasingly marginalized by the growing white in-migration to the city, coupled with restrictions on free black mobility within the state. As a result, black miners found fewer and fewer opportunities within the mining industry, and were forced to live within the city of Galena.⁵² It was this set of circumstances that led to the creation of Equal Rights mentioned earlier.

The second period, the decline of lead mining, saw the end of African-American mining in Jo Daviess County. As economic returns from mining diminished, and accessible lead veins became more and more scarce, whites effectively blocked blacks from the few mining jobs that remained in the county (this briefly changed during the Civil War when there was a distinct shortage of labor in the county).⁵³ What black miners did, once mining was no longer an option, remains unclear. Some joined the growing black community in Galena. Other migrated to California, drawn by the gold rush and other mining ventures in the mountains,⁵⁴ while still others returned to the south to assist in reconstruction.⁵⁵ In the final period, blacks were effectively shut out of the now extremely reduced lead mining industry.⁵⁶ Most, if not all, lived in the urban Galena community, and worked in the hotel industry or in menial positions downtown. Race relations were relatively without incident, as long as blacks knew their place—they were often paternalistically referred to as "our blacks" by the local paper in opposition to the presumably more lazy and incompetent blacks who came through with the railroad.⁵⁷ The community slowly disappeared as jobs dried up and whites increasingly fought for economic relevance by positioning blacks lower on the economic food chain. By 1920, Jo Daviess County had but a handful of blacks.

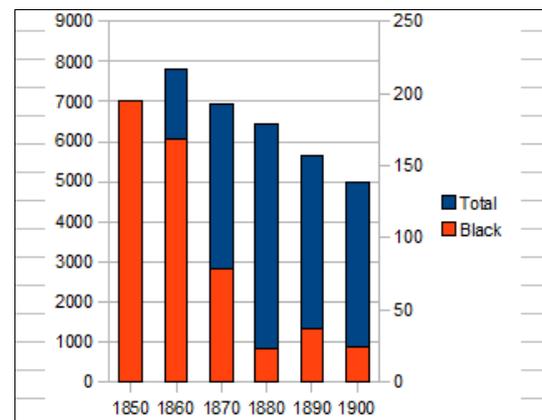
However, it would be wrong to believe that Galena (the same can not be said for the county in

general—see graph 2) actively expelled its black population as the mining economy went into decline. As the numerical table of the latter nineteenth century shows (table 3 and graph 2), the rise and fall of the black population in Galena mirrored the changes in the overall population. There never was a significant out-migration of blacks disproportional to the general out-migration brought about the collapse of the mining industry. That being said, blacks were prevented from pursuing agriculture in the county, an occupation increasingly sought by white ex-miners. Galena's blacks instead turned to industrial types of employment, joining growing black industrial economies in Dubuque, Iowa, Chicago, and places further afield.

Year-Galena	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
Total	5809	7805	6941	6451	5635	5005
Black	195	168	78	23	37	24

Table 3. Black population in Galena (Jo Daviess County) in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Graph 2. Black population over white population in the latter half of the nineteenth century. From this chart it is clear that black population decrease in Galena mirrored white population decrease as the mining economy upon which the region was based faltered. However, equally clear is the fact that the black population, for the most part, fell much faster than the white population. It is unclear why the black population increased in 1898, but it may be owing to the fact that Galena's schools were desegregated in 1887, making the town an attractive destination despite a stagnant economy. The lack of any dramatic decreases in the black population (the 1860–1870 decrease may be owing to many in the black community leaving to assist in reconstruction) suggests it would be wrong to call Galena a sundown town.



A final note on census data in Jo Daviess County

There a number of issues involved in trying to quantify the black miner experience in Jo Daviess County. Geographic and economic factors impede definitive numerical portraits. First of all, the entity known as Jo Daviess County was not a unit of analysis until the 1830 census, and throughout the nineteenth century demographic breakdowns per industry per county were not conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Quantitative portraits must therefore be composed using a mixture of census and primary source materials.

In general, both manuscript and census sources support the estimation that through the 1840s in the larger society blacks amounted to between 3 and 4 percent of the larger non-Indian population. It is more difficult to determine whether or not blacks were proportionally higher in the lead mines in the early period. The miner's registry would suggest they were proportionally less likely to work in the mines than whites: of the thousands registered with the U.S. Agent in Galena as miners, only thirteen were noted as "Negro," "coloured," or "of colour."⁵⁸ These were free blacks—slaves (by any name) would not appear among the registered miners nor would those who for whatever reason felt

marginalized or were mistrustful of mainstream society and the government. Finally, the miner's registry was not a demographic recorder and did not systemically note race or ethnicity. The number of black miners was surely much higher than the thirteen officially recorded. At any rate, the entire economy of the county in the antebellum period revolved around mining, so any black living in the county would certainly be, at least tangentially, a member of a mining community.

Part 2: Blacks and coal mines in post-Civil War Illinois

As massive industrial development moved westward, especially after the end of the Civil War, and Chicago, East St. Louis, Peoria, Springfield, and Rockford in Illinois became industrial centers (see table 4), a source of fuel to drive the industry was needed. Furthermore, as the nation's railroad infrastructure expanded the shipping of products made in the nation's industrial centers demanded more and more coal. Illinois's central location, along with its abundant supply of coal and proximity to the agricultural west, made it an ideal area for industrial development. Consequently Illinois became the "King Coal" state during the latter half of the nineteenth century, with coal mines opening throughout the state. Both strip (surface) and underground mining technologies were utilized depending on the local geology and how near the coal was to the surface.

Illinois pop.	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
Cook	144954	349966	607524	1191922	1838735	2405233	3053017
St. Clair/Madison	68945	95199	111932	118106	151279	209717	243145
Peoria	36601	47540	55355	70378	88608	100255	111710
Sangamon	32274	46352	52894	61195	71593	91024	100262

Table 4. Explosive population growth, not just in Chicago, but in other industrial centers around the state necessitated a steady supply of fuel, which drove Illinois's coal mines to continually increase production. Note: This table does not mention St. Louis, Missouri, which was also a major consumer of Illinois coal during this period.

To meet the rising demand for labor in the manufacturing and coal mining industries, energy was directed towards attracting European immigrants. Little was done to attract newly freed slaves from the south, except as strikebreakers in cases when white labor organizations struck for better wages and living conditions. Although the majority of the coal mining workforce was composed of European immigrants, significant piecemeal migrations of blacks also added to the ranks, especially to the southern third of the state.

Both the piecemeal migration and the strikebreaker migration of blacks to the Illinois coal mines occurred as local labor organizations mushroomed into national labor unions with significant clout with the government. This can be seen clearly in the reaction of the Illinois government to strikes. When white miners in Braidwood went on strike in 1877, both the government and the popular press refused to support them and instead pressured the miners to return to work. When miners struck in 1898, by contrast, the state government nearly bent over backwards to appease the powerful mining union. A more detailed account of this narrative can be found below.

The labor unions claimed to speak for all workers, but in reality the workers they had in mind

were generally white (and sometimes northern European). As a result, blacks were confronted by the dilemma of either joining a clearly racist union which fought for class issues, which sometimes clearly helped blacks, or becoming a strikebreaker for corporate interests which viewed blacks as little more than a means to an end. The latter situation antagonized unions but gave blacks a viable position in mines from which they were often blocked by racist unions. In many ways, blacks faced a no-win situation. As will be shown in the various case studies to follow, class solidarity taken to its extreme resulted in blacks appropriating the racist ideology of the unions whereas strikebreaking as a means to economic advancement forced the black population to be constantly mobile and at the whim of corporate overseers. There was no best path for the black miner, which may have been one of the reasons that black mining populations tended to disappear as quickly as they emerged. Furthermore, blacks had other options, most notably the more diversified economy of urban areas which promised at least the possibility of seeking a better path.

County 3. Will County

The town of Braidwood, where most of Will County's mining efforts were centered, was still largely pristine prairie at the end of the Civil War—virtually no European presence had reached the area.⁵⁹ This quickly changed with a large influx of Scottish, Irish, and English coal miners, who joined miners coming from Pennsylvania to take advantage of the untapped coal fields in the years following the Civil War.⁶⁰ This labor force gave rise to a mining culture quite different from that of Gallatin and Jo Daviess Counties, where southern adventurers (and their slaves) appropriated techniques devised by indigenous peoples and supplemented the methods with industrial technology. Will County's mines were manned by lower-class European migrants, who brought their own experience in mining.

Braidwood was the first northern Illinois coal mining camp to become a full-fledged community, being incorporated in 1865. Mining was the reason for the town's founding: the town's "father" was James Braidwood, a skilled pick miner from southwest Scotland. The combination of high demand in Chicago and financing from eastern U.S. interests led to the rapid growth of Braidwood and other coal mining towns in northern Illinois. The Chicago and Wilmington Company (CW&V) alone invested more than \$475,000 in the Braidwood mines in the late 1860s.⁶¹ By 1873, two thousand tons of coal left Reed Township daily, nearly all of which came from pick-axe miners.⁶² Satellite mines in nearby Grundy County added to the area's output.

Pick-axe coal mining is the most typical version of underground coal mining. Explosives are used to literally dig holes into the underlying rock, advancing to the point that miners are literally face-to-face with the coal deposit. A deposit can be anywhere from a few inches to tens of feet thick. Miners then use pick axes to scrape off coal from the coal strata, which is then transported out of the mine and shipped elsewhere for use.

As Braidwood developed, corporate interests increasingly marginalized the labor interests of the early community. Corporations acquired much of the county's land which they would then parcel out to incoming miners. Dozens of new miners were coming to the county weekly by 1870.⁶³ Anglo-European miners were the vast majority initially, as noted above, but increasingly large numbers of southern and eastern Europeans joined the work force. Although perceived as being different, they demonstrated (as will be shown) an ability to work collectively with the Anglo miners on labor issues. Reed Township, the township within which Braidwood is located, was unquestionably a mining town: in 1880 78 percent of the population (who were engaged in the market economy) were miners or mine

laborers.⁶⁴ Add to this the mine functionaries and overseers, and it is clear that mining was the exclusive industry of the city.

In the early 1870s white miners united and stood up to the CW&V for increased labor rights. The gains they won were eroded in 1877, however, when the CW&V announced a 25% decrease in pay for pick-mining work in Braidwood.⁶⁵ The CW&V further announced that it would not negotiate with the local union and would force miners to sign documents stating that they would not join labor organizations. Over 1,500 miners walked out.

In response the CW&V initially brought in whites from Chicago, and subsequently a larger number of blacks from the south as strikebreakers. The Illinois National Guard was sent in to protect the black workers (since miners controlled the local government and thus turned a blind eye to intimidation of the black strikebreakers through violence), and by November the miners were forced to return to work humiliated, having failed to achieve their goals. Felix Armfield identifies the blacks as being primarily from Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia.⁶⁶

A striking miner described the black strikebreakers thusly: “The companies are shipping in negroes by the car loads: tobacco spinners, blacksmiths, tinkers, street cleaners, and corn hoers from the plantation. This kind of rubbage [sic] can not hurt us any.”⁶⁷ If his assessment is accurate, the CW&V was bringing in a variety of blacks with highly varying histories and skills. Various sources estimate their numbers as being between three and six hundred, and most miners brought their families with them. John Mitchell, future president of the UMWA, was born in 1870 in Braidwood and witnessed the 1877 strike first-hand. The strike and its aftereffects did much to shape the UMWA’s approach towards race and government, which will be discussed later.⁶⁸

Although much has been made of the phenomenon of black strikebreakers as significantly affecting immigrant whites’ perceptions of blacks, it is important to note that a handful of blacks were living and working in Braidwood prior to the strike.⁶⁹ Although they represented a tiny percentage in the 5,000-plus population, their presence would have contributed to the construction of an image of black people in the minds of white miners before the 1877 strike began (see table 5).

Bwdwpop.	1860	1870	1877	1880	1890	1900	1910
Black	0	15	600	306	141	161	123
Total	1231	4573	6000	5524	4641	3279	3564
Miners	32	1326	1650	1693	1152	975	623

Table 5. Population of the town of Braidwood in Will County from 1860–1910, from the U.S. Census. Note that the number of miners is the total number of miners in the county, not at the community level, although nearly all of Will County’s mining activity has been in the close vicinity of Braidwood.

Nonetheless, it is undeniable that racism was a major issue in the strike and its aftermath. The CW&V had a history of importing strikebreakers, be they Scandinavians, Italians, or Poles (all from Chicago), yet never before had things gotten so out of hand as in the 1877 strike.⁷⁰

Since the use of black strikebreakers from the south in northern industry was at that time a novel phenomenon,⁷¹ it is worth considering what spurred the CW&V to make this move. The decision was motivated by the dissatisfaction of the president and stockholders of the CW&V with the

performance of white strikebreakers. Stockholder A. L. Sweet noted, “We are bringing Colored Miners from the South, and expect to fill up our mines at Braidwood with regular Colored Miners. This, we think, will obviate the necessity for having any more strikes at that place for some time to come.”⁷²

Sweet believed that blacks would put an end to the recurring series of strikes in Braidwood because prejudice would keep them out of existing mining unions.⁷³ Mitchell (among other labor organizers) took note of this belief, and as a result advocated for and achieved an integrated UMWA in the early twentieth century.⁷⁴

Examining the specifics of the black experience in Will County, especially during and after the 1877 strike, reveals a complicated and evolving position for blacks within the mining labor apparatus. Suspicion of strikebreakers coupled with prejudice towards blacks flared into violence in the evening of July 20, 1877, the first night the blacks received their wages as strikebreakers. Celebrating, two were arrested by the striker-controlled city police force. A rumor of blacks arming themselves to rescue the arrested men circulated and a mob quickly formed. The county sheriff defused the situation by guarding the black quarters, but on July 23 total havoc broke out.⁷⁵ Violent confrontations between city and county government law enforcement figures, and between striker and strikebreaker occurred throughout the day, but in a generally disorganized fashion. Nonetheless fears of a riot were reported throughout the state.⁷⁶ The strikers and city government organized over the night, however, and the morning of July 24 the strikers surrounded one of the mining shafts and ordered the blacks to leave town by four the following afternoon.⁷⁷

Chicago militia officer General Arthur C. Ducat was told to stand by and await orders: if necessary he and his men would move into the city and restore order by force.⁷⁸ On the 25th the county government backed down and the blacks, accompanied by the sheriff and his deputies, left Braidwood on foot. The blacks slept that night on the open prairie. The state papers reported complete order being restored to Braidwood.

The depictions of the blacks throughout this drama depended on a number of factors, but the newspapers’ labor orientation and prejudices were key. It is unclear what role the operators played in all this: some newspapers portrayed blacks as victims and other witnesses pointed to the fact that when the black miners were forced to leave the operators did not have to issue them pay. One miner reported that it was “a touching sight to see these poor negroes driven forth, without any means at their command to reach their far away homes, and a great deal of sympathy was expressed by all the old miners as they saw them going forth with all their worldly goods.”⁷⁹ This miner’s account notwithstanding, state papers spoke of the savage treatment suffered by defenseless blacks at the hands of the strikers. The truth of what happened as the blacks left the city is probably impossible to determine. However, the ease with which blacks later joined the mining workforce and the miners’ union suggests that the miner’s report is probably the more accurate account and that the newspapers’ sensationalist reports played to middle-class fear of labor unrest and the overturning of traditional hierarchies. Nonetheless, blacks certainly feared for their lives or they would not have fled—terror was definitely a tactic used by the strikers to drive away the strikebreakers.

When the mine operators were unable to break the strike with outside labor, Ducat and his militia were sent to Braidwood. He and his seven hundred men faced off against the miners, and although a few volleys of gunfire were reported, there were no casualties.⁸⁰ That same day, the militia escorted 350 of the refugee black miners and their families back to their homes in Braidwood.

Although reporters had earlier been sympathetic towards the black miners, they now voiced strong criticism of the guards. The white guards were portrayed as terrorizing white strikers, which was seen as a greater evil than white strikers attacking black strikebreakers. This is just one example of the complex ways in which racism influenced perception around labor issues.⁸¹

It was reported that the black refugees cheered the advance of the National Guard against the strikebreakers. Despite the offer of protection, however, many blacks did not return to Braidwood, evidencing their deep fear of the strikers and their white supremacist actions. Although the strikers resented the return of the strikebreakers, no violence against the latter was reported in the months that followed, even after the militia left and the strike continued.⁸²

After all the commotion, Braidwood's black community faced a significant crisis. In addition to the significant number who simply refused to return to the town, 60 of those who did return shortly thereafter moved on to St. Louis. One hundred more strikebreakers were brought in to replace those who had left;⁸³ the new arrivals had received military training and over 400 arms, and were under the command of a black major and several Civil War veterans.⁸⁴ The state and national governments' willingness to go so far as to arm the black strikebreakers against the local white population illustrates the overwhelming support for big business in its battles with labor. In this situation, the blacks were seen as tools of corporate interests. As we will see later, the power dynamics would change significantly by the end of the century—and the result for the black miners would be significantly different.

In November, the strike—the longest ever in U.S. history to that point—came to an end. The black strikebreakers were able to continue working in the mines, partly as a ploy by the mine operators to prevent further labor unrest. Many blacks were transported by the operators across the country to break strikes in places as diverse as Washington state and Iowa. Although racial tension certainly remained, as early as 1878 class solidarity among the blacks and whites had developed so fully that over 200 of the remaining Braidwood blacks were illegally enfranchised so that they could vote for the pro-labor candidate in a local election.⁸⁵ A miner mocked the mine operators' outrage at the election, comparing the black miners' experience of slavery to the white miners' situation and their status as "white slaves" whom the owners "bully, bribe and intimidate" to achieve their results at the polls.⁸⁶ These words could be interpreted as evidence of a brief period of labor solidarity trumping the predominantly racist society. Furthermore, many blacks stood up for the labor ticket and as a result were fired from the mines, thwarting the mine operators' attempt to use black labor as a preventive measure against labor organizing. In other words, blacks, originally viewed as pawns of big business, exercised their autonomy by choosing instead to side with the working-class community. Although many blacks had left Braidwood to serve as strikebreakers across the country shortly after the 1877 riot, by 1880 labor solidarity in Braidwood had grown to the point that a mining agent found few blacks willing to serve as strikebreakers in nearby Rapid City, Illinois, when he came to Braidwood to recruit.

This somewhat rosy picture of class solidarity loses some of its glow, however, when one considers that only a few mines would even hire blacks, and those mines paid the lowest wages and had the worst working conditions. Furthermore, the union did nothing to correct these wrongs, or advocate for full rights for black miners. In addition, during the late 1870s and early 1880s a number of separate black institutions such as churches and fraternal organizations emerged, suggesting separate societies and suspicion along racist lines.⁸⁷ Racial violence was not uncommon, and near riots occurred multiple

times over the next few years when tempers flared.

Thus while it was advantageous for the union organizers to minimize racial hostility in order to present a picture of a unified working class, police reports and court cases testify to a more complicated climate within which blacks and whites only periodically came together to support labor issues. According to Herbert Gutman, one of the most engaged writers on the Braidwood campaign, only one document survives that tells of the attitudes of Braidwood's blacks. In a letter to the *National Labor Tribune* in December 1881, Moses J. Gordon, black miner and union advocate, identified racism as the main problem in Braidwood society:

A rule that will not work both ways will not work. They [the blacks] could no more get work here until the year 1877 than they could fly. Why was this? Was it capital that prohibited them from working here? Not by any means; it was the miners themselves, who would come out on strike before they would allow the negro to earn his daily bread. Was that not taking the bread out of the mouth of the negro? Or would my fellow miners consider the negro unworthy of earning his bread?⁸⁸

Gordon argued that as long as white miners and the unions to which they belonged were racist, they would not realize their goals. In a sense, he was evoking the black jeremiad, warning white miner society that its racist sins would doom it to failure.⁸⁹ Gordon contended that unions would be unsuccessful in reaching out to blacks until they made the end of discrimination in mining one of their key platforms: "If the laboring class fights capital for their rights, they have enough to do without fighting against six millions of people that have got to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow."⁹⁰

Gordon's words may have had at least a partial effect. In 1883 the miners of one of Braidwood's mining shafts selected a black man as their union representative with no record of protest by the other white miners. His name was Elijah Roey. However, the union would never recover the power it had before the 1877 riot. It is impossible to state definitively whether racial tensions were the main reason a strong union did not emerge in this time period. Another possibility is that the regional decline of coal mining in the area made labor organizing different. The loss of jobs made competition fierce and labor solidarity that much more difficult to achieve (see the row on number of miners in Perry County over time in table 5).

Coal mining in Braidwood continued until 1970. However, it changed dramatically in 1900 when strip mining became the principal means of coal extraction in the area.⁹¹ Strip mines are much less labor intensive than underground mines, relying on a few highly trained individuals skilled in explosives rather than on an army of pick-axe miners. It is unclear whether this transformation caused the black mining population in Braidwood to evaporate. Census data (see table 5) show the black community in Braidwood surviving, and since the town's population was almost exclusively engaged in coal mining up until the 1950s,⁹² it would suggest that blacks continued to work in the mines even during the long decline in mining in the area. Further research is necessary to see what became of Braidwood's black miners as the twentieth century progressed.

County 4. Christian County

The black miner experience in Christian County shows some superficial parallels with the experience in Will County. However, changes in labor-organizing patterns and in demographics as well

as more experience with strikebreaking made for a very different situation. As in Will County, blacks were brought from the south to break a strike, but in this case the strikebreakers were from Birmingham, Alabama, and many had experience working in coal mines.⁹³ Furthermore, advertising from Birmingham papers, combined with first-hand reports, shows that the black migrants were unaware of the purpose for which their labor would be used only at the outset. Later migrants would have been known about their role as strikebreakers—and yet they still chose to come to Christian County.

The Pana operators, as the Will operators had done, brought in black strikebreakers only after the use of local white labor to break the strike failed.⁹⁴ Unlike in Will County, however, the operators' first choice was Chinese strikebreakers. This plan was opposed by the state government,⁹⁵ so black labor was sought instead. The operators personally traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to recruit the first group of black laborers. They advertised themselves as representing a newly discovered mining area that was short on labor; the strikes were never mentioned.⁹⁶ On August 24, 1898, two hundred blacks arrived at Pana—to avoid violence the train went past the city's stop and took them directly to the mine. Extensive stockades and manpower had been deployed to protect the strikebreakers.⁹⁷ By this time the United Mine Workers of America had shown itself as willing to do whatever was necessary to prevent strikebreakers from entering mines, and in response mine operators had become ever more sophisticated in the use of black strikebreakers.

Despite these barriers, white union representatives continually sought to make contact with the strikebreakers. They often succeeded and convinced many blacks return to Birmingham, often with their fare being paid by the striking miners.⁹⁸ Despite the union's efforts, however, blacks continued to come to Pana throughout the strike. The exact number of the blacks who came to the city cannot be precisely determined, with the constant in- and out-migration, but the *Pana Daily Palladium* reported that the number of blacks in the city had reached 700 by October 4, 1898⁹⁹ (the pre-strike population of the city was around 5,500).¹⁰⁰

Although the mines were still not running at full capacity, a number of factors kept the mine operators from bringing in as many blacks as they would have liked. The chief obstacle was the union effort to reach blacks, both in Birmingham and in Pana, in order to inform them about the situation.¹⁰¹ Both the Alabama Miners' Union and the Afro-American Labor and Protective Association worked with the United Mine Workers of America to prevent more blacks from moving north,¹⁰² this campaign, coupled with horror stories from blacks returning from Pana effectively ended the northward flow of labor after October 1898.¹⁰³

These horror stories told of unsanitary living conditions caused by a combination of the change of climate, lack of infrastructure in the mining camps, and a coupon-based payment system in which blacks effectively became peons of the corporations.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the blacks in Pana faced hostility on all fronts. Unlike in Will County, both the newspaper and government turned against the blacks, labeling them as outsiders encroaching on the rights of Illinoisians (many of whom, ironically, were foreign born and had only recently migrated to the nation and the state).¹⁰⁵ The only major newspaper sympathetic to the blacks' plight was the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, which on November 4, 1898, recorded the words of one Porter, a southern black who stated he had as much right to work in Pana as any other U.S. citizen. Governor Tanner, however, refused to respect that right and signed into law a decree that state troops could not be used to support imported labor in the mines. The National Guard would not be deployed to protect Pana's blacks, as been the case in Will County.

It is hard to describe the day-to-day life of Pana's black miners for a number of reasons. To begin with, all the blacks left the city after the strike ended. No social net existed for them, neither the operators nor the miners desired a black presence in the city, and there no other jobs to be had. As a result, later researchers were left with only the opinions of white residents, who demonstrated clear racism and bigotry in their description of the blacks.¹⁰⁶ Also, the *Pana Daily Palladium*, the main newspaper in Pana, was emphatically pro-union and was controlled by labor interests. It depicted blacks as nefarious and unsavory. Nearly every account of violence occurring between blacks and whites was sparked by a black man or woman insulting a white person who had no choice but to retaliate with violence.¹⁰⁷ The few times blacks were able to have their voices recorded, such as in Porter's comment to the *Globe-Democrat*, or the blacks' collective letter to Governor Tanner requesting protection, represent the meager evidence in the historical record concerning the black experience in Pana's mines and mining community.¹⁰⁸

The ambivalent sympathy shown strikebreakers in Will County was completely absent in Pana. Even among the new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe (Pana's population was 7 percent foreign born in 1880),¹⁰⁹ the rhetoric of mine operators "foisting a mob of colored people upon us" was able to solidify a sense of community which rendered the blacks from Alabama inherent outsiders.¹¹⁰ The governor himself made this opposition crystal clear when he divided the community between "Negro miners from Alabama" and the "good bona-fide citizens of Pana."¹¹¹

As in Will County, the blacks had at their disposal a large arsenal (provided by the mine owners) and were expected to protect themselves from the striking workers, although at Pana no state support was offered.¹¹² On numerous occasions, the blacks were deputized, as when the strikers briefly kidnapped two of the operators and demanded the removal of the blacks.¹¹³ By mid-September both sides were heavily fortified for what would come next.¹¹⁴

Class solidarity was important on both sides, but it was forever tinged by the white supremacist climate of the city. Blacks worked to prevent their fellow blacks from being intimidated into leaving—the feeling of staking a claim and standing by it was important for the black community in Pana. This is especially clear in the case where blacks, led by Henry Stevens and Henry Blevins, took up arms to block a white union miner from assisting a black worker secure transportation to Alabama.¹¹⁵ A riot erupted between the two sides, and although no casualties were reported intermittent shooting occurred throughout the night. In the aftermath Pana's Attorney General suggested no one would stop the miners if they tried to remove the blacks by force.¹¹⁶ In a situation like this, where blacks were viewed with hostility by all sides, standing up for the right to live and work in Pana took a great deal of courage.

Violence on both sides continued through October and into November, despite the eventual appearance of the National Guard. Finally on November 12 martial law was declared,¹¹⁷ and all weapons were forbidden within a one-mile radius of Pana, although they were still held by many citizens of the town.¹¹⁸ It was only at this point that the idea of unionizing the blacks was proposed: local union elites proposed to bring in black union missionaries to convince the strikebreakers to join the union. This plan, however, was not carried out since so much ill will had already developed along racial lines. Achieving solidarity among workers of different skin colors was considered impossible.¹¹⁹

The events in Pana reverberated across the state. As the strike wore on, and the UMWA mobilized its members across the state, any black person traveling through central Illinois was viewed

with suspicion and often harassed.¹²⁰ A commentator in Springfield at the time reported that “the men have gotten the Afro-Phobia go badly that the colored porters on the trains crawl under the seats when going through town.”¹²¹ The labor troubles in Pana attracted national attention, as mentioned earlier, and left an indelible mark on central Illinois culture and race relations. Carl Sandburg’s poem “The Sayings of Henry Stephens” was partly inspired by the events in Pana. In the poem his black narrator states:

There’s only eight mines out of twenty
 In Sangamon county
 Where the white miners
 Let a negro work.
 If I buy a house right next to the Peabody mine
 That won’t do no good.
 Only white men digs coal there.
 I got to walk a mile, two miles, further
 Where the black man can dig coal.

Sandburg’s poem represents the reality of the divided mines. His reaction to Pana, and its racist divisions, was meant to show the futility that comes from racist divisions among miners.¹²²

In Pana, labor solidarity broke evenly along color lines. When the fear of being run out of town became palpable in the early days of 1899, the black miners joined together to form the Afro-Anglo Mutual Association to protect their interests.¹²³ The organization lobbied the state government to ensure that black and nonunion miners received the same protection as the union miners. These pleas fell on deaf ears as the governor removed the troops that were keeping order, leaving the blacks at the mercy of a local government openly hostile to them.¹²⁴ In response the blacks immediately sent a delegate to ask for the soldiers’ return.¹²⁵ Although unsuccessful, such a request testifies to the unified front presented by the black miners and contradicts the negative characterization of them in the contemporary reporting of the situation with the use of charged words like strikebreaker and scab.

Although we lack any records produced by this primarily black labor organization in Pana, a local paper described its leader, Henry Stevens, as “as hard as iron and his muscles stand out like whip cords. His biceps are as large as the calf of an ordinary man’s leg. He stands about six feet, two inches tall and he will weigh in the neighborhood of 200 pounds.”¹²⁶ In mid-April Stevens led the black miners after a riot broke out following the accidental shooting of one of the union miners (by one of his friends, ironically, not by a black miner).¹²⁷ The violence left five blacks and two whites dead, and at least six blacks wounded. The only white fatalities were the abovementioned accidental death (at the hands of a white policeman) and the shooting of the son of the sheriff, most likely by a white man as well.¹²⁸ In other words, the riot was really a minor massacre of Pana’s black miner population.

It is difficult to determine the actual death toll and the reaction from the black community to this event. The local paper completely overlooked the black deaths in focusing heavily on the two white fatalities. Nonetheless, among the black dead killed were Henry Johnson, Louis Hooks, James L. James, Charles Watkins from Georgia, and Julia Dash, wife of a black miner. The black wounded included Clinton Rolo, Louis Whitfield, Charles York, Ed Delinquent, F. C. Dorsey, and George Freak.¹²⁹ In the wake of the riot, all blacks seen on the street were chased by union miners into the city jail, and many feared that lynchings were imminent.¹³⁰ Peace was restored only with the return

of the militia. Illustrative of the difficult situation faced by blacks in Pana were the comments of recently elected Sheriff Downey in an interview with the *Illinois State Journal*: Downey believed some of his deputies would have helped, not hindered, the striking white miners in lynching Stevens, the leader of the blacks.¹³¹

As a final note, in the days that followed it was revealed that the riot was in part caused by a botched attempt to bring in a large number of union miners from the surrounding area to drive the blacks out.¹³² In other words, black resistance to an attempt to force them out of the city may have been the precipitating factor in Pana's massacre. The official scales of justice, however, were completely skewed against the black miners. No whites were arraigned, while Stevens was charged with three counts of intent to kill.¹³³

Following the riot/massacre on April 10th, Pana's blacks increasingly saw their situation in Pana as untenable and not worth the risk. Many left immediately afterwards, with travel support from the union.¹³⁴ Those who stayed protested the arbitration talks that began between operators and union miners, with blacks not being given any voice at all. The operators, in order to demonstrate their good faith with regard to the arbitration talks and also out of fear of increased violence, temporarily shut down all of Pana's coal mines in late June. As a result, the entire black community was immediately left destitute,¹³⁵ as it lacked the local and regional support networks upon which white union miners could rely. It should also be noted that the blacks' economic plight was due in large part to the extremely low wages paid to them and the wage system that prevented any type of accumulation of capital.

The economic and social marginalization of the blacks was now complete. In reaction the black community met to discuss what it should do. A report of this meeting was published in the *Pana Weekly Palladium* in July, 1899. Many feared another riot was imminent. The final result of the meeting was to appeal to Governor Tanner for financial support to assist the now-destitute blacks in returning to Alabama.¹³⁶ Over the months of June and July Pana's black community, already shrunk by the riot, was almost completely decimated as some moved to Alabama while most moved to Weir, Kansas to break a strike in progress.¹³⁷ According to local historian Millie Meyerholtz, 211 blacks moved west, primarily to Weir, and only 63 opted to return to Alabama. Those who remained in Pana were driven out in the following months.¹³⁸ Many of these holdouts ended up in Springfield, only to face violence again in the 1908 Springfield riot that would leave the black community decimated, as many blacks were expelled from the city never to return.¹³⁹ Although betrayed by the mining operators, the fact that most of the black miners preferred paying their own way to Kansas rather than move back to Alabama illustrates their aversion to returning to the Jim Crow South, a feeling strong enough to overcome nearly all other objections.

In the wake of the blacks' departure, the town became completely and emphatically anti-black. In the late 1940s Eleanor Anna Burhorn, in a history dissertation for Washington University in St. Louis, reported that "Negroes are neither permitted to live in Pana nor to remain there for the night The leading restaurant of the community will not serve meals to a Negro ... [T]he gasoline stations refuse to sell gasoline to Negroes who are passing through the community."¹⁴⁰ A later commentator noted that Pana had signs at its city limits into the 1960s advertising its no-black policy.¹⁴¹ With the growth of exurbs and the building of vacation homes Pana, built on a legacy of racism fomented during the labor troubles of the late 1800s, has become attractive to whites seeking to escape the presence of blacks in urban and suburban areas. A Pana resident told author James Loewen in 2001 that white Chicagoans with "radically racist ideas" seek Pana out as a vacation home owing to

its anti-black tradition.¹⁴² Demographic data would suggest that although Pana became a sundown town owing to the incidents here described, the rest of the county did not develop in the same direction (tables 6 and 7).

Pop-Christian	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
Black	45	127	98	165	181
Total	20363	28227	30531	32790	34594

Table 6. Population of Christian County from 1870 to 1910. As can be seen, at the county level Christian County's black population continued to expand in the early twentieth century, while in the same time period Pana's black population shrunk to nothing despite an overall population increase in the same time period (see below).

Pop.-Pana	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
Total	1532	3009	5077	5530	5934
Black	7	20	15	5	2

Table 7. Population of the city of Pana from 1870 to 1910. Were one to look only at this table, produced from official census data, one would never guess that Pana had a black population that at its height may have been around one thousand.

County 5. Perry County

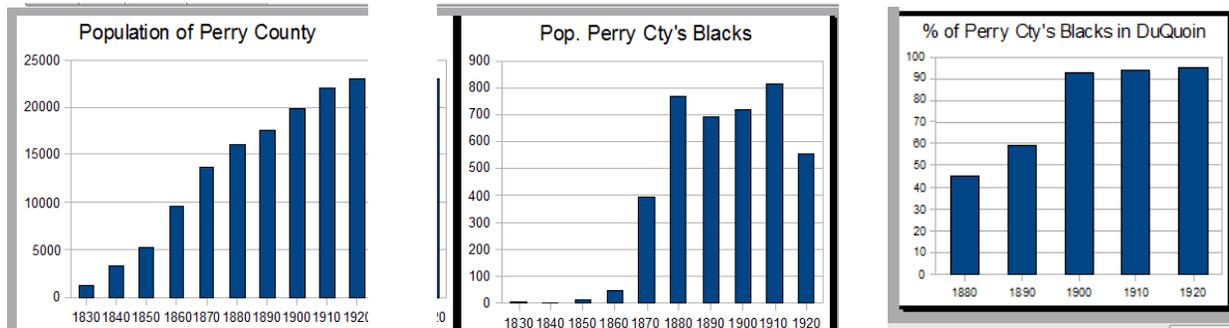
The story of African-American coal miners in Perry County, specifically in the city of Du Quoin, differs dramatically from the preceding two case studies. Early in the state's history Du Quoin became one of the centers of southern Illinois mining—in 1854 the St. Johns mine two miles north of Du Quoin became the first mine in Illinois to be directly linked to the railroad, connected to Cairo and later East St. Louis through a spur.¹⁴³ By 1856 Du Quoin was the state's leading producer of coal and coke.¹⁴⁴

In the periods just prior to and immediately after the Civil War, blacks in an unorganized fashion began migrating to this economic pole.¹⁴⁵ Many of the first migrants were runaway slaves kept in protective custody by the Union government during the Civil War on the border between Kentucky and Illinois.¹⁴⁶ Although blacks in Du Quoin never made up more than 15 percent of the population,¹⁴⁷ the community has endured to the present day in marked contrast to the black mining communities discussed above. Throughout the nearly 150 years during which Du Quoin has had a black community, salt and coal mining have been central to the community's economic activity.

Historical knowledge of this community and the black miner experience in Du Quoin comes primarily from Hollywood actress Ruby Berkley Goodwin's memoir *It's Good to be Black*. Goodwin's account is largely composed of vignettes that describe the social situation of the black community between the years 1903 and approximately 1920. The importance of Goodwin's book as an historical document cannot be overstated.

The history has otherwise largely been erased. For example, the two-volume history of Perry County put out by the Perry County Historical Society in 1988 makes no mention of Du Quoin's black community beyond a brief description of the black church of which Goodwin's grandfather was pastor.¹⁴⁸ The myriad family histories in that volume do not include any of the many black families with

deep roots in the county.¹⁴⁹ Part of this no doubt stems from the history of racist dynamics in the county. Outside of Du Quoin black communities in Perry County, where they have existed, have been transitory in nature (see graphs 4, 5 and 6). In the words of one man from the Perry County Historical Society, they were “what you might call sundown towns.”¹⁵⁰



Graphs 4, 5 and 6. These graphs show that even though Perry County consistently grew in population in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the black population at the county level was much more volatile. Especially notable is the drop in black population between 1880 and 1890 and the slow rebound followed by a dramatic drop in 1920. Concurrent with this was a movement for all of Perry County's black population to become consolidated in Du Quoin. One possible explanation is that racism at the county level forced the once geographically dispersed population into Du Quoin. The 1910–1920 drop requires further analysis, but might be related to racism directed against blacks in the wake of the Great Migration and hostility toward so-called “foreign” blacks which eventually led to a virulently racist atmosphere in the county (see text for more details on this phenomenon).

In this context, we must use Goodwin's account as a cipher to navigate the references to mining in Perry County in order to tease out the history of the black miner experience. The Du Quoin Goodwin remembered was “divided by invisible but well-defined lines”¹⁵¹ in which the black community was centered in an area known as “the Bottoms.”¹⁵² Although confrontational racism in Du Quoin was rare, the conception of race permeated nearly all social interactions. This came to the fore when mining accidents occurred, galvanizing the community:

When there was an explosion at White Ash mines, the colored people weren't too bothered. They talked about it, to be sure, but all agreed that God was venting his wrath upon the operators who never permitted Negroes to work there. Their summarization of the disaster was, “God sho' don' love ugly.”

But if something went wrong at the Old Enterprise, Horn's, Eaton's, or the Majestic, the whole populace hurried on foot down the dusty roads that led to the mines. Neighbors who hadn't spoken for years suddenly became friends as they milled around, tense and trembling until every man was accounted for—dead or alive. In the terrible waiting someone would mutter, “Devil sho' is busy.” Thus every happening was speedily rationalized as being either the work of the Lord or the trickery of the devil.¹⁵³

These sentiments of concern and disdain for the white supremacist system mirror those of the miners in Braidwood who warned that racist divisions in the mines would prevent the emergence of a labor solidarity that could achieve fundamental change.

Despite these divisions, Goodwin emphatically states that Du Quoin's mining industry was less racist than other communities in the area. Her father Braxton, despite being the son of an ex-slave, was able to rise to the position of entry driver because in Du Quoin "no one was too concerned about a miner's background."¹⁵⁴ In addition, a number of prominent white businessmen lived immediately adjacent to black families: a fact Goodwin says exemplifies "Du Quoin at its democratic best."¹⁵⁵ This would suggest that the technology of mining, which required close collaboration in low visibility environments, played a critical role in the development of the egalitarian (to a very definite limit) society that developed in Du Quoin.

A portrait emerges from Goodwin's narrative in which black miners were often (but not always) accepted, but as second-class citizens, in Du Quoin's social order. On the one hand miners of all ethnicities joined the black workers in constructing the local black church when the mines were idle,¹⁵⁶ but at the same time many of the local whites were willing to bet on a white boxer seen by nearly all as destined to lose in the 1910 championship fight—a wager Goodwin said was made "to uphold their belief in white supremacy."¹⁵⁷ The Jeffries–Johnson bout, and the black community's jubilation over Johnson's victory, symbolized a unity based around liberation in which Du Quoin's blacks joined with other black communities across the country.¹⁵⁸ Their jubilation was a response to the type of ingrained racism that caused a local white woman to callously describe the death of a black miner thusly: "[W]ell, it coulda been worse. Woulda too if the men had been down. As it was there was jes twenty mules and a nigger that was killed."¹⁵⁹ Johnson's victory reaffirmed the blacks' worth in the face of racism.

Despite the institutionalized racism that permeated the community, blacks still exercised real power in the town, as can be seen when representatives from both parties courted Goodwin's father in the race for the state assembly. As Braxton stated, "I ain't bragging, I'm stating a cold fact. I run the Second Ward—and the Second Ward runs this town."¹⁶⁰ Braxton backed up his words by garnering the votes for the candidate who promised to keep mining interests at the forefront of his platform. Among the visitors who passed through the Berkley house was Governor Deneen, illustrating the prominence of the Berkley family beyond the municipal level.

On the other hand, it is worth considering whether or not Goodwin's family, and its prominence, reflected a unique case rather than a general trend. After all, the schools were segregated, and despite Braxton's continual complaints to the school board integration did not occur. Perhaps further underscoring Braxton's special position in the community, the school board did offer to allow his children to attend the white school—an offer he declined for the principles of black solidarity.¹⁶¹ As one of Du Quoin's older families, the Braxtons were in a unique position vis-à-vis the continually arriving immigrants. In a case similar to that documented by Armfield in northern Illinois, it may have been that blacks who were long-time residents of Du Quoin were briefly allowed to rise in the social hierarchy due to suspicions of the incoming foreigners.¹⁶² Future work needs to be done to measure how the blacks' position in the community changed as these European ethnics became fully "white."

The sense of a unified community based around mining and mining culture was expressed plainly in the extremely cold reception both blacks and whites gave to more recent black migrants from the south who came to the area in the 1910s.¹⁶³ One could draw a parallel to the situation described above in Galena in which the white community drew a distinction between "our blacks" who had been assimilated into the larger society, and the incoming blacks from the south who were viewed with suspicion.

Furthermore, at least in the conceptualization of Braxton and many of the older black miners, the mines themselves represented a social equalizer, a place in which a man was judged by his skills and labor solidarity and not by his skin color. As Braxton described his union to a black tramp who came in with the train, "If you're interested in a job, I'm sure you can get on at the mines. We need good entry drivers. Of course, you'll have to join the union. Everybody does; black, white, grizzly, or gray. You see, we protect each other by having the union. Every man has a voice. There are no big I's and little you's."¹⁶⁴ The Berkleys' color-blind ideal in labor relations extended to their choice of physician. When "race zealots" solicited support for Du Quoin's first black doctor, Zephaniah Green, fresh from the South, the family chose to stay with their trusted Scots-Irish doctor, stating, "We never stop to think whether Dr. Gillis is white, black, or purple. He's our friend and that's all there is to it."¹⁶⁵

One could question how far this color-blind rhetoric which Braxton clearly bought into, at least in relation to the mines, would extend itself. County lore includes the story of a black miner from the north who killed over fifteen black strikebreakers from the south in order to set an example for blacks who attempted to destroy the class solidarity that existed between blacks and whites in the mines of Illinois.¹⁶⁶ This story and its retelling in the community reflect the no-win situation for blacks, who had to choose between backing an often racist union or making the case for their right to work in terms of black liberation and ethnic solidarity.

If we accept that ethnic relations in Du Quoin were different than in many other mining towns in Perry County, the question then becomes one of what caused this difference. This is a problem James Loewen, author of *Sundown Towns*, has grappled with extensively.¹⁶⁷ As the large bibliographies attached to the strikes at Pana and Braidwood attest to, violent interracial conflicts in mining have attracted enormous attention. Much less study has been devoted to relatively peaceful, but still clearly divided, towns in which blacks and whites worked side-by-side in the mines. Investigations of mining relations and mining communities in nearby Saline and Vermilion Counties could perhaps shed light on this issue as both areas had significant populations of black miners throughout their histories.¹⁶⁸ Although this data is not at hand, a cursory examination of available information at Perry County could suggest possible answers that could be tested more fully with a broader data set from more counties.

One major difference between the history of labor relations in Du Quoin and those of Pana and Braidwood was that the black community was at the very forefront of the unionization process. Braxton, along with two white miners, organized Local No. 98 of the UMWA into an 1100 member-strong organization at the turn of the century.¹⁶⁹ As a result Braxton and the black community earned a measure of respect often withheld from black miners elsewhere in the state, where indeed the word black was often synonymous with scab at this time.¹⁷⁰

In addition, Goodwin's narrative would suggest that Du Quoin's blacks were able to describe their identity first and foremost in terms of occupation and class in a way that did not occur at Braidwood and Pana, where the strikebreakers' skin color served as a constant reminder of their origins as scabs. This collective identity based on mine labor becomes crystal clear when Goodwin describes recent black migrants coming through the town in 1915: "These were the first real aliens we had ever seen. I say the 'first real aliens' because these men, though bound to us by the ties of color, were much more foreign than the immigrant Irish, Polish, German, and Italian workers who came to Du Quoin directly from Ellis Island.... [A]ll the men were miners and were bound together by the common dangers they shared each day in the pits."¹⁷¹ The perception of the black migrants as 'others' by Du Quoin's blacks was heightened by the migrants' seeking of work at the businesses of the town, such as

the hotel and bakery, rather than in the mines. This would suggest that the ties of mining shaped a community that enabled black and white to partially share a cultural identity that proved more durable than the racist tensions of the city, which may or may not have come primarily from the middle class.

This labor identity that at least partially transcended bigotry was evident when the local union went on strike in the spring of 1916. The operators planned to bring in strikebreakers, and the workers collectively took up arms and went out either to reason with the strikebreakers or drive them away if necessary. Pointedly, no mention of the strikebreakers' ethnicity was made—their identity as scabs was all that mattered to the unionized workers.¹⁷² It is unclear, but definitely should be investigated, if any blacks were among the “Du Quoin boys,” a group of men killed during the mine wars that galvanized the mining region of southern Illinois during the early years of the Great Depression.¹⁷³ A 1934 commentator reported that blacks in the area were feeling the brunt of the Great Depression much more keenly than whites.¹⁷⁴

Beyond labor relations, it is worth noting that the technology of mining itself, combined with blacks and whites working side-by-side with that technology, may have helped to diminish racist tensions in the city. Just as the blacks in Braidwood fared relatively well in the city after the strike ended, despite their status as strikebreakers, the white and black miners of Du Quoin remained on good terms. As Goodwin's brother Spud points out, in mining “[t]he safety of so many men depended on the knowledge of one: A miner had to tell by the flicker of the carbide light, the amount of gas in the entry or in his room. He had to know when to put a prop under hanging sheets of coal. He had to know how to set his powder to keep the shot firer from being blown to bits when he lighted the fuses at night.”¹⁷⁵

The mutual dependence that resulted from the use of the technology may also have contributed to the race relations in Du Quoin. As Arnesen points out, black strikebreakers were often able to secure a toehold in northern industrial workplaces whereby they could then join unions that otherwise would not allow them.¹⁷⁶ This would suggest that for many black migrants the main hurdle was entering the industrial workforce, not fending off racism once they were employed. Social mobility came quickly in cities that lacked the oppressive racism seen in places like Pana. In Du Quoin, for example, the city elected a black alderman in 1918, himself a former miner, representing the degree to which blacks could become integrated in cities that were not violently racist.¹⁷⁷

Towns like Du Quoin were rare in rural Illinois, however. A black Du Quoin miner pointed out to James Loewen while he was writing *Sundown Towns* that “If they [sundown towns of southern Illinois] did not have such a policy, surely blacks would be *in* them.”¹⁷⁸ This broad phenomenon documented by Loewen makes the longevity of Du Quoin's black community, tied to mining for the most part until very recently, all the more fascinating.

Section 4. Conclusion

This brief survey of five mining communities in black miners lived and worked during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries suggests a number of potential topics for further research. One of the most critical topics of inquiry would be to identify and track the black populations of the various counties as they migrated away from the mining communities because of racism, economic decline, or a combination of the two. This work could be done by citizen-scientists around the nation who through genealogical research have identified family members with histories in the mines of Illinois. Such an effort would be a dramatically different, but extremely important complement to the current work.

Whereas this study has addressed the issue of black miners by focusing mainly on counties and time periods which have attracted the attention of scholars for various reasons, a grassroots study based in genealogy would have the potential of illuminating the more mundane lived reality of black mining communities over time.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, such a study could reinsert black voices into what has been primarily a tale told through the voices and sources of white individuals.¹⁸⁰

Working from the opposite direction, a study of black mining nationwide would yield a dataset that could answer some of the questions posed in this study. Ron Lewis's *Black Coal Miners in America* represents one type of effort, but his study is primarily of labor relations, especially unions and union activity. Other perspectives and other types of mining could be discussed in such a broad work, which could also touch upon the issues of community formation and technology interaction discussed in this study.

Finally, rather than jumping from county to county, it would be worthwhile to focus on a single area within Illinois and carry out an in-depth analysis. An example of such a study is Joe William Trotter, Jr.'s *Coal, Class, and Color: Blacks in Southern West Virginia, 1915-32*.¹⁸¹ Regional studies could be done of the coal industry of southern Illinois, which still has a strong black presence despite economic downturns in the sector; the broader tri-state area lead mining region; the coal region in northern Illinois at the end of the nineteenth century, centered around places like Spring Valley, Braidwood, and Coal City; and the area around Vermilion County, Danville, Terre Haute, and western Indiana. All of these regions had black miner populations. There may be more which have not been discovered in the secondary literature.

Section 5. Final notes on gathering resources

Conducting a research endeavor such as this requires close collaboration with librarians and archives from the areas under study. Furthermore, interlibrary loan, at least until digital historic newspapers are available broadly, are essential to acquire the newspaper accounts necessary to compose a narrative history of the black miner experience.

The author relied on the advice and knowledge of librarians and local historians across the state in researching this paper. Librarians at the Illinois Survey at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Lincoln Library in Springfield, and the Du Quoin Public Library offered valuable assistance, as did individuals from the Illinois State Archives and the Chicago Public Library Special Collections division. A special note of thanks goes to local historians in Jo Daviess, Perry, and Will Counties. The interlibrary loan staff at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ceaselessly tracked down and acquired obscure references, many of which were held at only one library in the world. Finally, the author benefited immeasurably from the feedback and advice offered him by his class-mates and professor Abdul Alkalimat during the seminar on "Information Technology and the African-American Experience" offered through the University of Illinois's Graduate School of Library and Information Science and African American Studies and Research Program in Spring 2008.

A final note on newspapers: Currently initiatives around the nation and at the state level are underway to digitize and make accessible American newspapers no longer under copyright. These underfunded initiatives will take years, if not decades, to finish, especially for the obscure local papers that document mining towns. Requesting these newspapers on microfilm is relatively easy, and heavy use of the microfilm combined with repeated requests for digital access will enable librarians already

engaged in this digitization work to provide evidence to budget personnel of the necessity and usefulness of such an effort. Those engaged in the use of primary resources have a duty to apply pressure where possible to demand digitized access. Imagine a time when with a few searches every reference to black miners in a local newspaper could be found. Now consider this scenario to the present reality. Local historian Scott Wolfe has over the last twenty years painstakingly transcribed whatever references to blacks in the city of Galena he has found during his long volunteer career with the Jo Daviess County Historical Society. With the aid of digitization, Wolfe's work could be directed more towards interpretation, synthesis, and the generation of knowledge, rather than simply procuring sources. This is the potential of digital technology for the future of historical scholarship.

¹For an overview of this literature see Joe W. Trotter with Earl Lewis and Tera W. Hunter, eds., *African American Urban Experience: Perspectives from the Colonial Period to the Present*, (New York: Palgrave, 2004).

²A national survey of the history of mining focused on its long-term impact on the environment and the infrastructure it created can be found in Duane A. Smith, *Mining America: The Industry and the Environment* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987). Although environmental concerns were less important during the time periods studied in this paper, it is important to note that blacks were routinely given the “dirtiest,” that is, the most health-degrading jobs in mines.

Furthermore, environmental regulation in the latter part of the twentieth century forced most of the remaining blacks involved in the mining sector from employment. This development is alluded to in the memoir of Appalachian coal miner Robert Armstead, see Robert Armstead, *Black Days, Black Dust: The Memoirs of an African-American Coal Miner*, (Memphis: University of Tennessee Press), 2002.

³This should not be taken to mean that shared use of mining technology erased racist sentiments. Blacks were always seen as second-class citizens, being barred completely from many mines across the nation until the passage of the civil-rights act. Furthermore, in times of economic hardship blacks were the first sector of the community forced from the mines, and, as a result, the communities based on those mines. For example, Barnum shows that in the more eastern Bituminous coal regions, when the mining economy began being replaced largely by oil and natural economies, black population fell much faster than white population in the mining region. Between 1950 and 1960 in that region, white population fell by fifty percent, but black population fell by seventy-five percent. See Darold T. Barnum, *The Negro in the Bituminous Coal Mining Industry*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970), 39.

⁴An additional factor to consider is what David Roediger calls the “Wages of Whiteness,” wherein beyond economic rationale whites (especially immigrant whites – who tended to be most of the workers alongside the blacks worked, especially in frontier-era Illinois) would place themselves above blacks in order to psychically elevate their culturally and economically vulnerable position in the New World. See David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, (London: Verso, 1999). However, even in this case, one could argue that economic motivations lay behind the psychological assumptions; vulnerable immigrant whites wish to affirm their economic importance and value by insisting upon a class-based order in which they rise above African-Americans.

⁵One of the foundational texts of this labor history discourse is: Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker and the Labor Movement*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931). The authors devote their book to studying how a sense of labor-class consciousness based on collective action emerge among African-Americans after the Civil War.

⁶It would be wrong to state that these critiques of Gutman and his cohort completely discarded their predecessors. These scholars recognized the necessity of the earlier generation's work, but wanted to go further in terms of probing the black labor experience. One of the first studies in this vein was: August Meier and Elliot Rudwick. *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW*, (New York: Columbia, 1979), and Joe W. Trotter, *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-1945*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985).

⁷For a good survey of these developments see: Eric Arnesen, “Up From Exclusion: Black and White Workers, Race, and the State of Labor History,” *Reviews of American History*, 26 (1998), 146-74.

⁸Arnesen, again, is at the forefront in articulating these ideas in his 2003 article in *Labor History*: Eric Arnsen, “Specter of the Black Strikebreaker: Race, Employment, and Labor Activism in the Industrial Era,” *Labor History*, 44 no. 3 (2003), 319-348, in which he states that “the factors pushing black workers in one direction or another were grounded in their concrete experiences and evolved over time” (333), portraying the black workers as much more aware and familiar with the American economic system than European immigrants previously described in terms of proletarianization.

⁹William P. Jones, “Black Milwaukee: Review,” *Journal of Urban History*, 33 (2007), 547.

¹⁰To address the problem of a historical narrative centered around black coal miners, Ronald L. Lewis utilized what he terms a “comparative regional approach” wherein a broad analysis of the historical issues and trends at any given time is juxtaposed against the local and regional levels to better explain the isolated, geographically dispersed mining towns across the country. Ronald L. Lewis, *Black Coal Miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict, 1780-1980*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), x.

¹¹Ronald Lewis describes the advantages and pitfalls of using newspapers: “The rural environment in which coal mining is typically conducted has produced something of a distortion in the sources relied upon by those who have written about mining. When the major magazines and newspapers reported events in the coalfields at all, they were the sensational affairs, such as violent confrontations between capital and labor or the pathos of hunger and destitution which so often accompanied these frequent and protracted struggles, and the reporters often were oblivious to the subtler nuances.” However, Lewis goes on to describe the locally produced newspapers as “small, obscure and less accessible” making a full use of them difficult at best, especially when considering multiple communities. Lewis, ix.

¹²University of Virginia Library, “Historical Census Browser,” University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

¹³N. Dwight Harris, *The History of Negro Servitude in Illinois*, (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1904), 4.

¹⁴Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *A Gathering of Rivers: Indians, Metis, and Mining in the Western Great Lakes, 1737-1832*, (Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 79-137. Murphy describes the history of lead mining in the region from the

precolonial to the frontier American state.

¹⁵Governor St. Clair of the Northwest Territories chose to interpret the 1787 Northwest Ordinance as allowing those slaves already in the area to remain. Furthermore, later bureaucrats chose to interpret the law as allowing “voluntary” servitude, or the interpretation of slaves on a temporary basis. These slippery interpretations of the law in fact resulted in the wholesale allowance of slavery in the areas, as will be shown later. See Harris, 6-8.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁷Jon Musgrave, *Slaves, Salt, Sex & Mr. Crenshaw: The Real Story of the Old Slave House and America's Reverse Underground R.R.*, (Marion: Illinoishistory.com, 2005), 64.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 81

¹⁹Foescrue, Cuming, *Sketches of a tour to the western country*, (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear & Echbaum, 1811), 245-246. Available through the Louisiana Digital Library at

<http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/lapur&CISOPTR=25274>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

²⁰County and Community Histories, “Early Times in Illinois: by William Bryant,” The Yesterdays of Hamilton County, Illinois, <http://www.carolyar.com/Illinois/Bryant.htm>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

²¹Musgrave, 115.

²²Harris, 13

²³JT Lamkin, “Porter Family History,” USGenWeb Archives Special Projects, <http://files.usgwarchives.org/tx/history/porter.txt>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

²⁴*Shawneetown Illinois Gazette*, 24 February 1820. Jon Musgrave, who has devoted a considerable amount of his life to documenting the “reverse underground railroad” that operated around the salt works has identified the following black residents of the county, some of whom were slaves and some of whom were free blacks forced into slavery through kidnapping: Abraham, Alfred, Barney Hargrave, Ben, Benjamin Baxter, Carter, Celia, Charles Adams, Cosby, Dave, Dick, Emily, Ephraim Lawrence, Fox, Frank Granger, George, Haman, Harry, Henry, Hiram, Jacob, James Bayard, Aunt Jemima, Jim, John, John Jacob's black boy, Joshua, Juliet, Lewis, Little Jack, Little John, Lotty, Lucinda, Lucy, Lydia Smith, Madison George, Maria Adams, Mary, Martha, Matz, Milly/Milley, MinnyAunt, Moses, Napoleon, Nelly, Nelse, Nelson Adams, Patrick, Patrick Henry, Peter Hook, Pompey, Rach, Sabe, Sally, Seamore, Sukey, Sylvia, Toby, Venus Davenport. See Musgrave, 605-606.

²⁵See Article IV of 1818's Constitution of Illinois: “No person bound to labor in any other state, shall be hired to labor in this state, except within the tract reserved for the salt works near Shawneetown.” Pat Collins, “Illinois Constitution of 1818,” Pat Collins' Wargame and play by Email! age, <http://tippecanoe.tripod.com/c1818.html>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

²⁶1830 Census of Gallatin Co., Illinois.

²⁷This happened especially in relation to the “reverse underground railroad” operated through Gallatin County. As late as the late 1850's one can find reports of free blacks being abducted, kidnapped and covertly shipped south to plantations. One of the victims of this process even reported at a later date that black abductees were sometimes forced to procreate in order to produce fresh black blood to be shipped south. Musgrave, 342.

²⁸*Shawneetown Illinois Gazette*, 2 August 1823.

²⁹Musgrave, 141.

³⁰Willis Hargrave, “Letter to Gov. Coles. Gallatin Salines, Nov. 2, 1824”, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

³¹*Shawneetown Illinois Gazette*, 17 December 1825.

³²Leonard White, “Letter to Gov. Coles Gallatin Salines. Oct. 9, 1824,” Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

³³Harris, 55 and Musgrave, 173-184.

³⁴Edmund, Flagg, “The Far West: or A Tour beyond the Mountains,” in R.G. Thwaites, ed.. *Early Western Travels. 1748-1848*, (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1966), vol. 26, 69.

³⁵Musgrave, 320-321. See also, *History of Gallatin, Hamilton, Franklin and Williamson Counties, Illinois*, (Evansville: Unigraphic, 1970), 112

³⁶Gerald C. Smith, “Letter to David V. Koch” Gallatin County Papers, Special Collections/Morris Library, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

³⁷*History of Gallatin....*, 22

³⁸Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States*, (Ann Arbor, MI : University Microfilms, 1966), 342.

³⁹Murphy, 80-81.

⁴⁰Thomas Forsyth, “Thomas Forsyth to John C. Calhoun 24 June 1822” Thomas Forsyth papers, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁴¹“Consolidated Returns of Mineral and Lead Manufactured, 1827-1829,” Historical Collections of the Galena Public Library, Galena, Illinois.

⁴²James P. Beckwourth, (as told to Thomas D. Bonner), *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 20

⁴³Ibid., 21.

⁴⁴*Galena and Its [sic] Leadmines*. (Galena: Galena Historical Society, 2003). Originally published in Harper's Magazine, May 1866.

⁴⁵This economic system is described in Michael Meeker, "Early History of lead mining region of Wisconsin," Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁴⁶Beckwourth, 22.

⁴⁷"Mrs. Adele P. Gratiot's Narrative," 267, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁴⁸Much of the information in this section came from a number of informal interviews with Scott Wolfe, the director of the nascent Galena African-American Heritage Foundation. Another principal source was Scott H. Wolfe, "His Whole Life Vindicated," Galena Historical Society, <http://www.galenahistorymuseum.org/vindicatedhistory.htm>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

⁴⁹Despite the racism that propelled Baker to found Equal Rights, he was eulogized was nothing but positive words upon his death in 1892. The Warren Sentinel reported that in 1830 an attempt was made to kidnap him and force him into slavery. In addition being a miner, Baker was also a barber and medicine man. The Sentinel reports that "He was well liked and respected by his neighbors, and will be missed by the community and in the church." *Warren Sentinel*, 13 January 1892.

⁵⁰William Mills, a miner who became a barber in Galena, was seen as especially valuable by recruiters during the Civil War, since barbers were seen as the most intelligent of blacks. See Edward A. Miller Jr., *The Black Civil War Soldiers of Illinois: The Story of the Twenty-ninth U.S. Colored Infantry*, (Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 24.

⁵¹The legacy of this system can be seen in some buildings in Galena that were owned by blacks.

⁵²The same phenomenon was occurring through the lead mining region during this time period. See the case of the Iowa's lead mining population becoming consolidated around a specific section of the city of Dubuque and forced into menial service positions within the economy. Leola Nelson Bergmann, "The Negro in Iowa," *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 44 no. 1 (1948), 14. However, some blacks continued to work as miners. For example, James Drayden, a black miner from East Galena, was reported as a miner in 1877. *Galena Daily Gazette*, 22 September 1877.

⁵³Timothy R. Mahoney, *Provincial Lives: Middle-class experience in the Antebellum Middle West*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 78. Mahoney describes a vigilante group that emerged during the economic down-turn that ran an African-American man out of town.

⁵⁴Beckwourth exemplifies this trend.

⁵⁵Garrett Johnson, a former miner, moved to Jackson, Mississippi, and became involved with fighting for labor rights of the freed blacks. See Wolfe, <http://www.galenahistorymuseum.org/vindicatedhistory.htm>.

⁵⁶Although there was at least one exception. Moses Lester bought a lead mine in Jo Daviess County in 1890. "Deed of purchase of Lots 13-15-14-23 and 24, on South ½ of Section Sixteen in Township 28 range 1 East," Historical Collections of the Galena Public Library, Galena, Illinois.

⁵⁷A key example of this phenomenon was the oft-repeated story of Garrett Johnson, a black miner who famously saved the life of white George R. Melville in 1869. Johnson represented the type of black citizen Galena felt proud of in juxtaposition to the transitory blacks who migrated with the railroads. *Galena Weekly Gazette*, 8 February 1869.

⁵⁸"Miner's Registry," Historical Collections of the Galena Public Library, Galena, Illinois.

⁵⁹John H.M. Laslett, *Colliers Across the Sea*, (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 77.

⁶⁰This portrait comes from Laslett's earlier study of the development of the United Mine Workers of America, published in John H.M. Laslett, ed., "*The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?*" (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1996).

⁶¹Richard P. Joyce, "Miners on the Prairie: Life and Labor in the Wilmington, Illinois Coal Field, 1866-1897," (Bloomington-Normal: M.A. Thesis, Illinois State University, 1980), 12-13.

⁶²Laslett, *Colliers*, 78

⁶³Ibid., 79

⁶⁴U.S. Population Census, Reed Township (Braidwood), 1880.

⁶⁵Laslett, *Colliers*, 107.

⁶⁶Felix L. Armfield, "Fire on the Prairies: The 1895 Spring Valley Race Riot," *Journal of Illinois History*, 3 no. 3 (2000), 185

⁶⁷"Miner, Braidwood, to the editor," *National Labor Tribune*, 18 August 1877, As quoted in Michael R. McCormick, "Comparative Study of Coal Mining communities in northern Illinois and southeastern Ohio in the late 19th century," (Columbus: M.A. Thesis, Ohio State University, 1978).

⁶⁸Craig Phelan, *Divided Loyalties: The Public and Private Life of Labor Leader John Mitchell*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 1-12.

⁶⁹"Miners' National Record I (December 1874)," 22. As quoted in McCormick, 35.

⁷⁰Herbert G. Gutman, "Labor in the Land of Lincoln," in *Power & Culture: Essays on the American Working Class*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 150. Furthermore, Warren C. Whatley has showed that the use of black strikebreakers was statistically more likely to lead to violence and riots than the use of white strikebreakers during the late 19th and early 20th

centuries. See Warren C. Whatley, "African-American Strikebreaking from the Civil War to the New Deal," *Social Science History*, 17 no. 4 (1993), 546.

⁷¹Whatley identifies the Braidwood case as only the second time in the state of Illinois that black strikebreakers had been used. Whatley, 531.

⁷²A.L. Sweet, "Chicago, 2 June, 2 July 1877 to Cyrus Woodman," Woodman Manuscripts, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison Wisconsin.

⁷³For a consideration of the ideology behind this belief, see David Roediger, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness*, (Brooklyn: Verso, 1994), 145.

⁷⁴For a brief survey of the integration that occurred in the ranks of the UMWA see: Black History Forum, "African American Miners in the UMWA," Black History Pages, <http://www.blackhistorypages.com/link.php?n=1060>, Accessed 26 June 2008. Also see: UMWA, "UMWA History: Diversity in the UMWA," United Mine Workers of America, AFL-CIO, CLC, <http://www.umwa.org/history/race.php>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

⁷⁵Gutman, 176

⁷⁶*Chicago Tribune* 25 and 26 July 1877.

⁷⁷*Chicago Times* 25-27 July 1877.

⁷⁸*Riots of 1877 in Illinois. An Official History of the Braidwood Campaign*, (Chicago: Guilbert & Clissold, 1879), 4.

⁷⁹"Braidwood, 12 Aug 1877 to the editor" *National Labor Tribune*, as quoted in McCormick, 22.

⁸⁰Eleanor L. Hannah, *Manhood, Citizenship, and the National Guard*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 88

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 90.

⁸²Gutman, 186, 188

⁸³One of those that left Braidwood was later found breaking a strike in Washington state. See Roslyn Black History, "Harriet Jackson Williams, 1922," Brooks Library, Central Washington University, [http://digital.lib.cwu.edu/cgi-bin/library?a=d&c=ellensbu&cl=CL1-photo of ex-black braidwood miner](http://digital.lib.cwu.edu/cgi-bin/library?a=d&c=ellensbu&cl=CL1-photo%20of%20ex-black%20braidwood%20miner), Accessed 26 June 2008.

⁸⁴These facts were reported in the *National Labor Tribune* in late October and early November, 1877. As quoted in Joyce, 55.

⁸⁵Gutman, 195.

⁸⁶*National Socialist* 8 June 1878, As quoted in Gutman, 198.

⁸⁷Gutman, 202.

⁸⁸As reported in Gutman, 204.

⁸⁹For more on the black jeremiad, its relationship to technology and its revolutionary potential see Adam J. Banks, *Race, Rhetoric and Technology: Searching for Higher Ground*, (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 87.

⁹⁰As reported in Gutman, 204.

⁹¹R.G. Bluemer reports all the major underground mines being closed by 1900. R.G. Bluemer, *Black Diamond Mines: A History of the Early Coal Mines of the Illinois River Valley*, (Henry: M&D Printing, 2001), 24.

⁹²City of Braidwood, "Braidwood History," City of Braidwood, <http://www.braidwood.us/history.htm>, Accessed 26 June 2008

⁹³A state mine inspector found the blacks to be well-qualified miners during an inspection, as reported in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 25 August 1898. Whatley, furthermore, believes that the description of blacks as victims in which they did not know what they were doing as strikebreakers as a myth put together by union interests to portray a facade of labor solidarity. He argues the myth has persisted due to conventional labor history which focuses almost solely on white unions. Whatley, 538-45

⁹⁴*Pana Daily Palladium*, 7 September 1898.

⁹⁵Illinois State Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Seventeenth Annual Report*, 12.

⁹⁶*St. Louis Republic*, 25 August, 1898.

⁹⁷*Chicago Times-Herald*, 25 August 1898.

⁹⁸*Daily Review*, 26 August, 1898.

⁹⁹*Pana Daily Palladium*, 15 September 1898.

¹⁰⁰See table 7.

¹⁰¹ Among those who tried to dissuade the strikebreakers was Dean from Danville, a black man. According to the Chicago Daily News, Dean was the leader of a group of miners trying to stop the southern strikebreakers. Dean's role illustrates the complexity of relations between whites and blacks in the Illinois coal fields. As reported by: John H. Keiser, "Black Strikebreakers and Racism in Illinois, 1865-1900," *Journal of the Illinois Historical Society*, 65 no. 3 (1972), 321.

¹⁰² Waldron argues that this illustrates the fact that southern black miners were tricked into strikebreaking at Pana. However, she, like most other commentators, neglect to comment on why there continued to be a strong stream of willing strikebreakers from Birmingham and also why most of Pana's blacks chose to break another streak again after leaving Pana. Waldron, like many other New Labor scholars and their adherents, chooses to view labor organizations such as the UMWA as the ideal and any deviation from this vision of solidarity as suspect. Her views neglect to consider the racist nature of the UMWA, even after it became integrated. Caroline A. Waldron, "Lynch-law must go!" *Race, Citizenship, and the Other in an*

American Mining Town,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 20 no. 1 (Fall 2000), 69.

¹⁰³*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 20 August 1898.

¹⁰⁴Eleanor Burhorn, *Strike of Coal Miners at Pana, Illinois 1898-1899*, (St. Louis: Dissertation, Washington University, 1949), 70.

¹⁰⁵*Illinois State Journal*, 28 August 1898.

¹⁰⁶See, for example, how Burhorn relies solely on the evidence of whites in her oral history reporting in the 1940's:

“Negroes would shoot into the homes of the white miners at night to such an extent that it became necessary for those white miners living near Negro homes to retire at dusk.” Burhorn, 75. The fact that no court cases or police reports mention such incidents reveals the difficulties inherent in relying on whites to describe the black experience.

¹⁰⁷See for example, the *Pana Daily Palladium's* Sept. 19, 1898 article in which twenty drunken and armed blacks supposedly paraded in the street insulting whites. A riot was averted by the Sheriff's quick thinking. *Pana Daily Palladium*, 19 September 1898.

¹⁰⁸*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 20 August 1898, in Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis, eds., *The Black Worker during the era of the American Federation of Labor and the Railroad Brotherhoods*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979). Lewis and Foner's volume contains an entire section of primary sources from the Pana and Virden strike (p. 207-250).

¹⁰⁹U.S. Decennial Census, 1880

¹¹⁰*Illinois State Journal*, 30 August, 1898.

¹¹¹*Illinois State Journal*, 1 September 1898.

¹¹²*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 2 September 1898.

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴*Pana Daily Palladium*, 5 September 1898.

¹¹⁵As reported in Burhorn, 98.

¹¹⁶*Daily Review*, 30 September 1898.

¹¹⁷*Pana Daily Palladium*, 22 November 1898.

¹¹⁸Burhorn, 117.

¹¹⁹*Pana Daily Palladium*, 12 and 17 November 1898.

¹²⁰Victor Hicken, “The Virden and Pana Mine Wars of 1898,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 52 no. 2 (1959), 273.

¹²¹*Illinois State Journal*, Oct. 7, 1898. As reported in John H. Keiser, “The Union Miners Cemetery at Mt. Olive, Illinois – A Spirit-Thread of Labor History,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 42 no. 3 (1969), 248.

¹²²Sandburg, Carl. “The Sayings of Henry Stephens” (Springfield: *s.n.*, 1917). Northern Illinois University, “The Sayings of Henry Stephens,” <http://www3.niu.edu/~td0raf1/labor/The%20Sayings%20of%20Henry%20Stephens.htm>, Accessed 26 June 2008. It should be noted that Sandburg saw the UMWA and its integrated policy as the solution to this dilemma. For him labor solidarity meant solidarity for civil rights as well.

¹²³The formation of this society is documented in: *Pana Weekly Paladium*, 28 January 1899, and *Weekly Breeze*, 25 January 1899.

¹²⁴*Illinois State Journal*, 21 March 1899, as reported in Burhorn, 121.

¹²⁵*Weekly Breeze*, 5 April 1899.

¹²⁶*Daily Breeze*, 11 April 1899.

¹²⁷According to oral histories Burhorn conducted in Pana in the late 1940's. Burhorn, 125.

¹²⁸*Pana Weekly Paladium*, 15 April 1899.

¹²⁹As reported in the *Pana Weekly Paladium*, 15 April 1899.

¹³⁰As reported in Burhorn, 128.

¹³¹*Illinois State Journal*, 12 April 1899.

¹³²Burhorn, 133.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 138

¹³⁴*Pana Weekly Paladium*, 15 April 1899.

¹³⁵*Pana Weekly Paladium*, 1 July 1899.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, and *Illinois State Journal*, 30 July 1899.

¹³⁷*Pana Weekly Palladium*, 1 July 1899

¹³⁸Millie Meyerholtz, *When Hatred and Fear Ruled* (Pana: Pana News, 2001), 33.

¹³⁹Deepak Madala, Jennifer Jordan, and August Appleton, “The Springfield Race Riot of 1908,” <http://library.thinkquest.org/2986/>, Accessed 26 June 2008.

¹⁴⁰Burhorn, 168-169. Interestingly, however, Burhorn goes on to point out that despite this collective “law,” one black family, that had lived in Pana before the 1898 strike and took no role in the strike, was permitted to stay in Pana through the early 1900's, although they were socially isolated and eventually left of their own volition. Millie Meyerholtz, a local Pana historian, reported that the black man who was allowed to stay was a barber who had an exclusively white clientele and refused to serve the black strikebreakers during their time in Pana. Meyerholtz, 34.

- ¹⁴¹Meyerholtz, 35.
- ¹⁴²James Loewen, *Sundown Towns*, (New York: New Press, 2005), 339.
- ¹⁴³John Robert Fenoli, *Era of Conflict in Southern Illinois Coal Fields—since 1890*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962), 2.
- ¹⁴⁴Kathryn Pope Olsen, *DuQuoin, Illinois: A Family History*, (Tacoma: LaserWriting, 2003).
- ¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 19.
- ¹⁴⁶Ruby Berkley Goodwin, *It's Good to be Black* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), 51.
- ¹⁴⁷At least between 1880-1930 and 1980-2000, the periods in which the decennial census was consulted.
- ¹⁴⁸*Perry County, Illinois*, (Paducah, Kentucky: Turner Publication Company, 1988).
- ¹⁴⁹In contrast, consider the story of Ed “Rooster” Lanum, who was featured in the exhibition: Illinois Humanities Council, “Working in the Seams: An Initial Photographic View of into the African-American Coal Culture of Southern Illinois,” http://www.prairie.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/dir_resources.kiosk_photo/object_id/82410812-dbbe-4025-aeac-2943a97a8ef6/EdRoosterLanum.cfm, Accessed 26 June 2008. Lanum was born in Du Quoin in 1934, with at least three generations behind him who worked as miners in the area.
- ¹⁵⁰Personal communication, 7 March 2008.
- ¹⁵¹Goodwin, 13
- ¹⁵²This area, which may or may not have always been within Du Quoin's city limits, makes estimations of Du Quoin's black community over time extremely problematic. Further complicating matters is the division between Old Du Quoin (unincorporated) and Du Quoin proper. If significant populations of Perry County blacks lived in these unincorporated areas during the later twentieth centuries it makes it hard to look to the census for authoritative data on the local black community.
- ¹⁵³Goodwin., 15.
- ¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 14.
- ¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 17
- ¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 46. See also, Olsen, 20-21. Olsen writes that the first black church, Mount Zion Baptist Church, was built with help from the First Baptist Church in the city, illustrating a complex society in which white supremacy (after all the whites must not have wanted the blacks coming to their baptist church) mixed with shared labor.
- ¹⁵⁷Goodwin, 76.
- ¹⁵⁸As shown in Thomas R. Hietala, *Fight of the Century*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 13-14
- ¹⁵⁹Goodwin, 188.
- ¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 98.
- ¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, 212
- ¹⁶²Felix L. Armfield, “Fire on the Prairies: The 1895 Spring Valley Race Riot,” *Journal of Illinois History*, 3 no. 3 (2000), 191.
- ¹⁶³Goodwin, 176-184.
- ¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 68.
- ¹⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 61.
- ¹⁶⁶Goodwin, 78. Also, Du Quoin Public Library, personal communication, 7 March 2008.
- ¹⁶⁷ James Loewen, “Future Research Areas,” University of Vermont, <http://www.uvm.edu/~jloewen/content.php?file=sundowntowns-future.html>, Accessed 26 June 2008. He asks “What explains Du Quoin ... a biracial town in southern Illinois surrounded by sundown towns in every direction?”
- ¹⁶⁸See the many stories of multi-generational black miners in southern Illinois told in the virtual exhibition at Illinois Humanities Council, http://www.prairie.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/dir_resources.kiosk_photo/object_id/58096163-ce27-4f68-b228-de50cb314713/CharlesPeachesGude.cfm.
- ¹⁶⁹Goodwin, 104
- ¹⁷⁰This was especially true at Pana. See Lewis, 134.
- ¹⁷¹Goodwin, 149-150.
- ¹⁷²Goodwin, 174-180.
- ¹⁷³For more on these “wars” and Du Quoin's role in them see John Robert Fenoli, *Era of Conflict in Southern Illinois coal-fields since 1890*, (Carbondale: Dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1962), 131.
- ¹⁷⁴Richard Stockton, *Underground in Illinois: How Coal Miners Live, Work, and Struggle for Unity*, (Washington, D.C.: National Research League, 1938), 5. Stockton reports that at one camp in Williamson County, seventy percent of those on relief were black. Stockton further reports that few of these black ex-miners have any hope of returning to the mines.
- ¹⁷⁵Goodwin, 217
- ¹⁷⁶Arnensen, “Specter of the Black Strikebreaker,” 334.
- ¹⁷⁷*Herrin News*. 25 April 1918. As quoted in Loewen, 164
- ¹⁷⁸Loewen, 8.
- ¹⁷⁹For example, Herbert G. Gutman has pointed out that although black strikebreakers have attracted most of the attention of historians, they in reality only represented a small fraction of the blacks who entered the coal mining labor force in more

normal fashion. This could reflect, perhaps, a persistent belief, or echo of the belief, that blacks were naturally strikebreakers in the historical tradition. See Herbert G. Gutman, "The Negro and the United Mine Workers of America," in Julius Jacobson, ed., *The Negro & the American Labor Movement*, (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1968), 51.

¹⁸⁰The work of Tim Pinnick, a citizen-scholar without any academic history training, represents such an initiative. After identifying an ancestor in Braidwood's mines, Pinnick has devoted himself to documenting the black coal miner experience through genealogy. He has lectured at local historical societies, published newsletters and produced a website in support of this grassroots effort. See especially: Tim Pinnick, "African-American Coal Miner Information Center," RootsWeb, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~blackcoalminers/>, Accessed 26 June 2008., and Tim Pinnick, "Historical Spotlight on African-American History and Genealogy," <http://blackcoalminerheritage.net/>, Accessed 26 June 2008, for examples of Pinnick's work.

¹⁸¹Joe William Trotter Jr., *Coal, Class, and Color: Blacks in Southern West Virginia, 1915-32*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990). Trotter's volume is an extensive survey of black mining communities in this region, including surveys of fraternal organizations, social conditions, and, of course, labor relations.