The Knights of Labor and the Salvation Army: Religion and Working-Class Culture in Ontario, 1882-1890

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IN 1883 THE SALVATION ARMY marched on Kingston. Intense excitment pervaded the town, with the Army hall packed night after night. As was the case in towns and cities across Ontario, most of the men and women who flocked to the Salvation Army's tumultuous all-night meetings and rowdy parades were working-class. In Kingston, working-class involvement is seen most vividly in reports that in the town's major factories, "noon day prayer meetings amongst the working men are established...and conducted by the men themselves".[1] By 1887 a very different working-class movement gripped the same workplaces. Workers at Kingston's Victoria Foundry, the Locomotive Works, and the cotton mill, who had organized Salvation Army prayer meetings four years earlier, now had joined the Knights of Labor (K of L). In May 1887, they were out on strike.[2]

Both the Knights of Labor, a major working-class organization, and the Salvation Army, which in this period was an exclusively revivalistic movement, drew mass support from Ontario's working class. It is no coincidence that both movements appeared in the 1880s, and saw their period of greatest strength in this decade. Industrialization first emerged in Ontario after mid-century, but was not well established until the 1870s and more particularly, the 1880s. In tiny villages and small towns across the province, as well as in larger centres, industrial wage work had become a way of life for many Ontarians.[3]

[1]*Thorold Post*, 23 March 1883 (letter from Kingston). Also see *The Daily British Whig* (Kingston) 12 March 1883.
[2]Gregory S. Kealey and Bryan D. Palmer, *Dreaming of What might be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900* (Toronto 1982), 347-8.
[3]Despite the increasing prominence of Hamilton and Toronto manufacturing remained relatively decentralized in this period. See Kealey and Palmer, 27-56.

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The existence of a class of people who sell their labour power to survive, a working class, does not necessarily mean that these people will identify themselves as a separate class. Historians have argued that when members of a class share distinct values, interests, and lifestyles — what some have termed a culture — they tend more readily to identify themselves with this class.[4] In *Dreaming of What Might Be*, the major study of the Knights of Labor in Ontario, authors Greg Kealey and Bryan Palmer have argued that the Knights, if only fleetingly, provided Ontario workers with a distinct "movement culture", which drew on working-class values and beliefs. One aspect of working-class belief that received minimal attention in their study was religion, which was central to the dominant culture of 19th century Ontario. While Kealey and Palmer acknowledged that religion was not irrelevant to the Knights, they downplayed its significance.[5] The mass popularity of the Salvation Army, which provided a distinct working-class religious alternative in the 1880s, strengthens arguments regarding the existence of working-class culture, but also forces us to recognize that religion was integral to the lives of many Ontario workers.

This paper examines the role of religion within the Knights of Labor and the Salvation Army, assessing its relationship to working-class values, beliefs, and culture. Canadian historians' failure to examine religion within the Knights of Labor and their lack of interest in the Salvation Army may be linked to a broader reluctance among both religious historians and working-class historians to explore the subject of religion and the working class.[6] The majority of Canadian religious historians have focused on either institutional histories of the development of

[4]In some cases the existence of a distinct class culture can help lay the basis for an oppositional class consciousness, in which the members of a class see themselves as sharing common class interests opposed to those of other classes. For an exploration of working class culture and consciousness see for example Richard Johnson, "Three Problematics: Elements of a Theory of Working-Class Culture," in John Clarke, *et al.*, eds., *Working Class Culture* (London 1979); E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York 1963); and Bryan D. Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montreal 1979).

[5]Kealey and Palmer recognize that religion was part of the residual culture out of which the Knights forged their "movement culture." They acknowledge that "religious motivation clearly served as a vital plank in the appeal of the Hamilton Knights" (145). Religion, however, receives only brief mention in their study.

[6]S.D. Clark's *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto 1948) still provides the best scholarly discussion of the Canadian Salvation Army within a social history context, despite Clark's overly functionalist approach. Stephen M. Ashley's MA thesis, "The Salvation Army in Toronto, 1882-1896," (Guelph 1969) also contributes some valuable insights, while R.G. Moyles, a Salvationist, provides a useful and fairly balanced history of the Army in *The Blood and Fire in Canada: A History of the Salvation Army in the Dominion, 1882-1976* (Toronto 1977).

Canadian churches, or histories of religious ideas.[7] The relationship between religion and labour has been studied only in terms of the social gospel movement, with historians focusing on the attitudes of middle-class social gospellers towards the working class, rather than on the working class itself.[8] English Canadian labour historians have also neglected the religious dimensions of male and female workers' lives, choosing instead to study workplace experience and union activism.[9] Those few historians who have examined working-class participation in non-workplace activities have focused on leisure rather than religion.[10] The reluc-

[7]See for example John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era* (Toronto 1972), John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness, A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Canada 1975), A.B. McKillop. *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal 1979), Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto 1985). Two recent books which try to extend the bounds of these approaches are John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto 1988) and William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal 1989).
[8]See for example Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto 1973) and William H. Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel," United Church Archives, *Bulletin*, 20 (1968).
[9]See for example Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Kingston and Montreal 1986), Ian McKay, *The Craft Transformed: An Essay on the Carpenters of Halifax, 1885-1985* (Halifax 1985), Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980* (Toronto 1987), Craig Heron, *Working in Steel: The Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto 1988) and Ruth Frager, "No Proper Deal: Women Workers and the Canadian Labour Movement, 1870-1940," in Linda Briskin and Lynda Yanz, eds., *Union Sisters: Women in the Labour Movement* (Toronto 1983). Studies of the household economy, which focus on the household as women's primary workplace could be included here. See for example Bettina Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows and Boarders: Non-Wage Forms of Survival among Montreal Families, 1861-1891," *Labour/Le Travail*, 14 (1984), 9-46, and Bradbury, "The Family Economy and Work in an Industrializing City: Montreal in the 1870s," Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers* (1979).
[10]See Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montreal 1979). Unlike Palmer, American historians who examine working class leisure do not completely ignore religion. However, it generally merits only a brief discussion. See for example Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge 1983); Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919* (Albany, NY 1984); and Steven J. Ross, *Workers on the Edge, Work, Leisure and Politics in Industrializing Cincinnati, 1788-1890* (New York 1985). Some very recent work both in Canada and the United States does examine religion as a significant element of working class life. See for example Mark Rosenfeld, "'She was a hard life': Work, Family, Community and Politics in the Railway Ward of Barrie, Ontario, 1900-1960," PhD thesis, York University, 1990; Doris Mary O'Dell, "The Class Character of Church Participation in Late Nineteenth-Century Belleville, Ontario," PhD thesis, Queen's University, 1990; and

tance of religious historians to examine workers' religious experience can be traced to a lack of interest in class-based issues, while the explanation for labour historians' lack of interest may lie in their thoroughly secular outlook. Labour historians may also have avoided this topic from a sense that any working-class religious involvement was imposed on workers as part of a middle-class strategy of social control, and could only sully the purity of a distinct working-class culture and retard the development of class consciousness.

This paper will argue that religion was important to many Ontario workers, but that religious involvement among workers cannot in itself be viewed as evidence that workers completely accepted the dominant cultural system, in which Christian belief and practice played such a major role. Many of the same Christian beliefs professed by middle-class Canadians did appear to have been important to the workers who joined the Knights of Labor and the Salvation Army. However, as we will see through this study of religion within the two movements, these beliefs could be used by workers to help them stake out an independent respected place for themselves within an increasingly unequal society, and could also fuel a working-class critique of this society.

In examining the Knights and the Army at the local level, this study will focus particularly (but not exclusively) on small-town Ontario, since despite the significant level of industrialization in these centres, we know very little about working-class life here.[11] Historians and contemporaries alike have pointed to an apparent working-class shift away from the churches within the large cities. We have few insights, however, into the nature of religious life in smaller centres, beyond the monolithic image of dour and devout, small-town Protestant Ontario.

Origins and Membership

THE SALVATION ARMY began in London, England in 1878, but emerged from an earlier organization known as the Christian Mission, founded in 1865 by William Booth, a former Methodist preacher. The dominant principle in Booth's life was said to be the need to convert the poorest groups in society, who were generally

Kenneth Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel: Christianity and Labor in Industrial Philadelphia, 1865-1915* (Philadelphia 1989).

[11]In *Dreaming*, Kealey and Palmer provide the best available overview of working class activism in small town Ontario. This study will focus particularly closely on the towns of Ingersoll, Thorold, Petrolia and Campbellford. (Ingersoll, Thorold and Campbellford are the focus of my forthcoming PhD thesis, "Gender and Class Dimensions of Religion and Leisure in Small Town Ontario, 1882-1896). For the Salvation Army section of this paper information concerning other towns has also been drawn from selected Ontario newspapers. A Salvation Army officer has gone through over thirty Canadian newspapers for the first few years of the Army's presence in each town and has copied out all references to the Army in the local papers. This was the source used in references to the mainstream press, other than within the towns mentioned above.

untouched by the churches.[12] While Booth's earliest efforts were based in traditions of Methodist revivalism, his work soon became distinctive through his willingness to use a variety of unconventional methods to reach the poor. A key method was the adoption of military organization and military trappings. Army structure was firmly hierarchical, with all members being expected to obey the orders of superior officers. Supreme power was vested in Booth, who as General commanded an Army which by the 1880s had spread around the world. The Army's military trappings included brass bands and uniforms, as well as a distinctive vocabulary in which prayer services were called "knee drills" and saying "Amen" was known as "firing a volley". Those who joined the Salvation Army after conversion were known as "soldiers"; preachers were called "officers" and congregations were "corps". In the 1880s the English Salvation Army was already involved in the social rescue work for which the Booth's legions were to become famous. It must be emphasized, however, that in this decade the Canadian Salvation Army was very different from the present-day "Sally Ann" in that it remained almost exclusively a revivalistic movement, and focused on saving souls through preaching rather than through social service.[13]

The K of L's origins are better known. This organization, which combined struggles to improve workers' conditions at the local level with a broader critique of industrial capitalist society, was founded in 1869 in Philadelphia by Uriah S. Stephens. Within the Knights, workers were organized into Local Assemblies (LAs) either by trade or as mixed assemblies. LA meetings incorporated ritual similar to that of the numerous 19th century fraternal orders, while assemblies also provided various educational and social activities for their members. LAs were led by locally elected Master Workman, while the overall leader of the Order was the Grand Master Workman, based in the United States. In the 1880s, the annual General Assembly of the Order regularly re-elected Terence V. Powderly to this position.

While the Knights organized a secret assembly in Hamilton in 1875, both movements arrived publicly in Canada in 1882. In this year the Knights organized a number of local assemblies, including the Hamilton painters Alliance LA 1852, and mixed assemblies like St. Catharines Fidelity LA 2056 and Ingersoll's Pioneer Assembly 2416.[14] Kealey and Palmer suggest that links with the nearby United States, where the Knights already were fairly strong, help to explain the formation of the earliest Ontario LAs.[15]

A similar pattern emerges in the case of the Salvation Army. In 1882, Army services were begun in both London and Toronto by recent English immigrants,

[12]Moyles, *Blood and Fire*, 5.
[13]The Salvation Army founded a rescue home in Toronto in 1886, but such work did not begin in a major way in Canada until 1890.
[14]Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 66-9.
[15]Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 67.

who had been converted in England. While these meetings were not officially sanctioned by Army Headquarters in England, General Booth soon sent American Army officers to Toronto to institute an official corps there and to commission those who had begun the meetings as full-time officers.[16]

It is difficult to compare the popular impact of the two movements, given their very different natures. Newspaper reports make it clear that when the Army first entered many Ontario towns, hundreds and sometimes thousands would rush to Army meetings.[17] Often the majority of the audience were curiosity seekers. But at least some of "those who came to scoff remained to pray," and the Army did make many converts. Some converts returned to the mainstream churches, but many became soldiers — the Army's equivalent of church members. The most conservative estimates of Salvation Army impact thus would be based on the number of Army soldiers. Measurement of Knights of Labor popularity have been based on membership tallies.

Membership in both organizations was extremely volatile. Although Salvation Army officers were instructed not to enroll converts as members until they were sure of the seriousness of an individual's conversion, the limited local evidence suggests that the majority of soldiers did not remain in the Army for more than three to four years, while many "backslid" much sooner, as was common in revival movements which focused on conversion.[18] K of L membership was at least as volatile, with many remaining in the Order only during the peak 1886-1887 period. Kealey and Palmer argue that in Ontario "over the course of their history the Knights organized a minimum of 21,800 members."[19] An opponent of the Army recognized that at its height in 1885-1886 the Army had enrolled 25,000 soldiers, mainly in Ontario, but by 1889, it was reduced to 9,000 soldiers across the country.[20] Certainly by the time of the 1891 census, just over 10,000 Ontarians are listed as Salvationists, and this, of course would include the children of adult soldiers.[21]

The basis for comparing the geographical strength of the Knights and the Army is again problematical. For an assembly of the Knights to exist in a particular centre,

[16] Moyles, *Blood and Fire*, 6-9.
[17] See *Daily British Whig* (Kingston), 26 March 1883; *London Advertiser*, 27 March 1883; *Newmarket Era*, 13 June 1884; *Northern Advance* (Barrie), 22 November 1883.
[18] For a discussion of the short term nature of conversion within highly revivalistic religious movements see Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 50-81. For evidence of the short term nature of many Salvation Army conversions, see the converts' and soldiers' rolls for the towns of Listowel, Petrolia and Chatham for the 1886-1900 period, Salvation Army Archives, Toronto.
[19] Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 65.
[20] A. Sumner, *The New Papacy: Behind the scenes in the Salvation Army by an ex-Staff Officer* (Toronto 1889), 7. Sumner, who denounced the Army in this pamphlet, would have insider knowledge of Army figures, as well as no reason to make the Army look good.
[21] Canada. Census of Canada 1891. Volume 1, Table IV. The Army stated that in 1890 over 60,000 people, the majority being non-members, attended Salvation Army services across Canada each Sunday. This figure may well be inflated, however. (Moyles, *Blood and Fire*, 11.)

it required the active support of at least a core of members. The Salvation Army could claim to have a corps in a particular town simply by sending two officers there. Nevertheless, there are ways of determining the relative strength of the Army in different centres. Despite the fact that the 1891 census was taken several years after the peak of Army popularity, an analysis of the proportion of Salvationists in local communities in 1891 can provide some insights, particularly when linked to other indices of Army support.[22] As in the case of the Knights, local newspapers occasionally provide evidence of the Army's numerical strength.[23] Since Army officers were recruited from among soldiers, analyzing the geographical origins of officers who joined up between 1882 and 1890 can provide further evidence of the relative enthusiasm the Army engendered in different locations.[24]

Both the Knights and the Army were successful in cities like Hamilton, Toronto, London, and Kingston. Although S.D. Clark, one of the few Canadian students of the Salvation Army, has characterized the movement primarily as a big city phenomenon, the Army, like the K of L, was also successful in many smaller centres.[25](See Appendix) The Salvation Army had corps in most of the towns and villages where Knights assemblies existed (57 out of 74). The Army appears to have enjoyed considerable popularity within at least 36 of these communities.[26](See Appendix) The Army also established corps in many towns and villages where the Knights had no foothold. While the Army did not thrive in all of these communities, at least 32 show evidence of local support. The proportion of the population in the industrial workforce tended to be as great in these communities as it was in those that welcomed both the Knights and the Army. On average, however, industrial establishments were smaller in towns which only supported the Army, suggesting that these communities were not at the forefront of industrialization.(See Appendix) Communities that welcomed the Army but not the Knights also tended to be less populous, with more than 40 per cent having fewer than 1500 inhabitants. Some small communities, like Bothwell and Dresden, reflect especially fervent support

[22]The 10,320 Ontarians listed as Salvationists in 1891, reflects at most a fifth to a quarter of Salvationist support at its height in the mid-1880s, given the fact that the census figures includes the children of Salvationists, while there appear to have been at least 20,000 adult Salvationists in Ontario in the mid-1880s. (Sumner, *New Papacy*, 7.)

[23]Army reports regarding the sales of the *War Cry*, the Army newspaper, sold in a particular location can provide further clues, but such evidence may suggest as much about the relative enthusiasm of the vendors as the buyers.

[24]It must be recognized that if an officer was recruited from a particular town she or he may not have lived there, but may instead have lived in the surrounding countryside.

[25]See Clark, *Church and Sect*, 420.

[26]While there are some regional differences between K of L towns where the Army was also popular and those where it was not there do not appear to be other significant differences. In K of L towns there does not appear to be any correlation between the proportion of population involved in the industrial workforce, or the average size of industrial workplace and Army popularity.

for the Salvation Army, with almost one per cent of their populations becoming officers. Small communities which did not contain a significant number of Army supporters were not financially viable, and many of these corps were disbanded during the 1890s.[27]

In certain Knights of Labor strongholds, the Salvation Army appears to have had little success. This was the case in the Niagara area (outside of St. Catharines) and in the communities surrounding Ottawa.[28] In other areas, however, where the Knights of Labor attracted a large proportion of the town's workforce, the Salvation Army also did very well. This was particularly true in the region immediately east of Toronto and in Western Ontario. In the small town of Ingersoll, the Salvation Army claimed to have converted almost 700 people in 1883, while hundreds more had attended its parades and services.[29] The Knights of Labor, which arrived in town a year earlier, also developed a significant presence over the next few years, sponsoring balls and lectures, and organizing a mass celebration on Dominion Day 1887. In the oil producing town of Petrolia crowds flocked to Salvation Army meetings in 1884; more than 200 became soldiers in the Army's first year, while only a year later 500 townspeople joined the local Knights of Labor assembly.[30] In other K of L towns — such as Woodstock, Seaforth, Chatham, Lindsay, and Belleville — the Army attracted large crowds, while in each town more than twenty soldiers were sufficiently committed to the Army to take up careers as full-time officers.[31] This compares quite favourably with the numbers of officers recruited in larger centres such as London (32), Hamilton (47), and Kingston (21).

At this point, the reader may wonder if there was any overlap between the K of L and Army memberships. This question is very difficult to answer directly, given the lack of local membership lists. Very few such lists exist for the Salvation Army, while none have been discovered for the Knights.[32] Yet less-direct evidence

[27]See Moyles, 270-7.

[28]In the Niagara area the Knights organized a number of small communities (Beamsville, Chippewa, International Bridge, and Queenston) which never had Army corps. Although the Army had some initial popularity in Thorold and Welland, it died out fairly rapidly in these communities. The unpopularity of the Army in the Ottawa region can be linked to the relatively large French Canadian Catholic population in the towns near the Quebec border, as well as to the fact that the Army did not establish corps in these communities until relatively late, by which point the novelty of the Army may have worn off for many.

[29]*The Sentinel Review* (Woodstock), 15 February 1884.

[30]*Petrolia Advertiser*, 28 June 1884 and Kealey and Palmer, 82.

[31]See for example, *The Belleville Daily Intelligencer*, 26 November 1883; *The Sentinel Review*, (Woodstock), 15 February 1884 and 4 July 1884; *The Canadian Post*, (Lindsay), 26 October 1883; *The London Advertiser*, 8 January 1883. During 1882-90, 20 officers were recruited from the Belleville corps, 22 from Chatham, and 23 each from Lindsay, Seaforth and Woodstock. (Source: "C" Roll, Salvation Army archives, Toronto).

[32]A very limited amount of data of this kind is available for the Western Ontario town of Petrolia, including lists of those who were Salvation Army soldiers in the late 1880s and the

does suggest that the two movements' support-bases were not wholly distinct. Workers at Kingston's three largest factories became actively involved in both organizations, organizing Salvation Army prayer-meetings and Knights of Labor strikes. There is also some evidence to suggest that ironworkers belonging to a Belleville local assembly attended Army meetings.[33] A closer look at the class-bases of these movements provides further clues about the probable extent of their overlap in membership.

Although some small merchants and employers joined the Knights of Labor, the Order was primarily a working-class organization. Skilled workers appear to have dominated the leadership of the movement even at the local level, and many LAs were organized on the basis of craft skills.[34] However, the K of L was the first major labor organization that attempted to organize all workers regardless of skill-level, and there were many unskilled workers within various mixed assemblies. Unlike earlier trade unions, the K of L was also open to women, who organized both within mixed assemblies and in separate women's assemblies. Kealey and Palmer have estimated that women were involved in at least ten per cent of Ontario locals.[35]

The Salvation Army was also primarily a working-class movement. Newspaper reports such as that of the *Toronto Mail* reported that Salvation Army soldiers "are chiefly working people, who give what little leisure they have to helping the cause..."[36] An examination of three surviving converts' rolls for the 1887-1900 period further reinforces this evidence. In all three corps women made up slightly more than half of all converts, and over half of all women for whom an occupation was listed were servants.(See Tables 1 and 2) In the small towns of Petrolia and Listowel, just over half of all male converts were labourers, while most of the rest worked in a variety of skilled or semi-skilled jobs.[37] Only in rural Feversham did the Army draw a significant number of farmer converts.(See Table 2)

Information on the occupations of the 1,228 officers who entered the Army in Ontario during the period 1882-90 provides further evidence of the class back-

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names of a small number of Knights of Labour leaders that were gleaned from the local newspaper. No overlap was discovered between these two lists. However, the K of L leadership appears to have been among the most skilled and well established workers within the Order. They may have been less likely to join the Army than the rank and file Knights.

[33] *Belleville Intelligencer*, 15 October 1883.

[34] Leon Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Urbana 1983) argues that the Knights' leaders were primarily skilled workers, (13).

[35] Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 323.

[36] *The Toronto Mail*, 17 July 1882. In a few towns both middle and working class people appear to have been attracted to the Army, see for example Kingston's *Daily British Whig*, 17 July 1883.

[37] Many of the labourers in Petrolia probably worked in the dominant oil industry of the town, and an addition 6 per cent of workers here are clearly identified with the industry as drillers or oil well workers.

TABLE 1
Sex of Salvation Army Converts in Selected Corps, 1887-1900*

Sex	Petrolia		Listowel		Feversham	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Men	236	46	129	47	65	44
Women	274	54	144	53	84	56
Total	510	100	273	100	149	100

Source: Corps Records, Salvation Army Archives, Toronto.
Note: Petrolia and Listowel both had populations of under 5,000 in this period, while Feversham was a very small rural community.
*These are the only corps for which converts' rolls have survived for this period.

ground of Army members, since officers were recruited from the membership and in the early years of the movement there appear to have been few barriers to soldiers becoming officers. As was the case with converts, over half (55 per cent) of all officers were female. These women, almost all of whom were single, were far more likely to be employed than the average single women.[38] Almost 40 per cent had been domestic servants prior to entering the Army, while most of the rest were employed in traditionally feminine working-class jobs.[39](See Table 3) More than 40 per cent of male officers had been skilled workers prior to entering the Army.

[38]In 1891 less than eleven per cent of Canada's female population engaged in paid employment. Most of those who were employed were unmarried. However, although the 1891 census does not provide a breakdown of female employment by marital status we can be relatively certain that less than half of the unmarried female population was employed in this period, since in 1921, when over fifteen per cent of the female population was gainfully employed, only forty-nine per cent of unmarried women between the ages of fifteen and thirty-four were employed. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Canada, 1921*. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Occupational Trends in Canada, 1891-1931* (Ottawa 1939).

[39]Many of the nurses or teachers who joined the Army may have come from working class backgrounds, although these jobs are generally considered middle class. Large numbers of women from working class backgrounds were becoming teachers in this period. See Marta Danylewycz and Alison Prentice, "Teachers, Gender and Bureaucratizing School Systems in Nineteenth Century Montreal and Toronto," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Spring 1984), 75-100. Nursing was only beginning to become a more professionalized middle class occupation in Canada in this period, and most nurses came from working class backgrounds. See Judi Coburn, "'I See and am Silent': A Short History of Nursing in Ontario," in *Women at Work, Ontario 1850-1930* (Toronto 1974), 127-64.

TABLE 2
Occupations of Salvation Army Converts in Selected Corps, 1887-1900*

Women						
Occupation	Petrolia		Listowel		Feversham	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
At Home	39	39	22	31	24	48
Dressmaker	4	4	1	1		
Servant	52	52	38	53	26	52
Other	5	5	11	15		
Total	100	100	72	100	50	100
Men						
Occupation	Petrolia		Listowel		Feversham	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Clerk	3	2	1	1		
Skilled Worker	24	18	14	16	1	2
Semi-Skilled	12	9	1	1		
Labourer**	83	60	51	59	23	41
Farmer	9	7	16	12	31	55
Other	6	4	4	5	1	2
Total	137	100	87	100	56	100

Source: Corps Records, Salvation Army Archives, Toronto.
*These are the only corps for which converts' rolls appear to have survived for this period. This table does not include those converts for whom occupation was not reported.
**Including farm labourers (only in Feversham was this a significant group).
Note: Does not include those for whom no occupation is listed.

A wide range of skilled trades, traditional and more representative of the emerging industrial age, are found among male officers.(See Table 4) Another one-quarter of male officers had been employed in other working class occupations, while the remaining third were primarily farmers (at twenty-three per cent) with a small number of businessmen and a more significant representation of clerks.(See Table

TABLE 3
Occupations of Ontario Salvation Army Officers
Upon Becoming Officers, By Sex 1882-1890*

Women	#	%
At Home	137	28
Clerks	10	2
Nurses	7	1
Teachers	16	3
Dressmakers/Tailoresses/Milliners**	98	20
Factory Workers	37	8
Servants	186	38
Other	2	-
Total	493	100

Men	#	%
At Home	2	-
Businessmen/Professionals	14	4
Clerks	31	8
Teachers	4	1
Farmers	91	23
Skilled Workers/Artisans***	164	41
Semi-Skilled Workers	22	6
Factory Workers	30	7
Labourers/Unskilled	39	10
Servants	6	2
Total	403	100

Source: Officers' Rolls, Salvation Army Archives, Toronto.
*Includes only those officers who joined up in Ontario, not those transferred from England or from elsewhere in Canada.
**Some of these women probably worked in factories, but this is impossible to determine.
***Some of these men may have been self-employed, or even small masters, while many probably worked in factories. The roll only provided occupational titles.

TABLE 4
Selected Occupations of Male Officers
Who Had Been Skilled Workers/Artisans*

Occupation	#	%
Baker	9	6
Blacksmith	11	7
Butcher	6	4
Carpenter	16	10
Harness maker	6	4
Moulder	5	3
Machinist/millwright	5	3
Painter	12	7
Printer	11	7
Railwayworker**	9	6
Shoemaker	6	4
Tailor	8	5
Tinsmith	7	4
Total	164***	

Source: Officers' Rolls, Salvation Army Archives, Toronto.
*Occupations listed are those held by 5 or more officers.
**Includes brakemen, engineers and not specified.
***Includes all male skilled workers, not just those listed above.

3) The class background of officers demonstrates clearly that the Army did not simply attract working-class followers, but also had a predominantly working-class leadership.[40]

[40]This was true in all Army ranks. While women seldom were found above the rank of Captain an examination of the twenty four Ontario male officers who attained a rank higher than Captain shows that two thirds (66 per cent) of these men were clearly working class, although predominantly skilled workers.

The occupational differences between converts and officers do suggest that officers may have come from a slightly higher strata within the working-class than converts. Surviving converts' rolls, however, may not be representative of Army membership across Ontario. The information gleaned from the officers' roll suggests that in larger and more industrialized towns the Army attracted more skilled workers than it did in Petrolia, Listowel, or Feversham. It is also true however that the Army was popular in many smaller, less-industrialized communities. In such communities the Army would have attracted many nonindustrial workers such as servants, labourers, and farm labourers.

The Salvation Army appears to have drawn in more of the unskilled and of the nonindustrial workforce than did the Knights of Labor. The Army also attracted many more women. The different composition of Salvation Army support meant that the Army was popular in many towns that remained untouched by the Knights. Even in towns that attracted both movements they would have drawn on somewhat different groups. For example, in many communities in which working-class husbands and fathers were active in the Knights, their wives and daughters may have found the Army more appealing.

While the Salvation Army and the Knights did attract somewhat different working-class populations, it is also true that both movements included skilled and unskilled workers, women and men. At the rank-and-file level, then, there may have been some overlap between the two movements. In the American context, Kenneth Fones-Wolf has noted that the strong Christian faith of the majority of American workers led many to see no contradiction between union membership, and even union activism, and involvement in fundamentalist Christianity.[41] It is reasonable to assume that this may also have been true in Canada.

The volatility of membership in the K of L and the Army means that even if few workers were simultaneously Knights and soldiers, many more may have been touched by both movements over the course of the 1880s. This is most likely truest in towns like Woodstock, Petrolia, and Gananoque, where the Army was strong and where Kealey and Palmer suggest that a large proportion of the workforce was involved in the Knights.[42] In these small communities, many Knights (or potential Knights) probably would have been attracted to the popular Salvation Army services. At such services some may have been converted, and made the decision to join the Army.

[41]Fones-Wolf argues that this may have been true at least of many rank and file unionists even in cases when fundamentalist preachers preached actively anti-union messages. See Fones-Wolf, 192.

[42]For a list of towns in which a high proportion of the workforce became involved in the Knights of Labor see Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 67.

Christianity and the Knights

THE EXTENT TO WHICH KNIGHTS OF LABOR were involved in the Salvation Army is likely to remain a fascinating but largely unanswerable question. An assessment of the role played by Christianity within the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, however, may make any possible overlap more explicable by demonstrating the importance of Christianity both to the Order, and to the workers who joined it. In *Dreaming of What Might Be*, Kealey and Palmer do note that religious zeal was part of the residual culture out of which the K of L fashioned their distinct "movement culture". However, this religious legacy merits very brief mention in their study of the Order. A closer look at this issue suggests that religion was more central both to the ideology of the Order and to the lives of individual Knights than historians have acknowledged.

Religious issues certainly were not absent from the K of L press. Newspapers were careful to avoid sectarian controversy, noting that such conflict only served to divide the working class.[43] However, the Hamilton-based *Palladium of Labor*, the Ontario K of L's principal newspaper regularly contained reports of various sermons, both supportive of and opposed to the labour movement, with appropriate editorial commentary. The churches were not irrelevant here — their attacks were responded to while their support was applauded. The *Palladium*'s "Local News" department periodically reported on the social and religious activities of various Hamilton churches, most commonly featuring the working-class Primitive Methodist church and the Salvation Army.

In Canadian and American labour papers alike, journalists frequently expressed their hostility to the current economic system in terms of Christian belief which they obviously assumed that their readers shared. The rhetoric identified here reinforces Herbert Gutman's argument in "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement" that while many Gilded Age labor leaders had little respect for the church, their profound belief in Christianity fuelled their battles for social justice.[44] For example, a poem in the *Journal of United Labor* proclaimed: "We'll fight in this great holy war till we die/ No longer in silence we'll whimper and sigh/ No longer we'll cringe at the proud tyrant's nod/ But defy him, and fight 'neath the banner of God...King Labor is ruler of earth of God's word..."[45] The *Palladium* is also full of the kind of religious rhetoric identified by Gutman. The editor was particularly fond of arguing that true Christianity was allied with the workers' cause. He frequently pointed out that "the doctrines of Jesus Christ, the carpenter — who would have been called a tramp and a Communist had he lived in these

[43] See for example, *Palladium of Labor*, 18 July 1885 and 4 December 1886.
[44] Herbert Gutman, "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement: The Christian Spirit in the Gilded Age," in *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (New York 1966), 79-117.
[45] *Journal of United Labor*, 25 May 1884.

days — if applied to the present conditions would solve the question satisfactorily."[46] Christ was also described as "the greatest social reformer that ever lived. He had nothing but words of bitter scorn and scathing indignation for the idle and luxurious classes who oppressed the poor..."[47]

In assessing similar rhetoric within the Canadian labourist tradition, Craig Heron concludes that "the crucial question remains whether working-class leaders got their politics from Christianity, or turned to a common cultural reservoir to express their politics."[48] This question could perhaps be put less starkly. The material deprivation which workers experienced and saw around them no doubt provided the primary basis for their opposition to the capitalist system. But, in the K of L's case at least, it seems that the religious imagery used did not merely reflect a routine acceptance of the dominant mode of discourse, but that it was based in fact, as Gutman suggests, on strongly-held Christian beliefs. In the American context, Kenneth Fones-Wolf has argued that Christianity was at the core of the Knights' cultural system and that "...a deep religious inspiration and a commitment to Christian beliefs pervaded the Order's distinctly working-class program."[49] The Knights' Christian beliefs probably did not kindle their anger against the capitalist system, but the disparity between the Christian message and 19th century capitalism would have fueled such anger.[50]

The significance of Christianity and of the churches to the Knights of Labor is also revealed through a brief look at K of L activities within certain small communities. Kealey and Palmer argue in their book that "there is evidence that in many communities the Knights of Labor usurped the traditional role of the church."[51] At the local level, no evidence has been found to substantiate the interpretation that the Knights, by acting as a kind of "secular church," came to replace the mainstream churches for small-town workers. The evidence cited by Kealey and Palmer points instead to the attendance of LA members at local

[46]*Palladium* (Toronto), 13 February 1886.

[47]*Palladium* (Hamilton), 27 October 1883. See also 22 May 1886, 20 March 1886, 14 March 1885, 29 December 1883, 8 September 1883.

[48]Craig Heron, "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class," *Labour/Le Travail*, 13 (Spring 1984), 65.

[49]Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel*, 79 and 84.

[50]The disparity between the Christian message and social inequality has certainly fueled oppositional consciousness in other contexts. See for example, E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York 1963), 431, 438; and Thomas F. O'Dea and Janet O'Dea Aviad, *The Sociology of Religion* (New Jersey 1983), 15.

[51]Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 311. In *Trade Union Gospel*, Fones-Wolf argues that the Knights took on the qualities of a millenarian sect. However, while he provides some fascinating arguments to buttress his assertion he makes no effort to prove that the Knights actually usurped the role of the church among workers, in that they left the churches for the Knights. They may however have provided a semi-religious parallel institution for many workers that did not necessarily lead them away from the churches.

ministers' special sermons on topics related to Christianity and the Knights of Labor.[52] The attendance by the Knights in a body at such sermons in towns like Ingersoll and Merritton parallels the annual attendance of fraternal orders like the Orangemen and the Oddfellows at their own special sermons.[53] On such occasions, the fraternal orders would march in a body to the church to hear a sermon that would interpret the activities of the particular order in Christian terms. This annual ritual of collective church attendance asserted these fraternal orders' position within the respectable culture of the town, which was most clearly symbolized by the institution of the church and the dominant ideology of Christianity.

The Knights' attendance at such sermons suggest that the Order was not usurping the role of the church in the local communities. The leaders of the Ingersoll Knights, who requested that the town's Presbyterian minister preach a sermon on a labour topic, probably saw that as with the fraternal associations, collective attendance at church would assert the Order's position within the respectable culture of the town.[54] Evidence for Ingersoll and Thorold (and from Kealey and Palmer's study) demonstrates that some K of L leaders also were officials in various fraternal associations, making the adoption of this ritual by the Order even more explicable. While there is still much more to learn about working-class church attendance, we do know that within some small towns, workers — particularly skilled workers — were often church members.[55] The forging of links with the churches thus may have also been viewed as a way of reassuring potential Knights that involvement with the Order would not conflict with their religious belief or involvement.

The Knights' march into the local church thus symbolizes their links to the dominant, respectable Christian culture. Like the Knights' dances, concerts, strawberry socials, and Dominion Day celebrations, which in their external form are patterned on standard components of local respectable culture, it may also mean something more. The speeches delivered at these social activities may reflect the Knights' alternative vision; what they also demonstrate are workers organizing for

[52]See for example, *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 3 June 1886, 27 May 1886. The *Stratford Beacon*, 16 April 1886, also cited by Kealey and Palmer records a unanimous resolution of thanks by the local Knights of Labor Assembly to Rev. Gordon-Smith for his sermon on the topic of the Knights of Labor. He was thanked for "his earnest and eloquent defence of our rights, also for his effort to instruct us in our duty both to our employers and as citizens of the great commonwealth of Ontario."

[53]See *Thorold Post*, 25 November 1887 regarding the Merritton Knights of Labor sermon. Also see *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 20 May 1886 regarding the Knights of Labor sermon there. Examples of fraternal orders' annual church sermon can be found in the *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 30 April 1885, 11 June 1885 and the *Thorold Post*, 14 December 1883.

[54]*Ingersoll Chronicle*, 3 June 1886.

[55]See O'Dell, "The Class Character of Church Participation," and Marks, "Gender and Class Dimensions of Religion and Leisure in Small Town Ontario, 1882-1896."

themselves, and in their own interests, events which in the past had been dominated by the local middle class.

Workers who were church members worshipped within churches dominated by the local elite. When they were officials within local fraternal orders, they shared such positions with local merchants and professionals. However, when they marched into church as part of the Knights of Labor contingent they were not simply members of another fraternal order. They were part of an organization of working-class townspeople who were asserting their class identity and their equal place within the dominant respectable culture. They did not want to reject Christianity, but neither did they wish to remain any longer in the galleries of the local churches.

Leon Fink has argued that the Order did not oppose many aspects of the dominant culture of respectability, but instead sought to assert working people's place within this culture, in the face of declining working-class living standards and increasing middle class pretensions.[56] What Fink and other historians have been less interested in exploring is the extent to which this assertion of respectable, "manly" equality and independence included the acceptance of an active role within the dominant religious institutions of the community.

In proclaiming themselves full and equal members of respectable Christian culture, the Knights could then go on to assert their rights on this culture's own terms, as they clearly did in the Ontario small towns of Petrolia and Thorold. In 1888 the federal government permitted the opening of the Welland Canal on Sundays for a few hours in the morning and the evening. Mountain Assembly No. 6798 of Thorold, unanimously passed a resolution condemning this action, declaring "that such order will conflict with both the social and religious liberty of many of our members who are the servants of the government and as such will be compelled to perform duties which their consciences cannot approve of..."[57] In Petrolia, it apparently was common for certain companies to operate their oil wells on Sundays. Soon after the Knights of Labor arrived in town they sent a letter to all offending companies requesting that they cease this practice. The grounds on which they made this demand are worth quoting. "The laws of both God and man demand the due observance of the Lord's day, and the moral sentiment of the entire community...It is believed that it is only necessary to appeal to the respect and reverence which, living as you do in an enlightened and Christian community, you must feel for God's law...in order to secure your unhesitating consent to this reasonable request of your fellow citizens".[58] No mention was made of the men affected by this request. It was only the editorial in the *Petrolia Advertiser* (not a particularly pro-labour paper) which, in supporting the Knights' letter, pointed out that "[the] most powerful reason why this should be done is that a large number of

[56]Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, 3-15.
[57]*Thorold Post*, 13 July 1888.
[58]*Petrolia Advertiser*, 24 September 1886.

men, greatly against their wishes, in violation of conscience and in opposition to their sense of moral right, are compelled either to violate the laws of both God and man and desecrate the Lord's day, or be discharged from their situation and thus deprived of the means of earning an honest livelihood."[59]

Why did the Knights press their demand against Sunday labour largely in religious terms? Was this simply a matter of tactics, a recognition that only an appeal to religious sentiment would be effective here? This would certainly be part of the answer. Phillips Thompson argued in the *Palladium* that "It is only that sacred character [of Sunday] which has secured to the working men the invaluable boon of a respite from toil in one day out of seven....Only the religious sanction was powerful enough to interpose this barrier between the insensate greed of the money power and the rights of the toilers..."[60] While tactical concerns no doubt played a role here, it is also important to recognize that at the local level most Knights probably accepted the dominant Christian values. But, in affirming that everyone had a right to the religious liberty and day of rest ordained "by God's law," they were using such values to affirm the dignity and worth of all, within the context of communities characterized by hierarchy and inequality.[61]

While ministers allied themselves with the Knights in battles over Sabbath observance, several of the sermons preached to K of L audiences, or more generally on the topic of "Capital and Labour," reinforce the popular impression that the church was not sympathetic to Knights' efforts to combat inequality. While the "large number of knights" present at the Pine Street Methodist church in the industrial village of Merritton to hear a sermon by a Rev. Mr. Snider "seemed very much pleased with the discourse",[62] their brother and sister Knights in neighboring Thorold had much less to be pleased about in the sermon by the Methodist minister Rev. Lanceley. Lanceley preached a strongly anti-labour sermon. "Let me warn you" he thundered "against the cry of 'our rights' it will spread like a fever...It is an inflammation, a burning, that is set on fire of hell." He said that capital and labour should make common cause together and warned against discontent and covetousness, telling his listeners that "God will reward the meek and trusting spirit with its own reward".[63] Not all sermons were so extreme but few provided wholehearted support. Although the Rev. T. Atkinson of Ingersoll cautiously praised the aims of the K of L, he also talked of the interdependence of all classes,

[59] *Petrolia Advertiser*, 24 September 1886.
[60] *Palladium*, 10 January 1885.
[61] For a discussion of battles over Sunday streetcars in Toronto in the 1890s in which the labour movement at first opposed Sunday cars and later supported them see Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company* (Toronto 1977). In *Trade Union Gospel*, Fones-Wolf demonstrates that Philadelphia workers sometimes used Sabbatarian arguments to protect workers from Sunday labour, but more often opposed Sabbatarianism as an interference in working class leisure.
[62] *Thorold Post*, 21 October 1887.
[63] *Thorold Post*, 21 October 1887, 28 October 1887.

and the need for capitalists not to oppress labourers and for labourers to obey their masters.[64]

Local Knights who subscribed to the *Palladium* would have pointed out to their sisters and brothers after the service that the minister preached in this way because he was under the influence of the local elite who paid his salary. One frequently saw in the labour press variations on the argument that "the paid teachers of Christianity dare not quote the Biblical denunciations of land grabbers, usurers and oppressers of the poor, and apply them personally to wealthy supporters of the church. If they did they would soon preach themselves out of their pulpit".[65]

The message of such preachers may have led some labour activists to reject not simply the church, but Christianity itself. The *Palladium* argued that "There is no cause which has contributed in greater measure to the spread of rationalistic views and the indifference to popular religionism which paves the way for full blown Secularism, than the manner in which modern so-called Christianity has become identified with wealth, position and power."[66] There clearly were free-thinkers within the Order. One of the arguments put forward by T.V. Powderly in asserting that Local Assemblies should not begin or end their meetings with prayer was that "we have members who believe that the dancing of a jig would be as appropriate as the use of prayer..."[67]

One must be careful, however, not to exaggerate the extent to which the Knights and labour reform generally were associated with secularism. In response to a letter asking Powderly to issue a circular stating that the word God in the Knights of Labor ritual [the Adelphon Kruptos] meant Good, Powderly responded that "the being whom God created with so little sense as to deny His existence is a fool. He may, if he chooses, have a spite against God for not furnishing him with a full stock of wit; but he should not ask others (who have) to take sides with him against their Maker."[68] Powderly may have been more conservative than many of his followers, but closer to home the *Palladium* also attacked freethought. When one member of the "Social Club" featured in the *Palladium* said that he was starting to move towards freethought, since freethinkers "are not always on the side of oppression and tyranny as religion is," Freeman, who spoke for the author, agreed

[64] *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 3 June 1886. The American churches may have been better than the Canadian ones in regard to their attitudes towards the Knights. Fones-Wolf suggests that in certain areas the churches appear to have supported the Knights. See Kenneth Fones-Wolf, "Religion and Trade Union Politics in the United States, 1880-1920," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, No. 34, Fall 1988, 43.

[65] *Palladium* (Toronto), 13 February 1886. Also see *Palladium*, 27 October 1883 and 8 September 1883.

[66] *Palladium*, 20 December 1884.

[67] *Journal of United Labor*, June 1883.

[68] General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, *Proceedings*, 1880.

that many modern ministers were self-serving hypocrites but argued that he was "confounding two different things. True religion is never on the side of tyranny".[69]

Labor activists also denied that freethought was particularly common among workers. In assessing the reasons why increasing numbers of working people were staying away from the churches, the *Palladium* recognized that "'infidelity'...may have something to do with it," but argued it could be much more readily linked to the fact that "many of our places of worship have become simply Sunday Clubs or opera halls, intended to attract rich congregations, where the poor are neither invited nor welcomed..."[70] A letter to the *Palladium* similarly argued that workers were not becoming freethinkers and that "the muscle and sinew of Hamilton still pins its hope of emancipation to the doctrine preached from the cross", while pointing out that if workers no longer attended church it was because the church has allied itself with capital against labour, and that ministers who dared alienate their wealthy parishoners by preaching the Bible's true pro-labour message would bring workers back into the churches.[71]

A letter from "Well Wisher" states that he had once attended church regularly but "for want of that brotherly society and sympathy fell away" and found the "human love and desire to help my fellow man" which was missing from the churches through his involvement in the Knights of Labor. Kealey and Palmer use this letter to buttress their argument that for many workers the Knights displaced the church.[72] While this is a fascinating argument and probably was true for some workers, we must be careful here. Even "Well Wisher," who had found brotherly love in the Knights, still sought something more and "would fain cry out with thousands of my fellow workmen, O for a warm kindly Christ like church, a common plane where we could all meet on an equality and be brothers in Christ in this world, even as we hope to be in the next..."[73]

At the local level we have seen that the Knights did not appear to replace the churches, but used them to legitimate the Order's position within the local community. The *Palladium* also provides evidence that many Knights remained reluctant to abandon the churches. In response to a minister who preached against the labour movement that "this democratic spirit scoffs at religion," the *Palladium* responded that "this is merely an assertion without any argument whatever to bear it out. Our churches are as well attended — with perhaps one exception (the Centenary) as they were before we had any organization among our work peo-

[69] *Palladium*, 27 October 1883.

[70] *Palladium*, 8 September 1883.

[71] *Palladium*, 20 March 1886. In *Trade Union Gospel* Fones-Wolf argues that workers remained committed to Christianity even if they did not attend church, and suggested that working class religion was characterized by "a lack of concern for such traditional gauges of religiosity as church attendance" and demonstrated "a greater reliance on direct Scriptural inspiration", xviii.

[72] Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming*, 311-2.

[73] *Palladium*, 28 November 1885.

ple..."[74] In describing female Knights at the Dundas Cotton Mills, the reporter noted that these women "go to make up the well dressed congregation in some of the churches..."[75]

Assertions that the Knights did indeed go to church may have been intended partly to provide a respectable counter-image to the common portrayal of labour activists as Godless, bomb-throwing anarchists. However, such assertions also reflected a reality that labour historians have been reluctant to recognize. Workers were not isolated from the Christian-dominated world in which they lived. They sought an independent, respected place within it, and were as critical of churches where ministers preached the gospel of Mammon and relegated working people to the galleries as they were of the capitalist system which shaped such churches. This does not mean, however, that they abandoned Christianity, or the churches. On special occasions K of L assemblies marched in a body to local churches, asserting their equal participation within them, while many individual Knights appear to have attended church regularly. Many, and perhaps most of those who no longer attended church, still saw themselves as Christians. They shared with their middle class contemporaries a belief in many basic Christian tenets, while also holding to distinct working-class values and beliefs, both religious and otherwise. In this context we have seen how Christian beliefs provided an important source, although certainly not the only source, of the Knights' challenge to the broader social and economic inequalities of Canadian society.

The Salvation Army and the Working Class

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR was not the only working-class movement of the 1880s that used Christianity in its critique of the inequalities of contemporary society. As Engels pointed out in 1882:

> ...the Salvation Army...revives the propaganda of early Christianity, appeals to the poor as the elect, fights capitalism in a religious way, and thus fosters an element of early Christian class antagonism, which one day may become troublesome to the well-to-do people who now find the ready money for it.[76]

While Engels was describing the British Salvation Army, his insight is also relevant to the Salvation Army in Ontario, which in a variety of ways both promoted and fed into a certain form of class identity among Ontario Salvationists.

Like the Knights of Labor, the Salvation Army provided a very trenchant, class-based critique of the mainstream churches. The mere existence of the Salva-

[74] *Palladium*, 17 May 1884.
[75] *Palladium*, 15 May 1886.
[76] F. Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* (London 1892), xxxi, cited in Victor Bailey, "'In Darkest England and the Way Out': The Salvation Army, Social Reform and the Labour Movement, 1885-1910," in *International Review of Social History*, 29, (1984), Part 2, 133.

tion Army points to a belief that the churches had failed in their responsibility to minister to all classes. But many Salvationists and their supporters were much more explicit in opposing the churches. In the first few years after the Army's appearance in Ontario, local newspapers were filled with letters both attacking and defending the Army. The defence of the Army frequently included an attack on the churches as middle-class institutions which ignored Christ's true teachings. The letter from "Spectator" of Belleville is representative in this regard:

> ...Of all the denominations whose worship I have attended that which suffers least by comparison with the precepts and example of Christ is the Salvation Army...As to the empty pews in the churches, they were so before the Army came to this city, and why? Because Sunday after Sunday they serve out the dry bones of sectarianism for the living truths of Christianity...I see the haughty "Miss Shoddy" sweep up the aisle and recoil in poorly concealed discomfort lest her costly robes should touch the threadbare garments of some poor sinner who had the temerity to enter therein. I hear the doctrine of Dives preached in the name of Christ...I see the Almighty blasphemed by the erection in His name of costly edifices, wherein are exclusive and costly people who worship in a costly style, while orphans cry for bread...[77]

"A Salvation Army Soldier" from Woodstock defended the Army which "reaches classes of people who have precious souls but whose burden of sin the clergy will not touch with even their little finger!", and attacked the "pew-renting and so-called respectable congregations of town and country, whose very respectablility has crushed many a bruised reed..."[78] James Smith, a London Salvationist wrote of "the Salvation Army, who without money and without price are nobly bearing their crosses, fighting the Lord's battles; while the sluggish churches and overpaid ministry thereof have been asleep and drunken in their opulence".[79] Complaints from Ingersoll churchgoers make it clear that Captain Annie O'Leary preached a similar message, frequently attacking local ministers for being more interested in collecting their salaries than in saving the souls of the poor.[80]

The Salvation Army's class-based critique of the churches does echo in some ways that of the Knights, particularly in attacking the churches' emphasis on money and appearance to the exclusion of both the true word of God and the honest workingman. But, for the Salvation Army the true sin here lies in the churches' neglect of the souls of the poor, while for the Knights it lay in the churches' refusal to speak out for workers' social and economic interests. An article by Commissioner Railton in the Army's *War Cry* makes explicit this focus on spiritual rather than temporal concerns, while at the same time drawing certain parallels between the two. Railton argued that as society is moving away from accepting "the sight

[77] *Belleville Daily Intelligencer*, 5 December 1883.
[78] *Woodstock Sentinel Review*, 6 June 1884.
[79] *London Advertiser*, 14 July 1883.
[80] *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 1 November 1883 and 10 January 1884.

of poor creatures toiling from early morning till late at night...for a few cents, neither will religious society...tolerate the cold blooded existence of a Christian congregation, assembling twice or thrice a week for the worship of the Lord, and making no effort to make known His Salvation to thousands who are without it all around them."[81]

While the Ontario Salvation Army of the 1880s was largely unconcerned about the temporal welfare of the poor, its emphasis on spiritual equality and its willingness to appeal to the working class on their own ground attracted many Ontario workingmen and women. The Army's evangelical emphasis on the salvation of souls, with its assumption of spiritual equality, may have tapped into or strengthened an emerging class consciousness. The Army explicitly discouraged involvement in political movements, since its followers were to focus on the state of their own souls and the salvation of others. But, as historians such as E.P. Thompson and Bernard Semmel have argued in the case of other highly evangelical religious movements, the Army's message of spiritual equality could perhaps have spilled over into the secular realm, fueling working-class anger at a society characterized by profound inequities.[82] At a minimum this message would have reinforced a sense of self-worth among the Army's working-class adherents, who were increasingly subordinated and devalued within the larger society.

In its focus on the equal value of all souls and in its acceptance of emotionally charged methods of bringing "the perishing" to salvation, the Army was very similar to earlier revival movements. By the 1880s, however, "emotionalism" had become anathema even among Ontario Methodists, who once had preached a "fire and brimstone" message across Upper Canada. By this period, middle-class Ontarians equated true religion with sedate church services, where they listened to rational learned sermons. Religion was respectable; indeed, was an integral element of respectability.[83] For this reason alone the intensely emotional appeal of Army services was interpreted as a class-based challenge to respectable middle-class churchgoing by middle class and working class alike.

While part of the Salvation Army's appeal to working-class people was its "blood and fire" revivalism, the Army's emotionalism was not all that distinguished it from respectable middle-class religion. Unlike earlier revivals, the Army drew explicitly on working-class popular culture as a means of attracting converts. The Army's methods included open-air meetings and parades, with colourful banners, the music of tambourines, triangles, and drums, the singing of hymns to the tunes of popular songs, and a variety of events, many of which were intended to provide a religious alternative to popular amusements, including Hallelujah Sprees, Popular

[81] *War Cry*, 27 August 1887.
[82] Semmel and Thompson make this argument for early Methodism. Thompson, *The Making*, 399, and Bernard Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution* (New York 1973), 193.
[83] See for example Neil Semple, "The Impact of Urbanization on the Methodist Church of Canada, 1854-1884," *Papers*, Canadian Society of Church History, 1976.

Matinees, Hallelujah Pic-nics, Free and Easy Meetings, and Grand Tea Fights. A service in Kingston was advertised as "Superior to any show on earth" in an effort to compete with the visiting circus.[84] Some officers, like "Happy Bill" Cooper, who stood on his head and did cartwheels while preaching, clearly delivered on such advertising.

The Army's success attests to the efficacy of such methods. In pointing up the appeal of popular culture, it also suggests the distance of many Ontario workers from the more respectable culture to which the Knights' leadership sought to lay claim. In its own way, however, the Army's popularity does demonstrate a distinct class identity, a rejection of middle-class domination, and an assertion of working-class dignity and independence.

The periodic "Trades Meetings" in which all soldiers marched in their workday clothes, gives us a visual demonstration of the way in which the Salvation Army provided a space for workers to assert their distinct identity, as do the frequent advertisements that officers such as "Billy the Tinker," the "Happy Shoemaker," "Wright the Printer," and the "Hallelujah Blacksmith" would be featured at various Army events.[85] The Army's flouting of middle-class standards of respectability which marginalized the language of working-class Ontarians is seen in the comments of Captain Hall of London East:

> We are accused of being illiterate and not using the Queen's English properly. Who cares for grammar. The Devil has his grammar, so has the Salvation Army. We have just been singing that good old hymn "Better and Better Every Day" let us change it, brothers and sisters, and sing "Gooder and Gooder every day" and it was sung...[86]

The equal value of workers' language in the sight of God was also asserted by "Hallelujah Jack" of Lindsay. "It is true I have not got the best of grammar, but I have got the love of God in my heart".[87] The primacy of salvation and the resultant irrelevance of mere earthly standards and social divisions was affirmed by "Shouting Annie" who proclaimed "there are no social distinctions in Heaven."[88]

The Salvation Army's appeal as a distinct working-class space is affirmed by the prevalence of domestic servants among it adherents, both as soldiers and as officers. Servants were among the lowest on the social hierarchy, and evidence suggests that they were among the least likely to be members of the mainstream churches.[89] Rather than sitting in church where she would be treated with disdain and watched closely by her mistress, the Salvation Army offered the domestic

[84]*Daily British Whig*, (Kingston), 14 July 1883.
[85]See for example *War Cry*, 25 June 1887, *Daily British Whig* (Kingston), 14 July 1883.
[86]*The Dumfries Reformer* (Galt) 24 April 1884.
[87]*Canadian Post*, (Lindsay), 14 March 1884.
[88]*The London Advertiser*, 16 November 1882.
[89]Marks, "Class and Gender Dimensions of Religion and Leisure."

servant freedom from such control, and a space where she would not be looked down upon, but could proclaim her equality in the context of her own distinct culture and language. The Army also provided such women with a unique opportunity to play an active leadership role, strengthening their own sense of value and self-respect in a society which devalued them.[90] Such an opportunity clearly appealed to many other workers, both women and men, skilled and unskilled.

Victor Bailey, an historian of the British Salvation Army, has noted the primarily working-class nature of Army membership, and has argued that involvement in such a distinctively working-class organization reflects the emergence of class consciousness.[91] Roland Robertson, who has also studied the Army in the British context has suggested that for many working-class Salvationists "allegiance to the Salvation Army offered an opportunity of maintaining religiosity within the Protestant tradition but in opposition to the middle class identified denominations".[92] The evidence suggests that a similar dynamic existed within the Ontario Army. Army membership may not have implied an active opposition to the middle class dominated churches by all soldiers, but it would certainly reflect an alienation from class-based institutions in which workers were both subordinated and marginalized. The Salvation Army provided Ontario workers with a religious alternative which spoke to them in terms of their own cultural values, and provided a separate religious space in which they could feel comfortable and in control. The popularity of the Army points to the existence of some form of distinct culture and class identity among Ontario workers, while the Army's activities would themselves reinforce such consciousness.

It is important to remember that the Salvation Army's success points not only to working-class consciousness, but also to working-class religiosity. The Army's message was delivered in working-class cultural forms, but remained the message of evangelical Protestantism. This message was clearly a familiar one to those workers who were swept up in the Salvation Army. Some Salvation soldiers had formerly been church members, and had either drifted away from the churches or found the Army's "blood and fire" methods more appealing than sedate church services. Many other Army soldiers and officers never had been church members, but had had a Christian, very often a Methodist upbringing.[93] Even those who had never even attended Sunday School lived within a society in which Christianity,

[90]Thompson makes a similar argument regarding the role of Methodism in *The Making*, 44. Also see E.J. Hobsbawn, *Primitive Rebels* (London 1959), 132, and Robert Colls, "Primitive Methodists in the northern coalfields," *Disciplines of Faith: Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy*, Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper and Raphael Samuel, eds., (London 1987), 326.
[91]Bailey, "In Darkest England."
[92]Roland Robertson, "The Salvation Army: The Persistance of Sectarianism," in Bryan Wilson, ed., *Patterns of Sectarianism* (London 1967), 94.
[93]For biographies of officers that give some sense of their religious background see for example *War Cry*, 4 December 1886, 19 February 1887, 19 March 1887, 18 June 1887.

(in particular Protestantism) was integral to the dominant culture. Anyone who had attended the public schools even briefly had been exposed to basic Christian teachings.[94] Like the workers identified by Gutman, and the *Palladium* many may have felt alienated from the churches while remaining committed to Christianity. The instant popularity of the Salvation Army certainly suggests that the basic message of evangelical Christianity was a familiar and welcome one to most workers, when presented within a culture and language with which they could identify.

The Army's message had a particular appeal to working-class women, as the gender distributions of converts and officers demonstrate. The relative over-representation of women within the Army is similar to that found within the mainstream denominations, suggesting at first glance a shared, cross-class feminine religiosity.[95] The behaviour expected of women in the Salvation Army was quite different, however, from the more passive, ladylike piety expected of women within the mainstream churches. Like male soldiers, female soldiers ("Hallelujah Lasses") were expected to stand up in crowded halls, testify to their faith in Jesus, and describe the sinfulness and misery of their past lives. They also marched through the streets, beating drums or tambourines to attract attention to the cause. The Army also provided many such women with the opportunity to defy more concrete, gender-based constraints. Many female soldiers challenged both the authority of husbands and fathers and their relegation to the narrow confines of the domestic sphere.[96] "Drum-Major Annie" of Petrolia proclaimed the importance of her efforts to save the souls even of unappreciative and undeserving men, defending such efforts as much more significant than "wash[ing] the crude oil out of the shirt of some dirty beast."[97]

Female soldiers who became officers posed an even greater challenge to dominant feminine roles by usurping the traditional male role of religious leader. Many such officers became Captains, and thus were in charge of local corps that could include up to several hundred soldiers and adherents. They were expected to follow the directives issued by Headquarters in Toronto, and were subject to transfer at any time. However, their work required considerable initiative and effort, not just in preaching to crowds every night of the week and three times on

[94]Susan E. Houston and Alison Prentice, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto 1988), 240, 248.
[95]The percentage of women in mainstream English Canadian denominations was consistently above fifty per cent, but differs in extent of female over-representation by denomination. See Marks, "Gender and Class Dimensions of Religion and Leisure" and Rosemary Gagan, presentation to Gender and Religion group, Toronto, March 1990.
[96]See Lynne Marks, "Working Class Femininity and the Salvation Army: 'Hallelujah Lasses' in English Canada, 1882-1892," in Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, 2nd edition (Toronto 1991).
[97]*Petrolia Advertiser*, 8 August 1884.

Sunday, but also in leading parades, visiting converts, managing the corps' finances, and planning innovative methods of drawing crowds.

As previously demonstrated, prior to becoming officers the majority of female Salvationists worked outside the home, labouring for long hours in factories, or as servants or seamstresses. Like the women who joined Knights of Labor assemblies during the same period, the image of the fragile, passive Victorian lady in the home thus may have had little relevance to the reality of female officers' lives, making them more willing to flout dominant gender roles.

Why did so many more women defy such roles through involvement in the Army than in the Knights? One reason is that while the Knights did welcome married women who worked in the home, their main female recruits were single wage earners. While this was also true of Salvation Army officers, a significant minority of female converts and soldiers appear to have been married.[98] As a result the Army had a larger pool of women to draw on.

However there is some evidence to suggest that the constraints of the dominant feminine ideology did prevent many women from joining the Knights. Certainly Leonora Barry, Organizer of Women's Work for the Knights, saw this as an issue, and cited "natural pride, timidity and the restrictions of social custom" as a barrier to women's organization.[99] Some women who did join the Knights were able to overcome such concerns, like Katie McVicar, who organized the first woman's assembly in Canada. A female coworker in denying working women's ability to organize suggests that McVicar may have been quite unusual. Her friend commented that

> "Organization...was all very well, but how were girls to accomplish it; were they to advertise mass meetings, mount platforms and make speeches? If so, the Canadian girls, at least, would never organize.[100]

The fact that upon McVicar's death, the assembly petitioned Powderly to appoint a man to chair their meetings, points to the reality of such sentiments.[101]

The Knights' own ambivalence about women's sphere may not have helped here. As Karen Dubinsky has demonstrated, while welcoming women and championing suffrage, equal pay, and temperance reform, the Order often called for the

[98]The proportion of married female converts varies from 56 per cent of all female converts in Petrolia to 33 per cent of female converts in Listowel.

[99]Cited in Karen Dubinsky, "'The Modern Chivalry': Women and the Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1891," MA thesis, Carleton University 1985, 141. Barry argues that the selfishness and injustice of men also played a major role in explaining the inequality of women in the workplace.

[100]In a letter to the *Palladium of Labor*, Katie McVicar quotes a co-worker as making this comment. Quoted in Dubinsky, "'The Modern Chivalry'", 32.

[101]Kealey and Palmer, 144.

family wage, and argued that in an ideal world women would not work outside the home.[102] The Knights' assertions of manly respectability, which explain their commitment to reforms such as temperance also led them to buy into certain aspects of the dominant gender ideology. A Knights of Labor parade in St. Catharines, in which the "lady Knights" rode in carriages, while their brothers marched beside them, provides a visual reminder of such values.[103]

This image can be contrasted with Salvation Army parades, in which, as one observer commented: "there's a brave lot of lasses in the ranks, and they walk just as bravely as the men, and just take as big a step".[104] What is one to assume here? That middle-class conceptions of femininity were less relevant to the working-class women in the Salvation Army than to those in the Knights? There may be some truth to this argument, given the Army's greater willingness to reject the trappings of respectability. However, there is something else going on here. Unlike women in the Knights of Labor, Salvation Army women were not marching in parades and making speeches to improve their own lives and their own working conditions. As the Salvation Army paper the *War Cry* continually reminded them, by joining the Army they had abandoned all self-interest and dedicated their entire lives to Christ. For some women the public behaviour required of them may have been justified as part of a most appropriately feminine Christian submission to God's will.[105] However, the evident reluctance of female officers to enter social service work once it was introduced into the Canadian Army in the late 1880s shows that women preferred active public roles as preachers to more private, self-denying, and suitably feminine ones as "angels of mercy".[106] For many women, feminine self-denial provided more a justification than a motivation for their willingness to "mount platforms and make speeches."

Women's participation in the Army hints at the existence of a distinct working-class conception of femininity, which more readily acknowledged women's strength, assertiveness, and involvement in the public sphere. The willingness of many working-class women to become "Hallelujah Lasses," however, may also demonstrate the continued relevance of aspects of the dominant feminine ideal to at least some working-class women. The Army probably was more popular with working-class women than the Knights since as a religious movement, it was a more familiar forum for feminine energies than was a trade union movement. For some, too, it may have been considered a more suitable forum.

[102]Dubinsky, "Modern Chivalry."
[103]*Thorold Post*, 19 August 1887.
[104]*The London Advertiser*, 18 April 1884.
[105]This was clearly the official Salvation Army position, as illustrated by a story in the *War Cry* of an officer's wife whose refusal to preach and testify publicly is presented as evidence of disobedience to God's will and a refusal to give herself completely to God. *War Cry*, 1 December 1888.
[106]See Marks, "Hallelujah Lasses", 194.

While some female Salvationists may have viewed their involvement in the Army as demonstrating appropriate feminine piety, many middle-class observers felt otherwise. For critics like Rev. A. Wilson of Kingston "female preaching and fantastic dressing, the outrageous talk and singing of doggerel hymns" combined to render the Army completely unacceptable.[107] The Army's class-based critique of the churches was more than fully reciprocated by ministers and other middle-class observers across Ontario. These men clearly saw the respectable trappings of the mainstream churches as being integral to Christianity as they defined it. The Army was frequently accused of treating Christianity with vulgarity, levity and frivolity, and Army activities were disparagingly compared to working class entertainments.[108] A common, and telling comparison identified the Army as being worse than "a negro minstrel show."[109] The adoption of the cultural forms of the marginal and the devalued, whether by class or race, placed the Army beyond the pale of true Christianity, which in the dominant discourse of the period was inextricably linked with respectable middle-class culture.

Hostility to the Army was also fueled by fears of disorder and loss of middle-class control.[110] Common complaints about the Army included the lack of order at their meetings, and in particular their habit of marching through the streets with drums and tambourines. For example, in Ingersoll a letter to the editor complained of the "infernal drum beating and parades" that forced "ladies" off the sidewalk into the gutter, while the *Newmarket Era* attacked the "abominable nuisance of singing and howling...after orderly people have retired to rest" and the "drum and symball (sic) playing and singing, on the streets on Sunday".[111] Middle-class citizens frequently attempted to regain control over public space by petitioning town councils to pass by-laws prohibiting the Army from marching and beating their drums. In some cases Salvationists were arrested for refusing to comply with such laws.[112]

[107]*Daily British Whig*, (Kingston), 31 August 1883.

[108]Comments regarding the Army's levity and vulgarity can be seen for example in the *Daily British Whig*, (Kingston) 30 April 1883; *London Advertiser*, 7 April 1884; *Sarnia Observer*, 16 May 1884.

[109]*St. Thomas Times*, 17 August 1883; *Toronto World*, 5 September 1884.

[110]For a discussion of middle class efforts to control working class behaviour in this period see for example Graeme Decarie, "Something Old, Something New...Aspects of Prohibitionism in Ontario in the 1890s," in D. Swainson, ed., *Oliver Mowat's Ontario* (Toronto 1972), Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Revenge* and Susan E. Houston, "The 'Waifs and Strays' of a Late Victorian City: Juvenile Delinquents in Toronto," in Joy Parr, ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History*, (Toronto 1982).

[111]*Ingersoll Chronicle*, 1 November 1883, *Newmarket Era*, 13 June 1884, also see *The London Advertiser*, 7 April 1884.

[112]For a petition to pass such a by-law see *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 27 March 1884 and 10 April 1884, also see *The London Advertiser*, 19 and 20 June 1884.

Outraged middle-class churchgoers and town councils were not the only Ontarians to oppose the Salvation Army. In most towns, the Army also faced considerable hostility from local young men, who appear to have been predominately working-class. This opposition took a variety of forms, from throwing rocks and rotten eggs, to putting cayenne pepper on a stove during Army meetings, to assaulting officers, to scoffing and heckling during meetings.[113] A major confrontation between the Army and these men occurred in Ingersoll in December 1883.

During the parade of the Salvation Army on Monday evening an "indescribable" meeting took place between this and another body headed by a brass band composed of members of our town band and others. When the Salvationist started from the market square the other body, composed principally of working men to the number of several hundreds, also started from an opposite point, the band playing vigorously...[when] opposite the Salvationists...both bodies commenced to play with renewed vigour and to emit the most hideous yells...[114]

While some of this behaviour was probably just considered "all in good fun" by the perpetrators, some of the attacks do appear to reflect real hostility to the Army. Catholic hostility to the Army's active Protestant revivalism may have been behind these activities, as they certainly were in Quebec. There is no evidence of this, however, in Ontario. It is more likely that such attacks reflect a hostility toward the Army for its efforts to transform the lifestyle of working-class men.[115] Local young men may have been particularly hostile to Army claims that through conversion they were able to transform the most hardened drinker's life to one of piety and sobriety. In this regard it is interesting to note that the behaviour of local "roughs" towards the Army parallels in certain ways the near-riots that were touched off by efforts to enforce the Scott Act in the same period.[116] Opposition to the Army also may have been grounded in a popular anti-clericalism (and perhaps anti-religiosity) among certain young working-class men that did not differentiate the Salvation

[113]See for example *British Whig* (Kingston), 31 January 1883 and 3 October 1883, *Barrie Northern Advance*, 30 August 1883, *Renfrew Mercury*, 15 April 1887, *Woodstock Sentinel Review*, 14 December 1883, *Huron Signal* (Goderich), 13 February 1885 and *Thorold Post*, 14 March 1884.

[114]*Ingersoll Chronicle*, 13 December 1883.

[115]Victor Bailey argues that this was the primary motivation for working class opposition to the Salvation Army in England. See Bailey, "Salvation Army Riots, the 'Skeleton Army' and Legal Authority in the Provincial Town," A.P. Donajgrodzki, *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London 1977), 241.

[116]For opposition to the Scott Act see *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 14 January 1886, 25 February 1886 and 10 March 1887. In the English context opposition to the Army was at least partially funded by tavern keepers, who perceived the Army as a threat to their business. See Bailey, "Salvation Army Riots," 239.

Army from the churches because of its working-class composition, but for this reason saw it as more vulnerable to attack.

While many local roughs remained hostile to the Army, others were at least temporarily converted at Army meetings. Such conversions gradually transformed middle-class attitudes toward the movement. The Salvation Army was increasingly praised for its ability to bring Christianity to those who would never enter the mainstream churches.[117] Middle-class observers were no doubt genuinely pleased by the Army's ability to save the souls of "the perishing masses". However, for these middle-class supporters, "getting religion" meant considerably more than accepting Jesus Christ. The Army was praised for reducing working-class drunkeness and crime, for increasing the industriousness of workingmen, and for providing an alternative to working-class movements that sought collective salvation on earth rather than individual salvation in heaven.[118] Such middle-class support was not misplaced. The Salvation Army did in many ways bring its followers more firmly within the dominant value system. Salvationists were expected to eschew drinking, smoking, dancing, and any interest in "worldly" issues. An organization which, while denying that it provided strikebreakers, went on to say "if [we have] anything to say in reference to the strike and the strikers it would be get converted, strike against sin, and use the cash as God directs you after you have earned it," would certainly appeal to middle-class Ontarians.[119] However, the Salvation Army cannot simply be dismissed as a manifestation of working-class false consciousness and middle-class social control. The Salvation Army was a working-class organization — while it did attract a minority of farmers and middle class converts, the vast majority of both officers and soldiers were working-class. It spoke to workers in terms of their own language and culture, and asserted the equal value of their souls to those that were ministered to in costly middle-class churches. The Army tapped into and reinforced a sense among working-class Ontarians of their own value and dignity within a society characterized by increasing inequality. The Army also provided the kind of space sought by Well Wisher in the *Palladium of Labor* where "we could all meet on an equality and be brothers in Christ in this world, even as we hope to be in the next."

[117] *Daily British Whig* (Kingston), 7 May 1883; *London Advertiser*, 3 March 1883; *Whitby Chronicle*, 4 April 1884.
[118] For comments regarding the reduction in drunkenness see *London Advertiser*, 17 July 1883, *Belleville Daily Intelligencer*, 4 December 1883, *Hamilton Spectator*, 25 January 1884. For statistics pointing to a reduction in crime see *London Advertiser*, 30 November 1882, *Northern Advance* (Barrie), 25 October 1883, *Hamilton Spectator*, 5 May 1884. For the testimony of businessmen regarding increased industrious see *London Advertiser*, 17 July 1883, *Petrolia Advertiser*, 28 June 1884, *Toronto World*, 17 December 1883. For a discussion of how the Army was preferable to revolutionary movement see *Toronto Week*, 10 January 1884.
[119] *War Cry*, 4 July 1885.

Conclusion

NEITHER THE KNIGHTS nor the Army retained the promise of the 1880s. The Knights declined rapidly in the late 1880s as a result of poor economic conditions, external attack, and internal weakness. While the Salvation Army remains active today, it is a very different movement from the one described in these pages. By the early 1890s, the Ontario Salvation Army had been transformed into a primarily social-rescue organization along the lines of the British Salvation Army. With this change, one finds growing class divisions within the Army itself, with increasingly respectable officers ministering to the "submerged tenth." The loss of evangelical zeal which accompanied the shift to rescue-work precipitated a major schism within the Army, led by Brigadier P.W. Philpott. Philpott opposed the Army's new emphasis on social work. Most tellingly, he also attacked the appearance of class divisions within the Army. He pointed to the inconsistency of the fact that senior officers travelled first-class while local field officers often lived on less than a dollar a week, although "we have always preached so much self-sacrifice and professed to the world to have all things in common."[120]

The transformation of the Army and the decline of the Knights does not negate, however, their importance to Ontario workers of the 1880s. Thousands of Ontario workers were influenced by these movements. While each movement did have greater appeal to different strata within the working class, the popularity of both the Knights and the Army demonstrate the importance of class identity and religious belief within the Ontario working class.

Skilled working men, who had bargaining power in the workplace and often a tradition of organized resistance, more commonly turned to the Knights. Here the Christian beliefs held by many workers were used to challenge the increasingly-hierachical social order they saw around them, both within the mainstream churches and in the larger social and economic sphere. The Knights demanded the consistent application of Christian values to all Ontarians, which, by their interpretation of Christianity, would lead towards the millennium on earth.

Ontario's more powerless unskilled workers, male and female, were more likely to be attracted to the individual heavenly salvation offered by the Salvation Army. The otherworldly emphasis of the Army negated the importance of a secular world where their lot was hard, their position lowly, and the prospects of material improvement slight. In flocking to the Army, workers demonstrated the importance of Christianity to their lives. At the same time, by turning to the Salvation Army, these workers were not demonstrating simply that religion was "the opium of the masses," and that piety undermined or precluded class consciousness. In joining the Army, Ontario workers were rejecting the hierarchical mainstream churches, choosing instead a religious movement which attacked respectable middle-class

[120]P.W. Philpott and A.W. Roffe, *New Light, Containing A Full Account of the Recent Salvation Army Troubles in Canada* (Toronto 1892), 17.

Christianity, and preached the equality of all souls. The popularity of the Salvation Army, a religious movement which provided workers with their own space and spoke to them in their own language, points to the existence of distinct working class beliefs and cultural forms among the unskilled male and female workers who made up the bulk of Salvationists.

While different strata and genders within the Ontario working class tended to find that either the Knights or the Army meshed more readily with their own values and experiences, it is also true that many Ontario skilled workers became Salvationists, and that the Knights boasted a considerable following among the unskilled. During the 1880s, some of these people may have been drawn to both movements. In small towns across Ontario as the hope of collective salvation faded with the local defeat or dissolution of the Knights, some workers may have turned to the Salvation Army. More commonly, since the Salvation Army more often preceded the Knights within Ontario communities, the Army may have contributed to the development of a sense of class identity among local workers, and when the fires of revivalism died out, certain of these workers may have turned to the social Christianity of the Knights.

While we cannot know how many workers were touched by both movements, this examination of the Salvation Army and the Knights of Labor clearly demonstrates the importance of religion to working-class life in late 19th century Ontario. The religion of these workers was not totally distinct from that of their middle-class neighbours, of course, for workers did not live in a completely separate cultural world. At the same time, working-class piety did not guarantee shared values and class harmony. As Kenneth Fones-Wolf has argued, religion "was truly a contested terrain".[121] Certainly, in 1880s' Ontario, as in many other times and places, religion did not act simply to buttress the social order, but also to challenge it.

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[121]Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel*, xvii.

APPENDIX

Local Support for the Knights of Labor and the Salvation Army

Communities with at least one Local Assembly of the Knights of Labor which also exhibited support for the Salvation Army

Community Population	Date SA est.	Date KOL est.*	% of Pop. in Industrial Wkfce 1891	Av # Workers/ Industrial Estab.
5,000 or greater				
Barrie**	1883	1882	9.9	4.0
Belleville	1883	1883	11.0	5.6
Chatham	1882	1886	11.3	5.8
Galt	1884	1886	22.5	10.5
Guelph	1884	1882	17.9	11.1
Hamilton	1882	1882	19.6	8.5
Kingston	1883	1887	13.9	6.7
Lindsay	1883	1886	10.2	6.1
London	1882	1884	18.9	7.5
Stratford	1884	1885	15.7	10.8
St. Catharines	1884	1882	14.3	12.1
St. Thomas	1883	1885	15.3	5.3
Toronto	1882	1882	14.5	10.9
Woodstock	1884	1884	18.5	15.2
Median			14.9	7.1
3,000-4,999				
Brampton**	1884	1882	15.3	5.6
Dundas	1884	1886	14.0	8.1
Gananoque	1885	1886	22.0	11.2
Ingersoll	1883	1882	16.0	6.5
Niagara Falls	1887	1887	7.3	6.8
Oshawa	1884	1882	22.7	9.8

Paris	1885	1886	21.1	14.5
Pembroke	1886	1889	13.5	6.1
Petrolia	1884	1885	14.5	6.0
Median			15.3	6.8
1,500-2,999				
Essex Centre	1885	1886	11.9	6.0
Clinton	1884	1885	14.7	5.5
Gravenhurst	1885	1887	30.8	15.8
Listowell	1885	1886	9.4	6.4
Napanee	1884	1886	11.8	4.8
Port Perry	1885	1886	12.5	3.9
Seaforth	1884	1886	16.4	6.0
Simcoe**	1884	1883	11.9	3.6
Tillsonburg	1884	1885	12.5	6.4
Whitby	1884	1883	12.8	3.9
Median			12.5	5.8
Less than 1,500				
Huntsville	1886	1887	***	
Hespeler	1886	1886		
Wyoming	1884	1886		

Communities with at least one Knights of Labor Local Assembly, where support for the Salvation Army appears to have been weak or non-existent.

5,000 or Greater				
Berlin	****	1886	24.6	19.4
Brantford	1884	1883	22.3	11.4
Brockville	1885	1882	13.2	8.6
Cornwall	1888	1886	25.7	16.3
Ottawa	1885	1883	15.1	12.1
Owen Sound	1884	1886	13.9	6.9
Peterborough	1885	1886	19.3	8.7
Port Hope	1884	1883	12.2	4.3

Sarnia	1884	1883	10.4	5.9
Windsor	1886	1884	6.3	5.1
Median			14.5	8.7
3,000-4,999				
Carleton Place	****	1885	20.4	10.3
Cobourg	1884	1883	13.3	7.8
Collingwood	1884	1883	6.6	4.2
Perth	1885	1883	12.3	5.5
Smiths Falls	****	1886	16.2	6.9
Median			13.3	6.9
1,500-2,999				
Amherstburg	1886	1885	2.8	2.9
Aylmer	****	1887	17.5	5.1
Georgetown	****	1882	15.8	4.3
Merritton	****	1886	35.0	39.6
Midland	1885	1886	9.7	5.8
Point Edward	****	1885	7.1	7.9
Prescott	1885	1888	11.4	5.0
Preston**	1884	1883	28.9	10.7
Thorold	1884	1886	13.7	9.4
Welland	1884	1886	10.6	6.0
Median			12.6	5.9
Less than 1,500				
Ayr	1885	1886	***	
Beamsville	****	1886		
Chippewa	****	1887		
Hagersville**	****	1882		
International Bridge	****	1885		
Marthaville	****	1886		
New Hamburg	****	1886		
Norway	****	1887		
Oil Springs	****	1886		

Port Dalhousie	1885	1883		
Port Colborne	1885	1884		
Queenston	****	1886		
York	****	1886		

Communities which exhibited support for the Salvation Army which did not have a Knights of Labor Local Assembly.

3,000-4,999				
Bowmanville	1884		14.0	5.8
Goderich	1885		7.5	4.9
Orillia	1884		10.1	6.6
Strathroy	1884		18.4	4.6
Trenton	1884		24.9	17.5
Walkerton	1885		19.2	6.6
Median			16.7	5.4
1,500-2,999				
Aurora	1884		14.8	4.0
Blenheim	1885		12.2	3.7
Campbellford	1885		17.0	4.1
Dresden	1883		12.9	3.5
Exeter	1884		12.4	3.9
Forest	1884		5.1	2.3
Morrisburg	1888		8.7	3.1
Newmarket	1883		11.7	6.1
Oakville	1885		14.0	5.5
Palmerston	1884		9.0	2.5
Ridgetown	1884		11.0	5.4
Wiarton	1884		11.6	4.8
Median			12.0	4.0
Less than 1,500				
Bothwell	1883		***	
Bracebridge	1884			

Brussels	1884
Drayton	1885
Fenelon Falls	1885
Omemee	1885
Picton	1884
Stayner	1884
Stirling	1884
Stouffville	1884
Sutton	1886
Thedford	1885
Tilbury Centre	1886
Watford	1884

Sources. Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be*; Moyles, *The Blood and Fire in Canada*; Canada. Census 1891, vol. 1 Tables III and IV and vol. 4 Table VIII; and Officers' Roll, Salvation Army Archives Toronto.
*Date first KOL Local Assembly was established in each community.
**Only telegraphers KOL Local Assembly.
***No data.
****No corps established prior to 1900, although the Army may occasionally have held services in these communities.

Notes
The definition of industrial establishment used in the 1891 Census includes workplaces with one or more worker.
This list does not include those communities which did not have Knights of Labor Local Assemblies and in which Salvation Army corps were established but support for the Army appears to have been weak. The Salvation Army was assumed to have support in a community either if this was reported in contemporary newspaper sources (particularly for larger communities), or if at least .2% of the local 1891 population became Salvation Army officers, or if at least 2% of the local population claimed affiliation with the Army in the 1891 census. By 1891 Army membership had declined to between a quarter and a fifth of what it had been in the mid 1880s, so communities with at least 2% of the population claiming to be Salvationists in 1891 would have had a considerably larger Salvationist presence earlier in the decade. Unfortunately, this measure of Salvationist support completely misses the many members of other churches who attended Salvationist meetings. This measure may also underestimate Salvationist support in certain communities in which earlier enthusiasm for the Army may have completely died out by 1891.

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