# A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN - BORN IN HURON, SANILAC, AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES OF MICHIGAN WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO CANADIANS: 1850-1880

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARLES FRANK KOVACIK

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has been accepted towards fulfillment
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Ph.D. degree in Geography

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ABSTRACT

A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN
IN HURON, SANILAC, AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES OF MICHIGAN
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO CANADIANS: 1850-1880

By

Charles Frank Kovacik

From the earliest date of white settlement to the present, Canadian-born persons accounted for significant proportions of Michigan's total foreign-born population. For each census decade since 1850, excepting only 1860, Canada has contributed the greatest number of foreign-born persons. However, most research concerning foreign-born settlement in Michigan has been limited to the Dutch, Germans, Finns, Swedes, and Norwegians. Little effort has been made at investigating the Canadian-born.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to analyze the demographic characteristics, interrelationships, and significance of the Canadian-born and other significant foreign-born groups and their impact in the settlement of Huron, Sanilac, and St. Clair counties of eastern Michigan from 1850 to 1880. Demographic attributes such as nativity, age, and sex are examined with respect to distribution, interrelationships, change, and significance of change on both a spatial and temporal basis. Economic and political activities of the Canadian and other major foreign-born groups such as occupation, voting behavior, and participation in local government are also considered.

The principle source of data utilized in this dissertation is the manuscript census. The individual handscript enumeration sheets are the primary census documents. Only these records provide data concerning foreign-born persons which can be organized at the township level.

The chronicle of settlement in the study area closely parallels that of the entire Lower Peninsula. French Canadians were the first white men to inhabit both areas. Michigan's first mills devoted to sawing pine lumber were established in St. Clair County by French Canadians. In both areas, Canadians were the most numerous foreign-born group. Between 1860 and 1880 more than one of every four inhabitants of the tri-county region was born in Canada.

Foreigners actually outnumbered natives in Sanilac County from 1850 to 1870. The same was true in Huron County between 1860 and 1870. Although St. Clair County maintained the largest number of foreigners, the foreign-born did not comprise as significant a proportion of the population as those in Sanilac and Huron counties. Canadians equalled from 55 to 65 per cent of all foreign-born residents. Germans, Irish, English, Scots, and Poles comprised the other significant foreign-born groups.

Port Huron Township reported the greatest densities for all foreign-born groups, excepting the Poles. Canadians accounted for unusually large proportions of the population in areas where population densities were low. The Germans and Poles exhibited a tendency to settle in rural clusters. The Irish, English, and Scots maintained a more dispersed distribution.

The age-sex composition of the Canadian population displayed characteristics of both the native and foreign-born. While males outnumbered females, the Canadian population exhibited less of an aging trend than the other foreign-born. Among all foreigners, only the Canadians contributed appreciably to the youngest age groups.

While most of the Canadians were farmers, many found employment in the city of Port Huron. Compared to all other employed foreigners, Canadians were predominately employed in the secondary industries. The leading

occupations reported were carpenter and saw mill worker.

Politically, little difference could be discerned between Canadian voting behavior and that of the native population. Townships which included large Canadian populations usually reported Republican majorities. Some townships which included significant German, Irish, and Polish populations favored the Democratic party.

It is hoped that this dissertation contributes toward gaining an understanding of the tri-county region and illustrates the research potential of the manuscript census. No foreign nation has contributed as many of her sons and daughters to the development of the study area, or Michigan, as has Canada.

# A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN IN HURON, SANILAC, AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES OF MICHIGAN WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO CANADIANS: 1850-1880

By

Charles Frank Kovacik

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1970

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It is a pleasure to recognize the assistance that has been afforded me in the conceptualization and preparation of this dissertation. Many individuals gave freely of their time and talents, and it is here that I wish to humbly express my gratitude.

Special recognition is due my supervisory committee: Dr. Daniel Jacobson, Chairman; Dr. Clarence L. Vinge; Dr. Lawrence M. Sommers; and Dr. Jay R. Harman for their cooperation and assistance. I cannot express too much my appreciation of Dr. Daniel Jacobson who so generously provided time, assistance, and encouragement.

I wish to express my appreciation to the memory of Paul C. Morrison whose suggestions were invaluable during the conceptual stage of this work. I also wish to thank Dr. Alvin C. Gluek since it was in his Canadian history courses where the idea for this study was conceived.

I am deeply grateful for the assistance rendered by the competent staff of the Michigan State Library. Special thanks are due Mrs. Jo Anne Jager, Michigan Section, who often gained me admittance to an overcrowded microfilm reading room.

Cyrus Young, graduate student at Michigan State University, deserves special mention for his invaluable aid in producing the computer maps. My colleagues in the Department of Geography at the University of South Carolina have been generous in their help and encouragement. The cartographic assistance of Dr. Donald O. Bushman and Dr. Paul E. Lovingood, Jr. has been much appreciated. Mrs. Dorothy Brabham typed the final manuscript

and to her I am deeply grateful.

A large debt of gratitude must be expressed to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kovacik, for extending to me the luxury of graduate school and their ever-present encouragement. Finally, I acknowledge my indebtedness to my wife, Susan Thorpe Kovacik, for her help in tabulating some of the data, typing of rough drafts, and constructive criticism. Most of all, I wish to thank her for her tolerance, patience, and understanding. To her this dissertation is dedicated.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Far too often geographers and historians overlook the role of Canada and its peoples in studies concerning settlement in North America. Although there is great interest in colonial settlement, American[1] scholars in particular, show little enthusiasm toward interrelating colonial settlement in Canada and the United States. Research is oriented to New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the southern colonies. In carefully documented studies scholars, following the advancing frontier, emphasize the South Atlantic and Gulf states, Tennessee and Kentucky, and the Ohio River Valley.

Another column of the advancing North American frontier, which is not of great interest, concerns settlement within the Great Lakes region of Canada and the United States. In general works concerning frontier settlement, Michigan is often avoided.[2] The interaction of Canadian and American peoples in the settlement of the Great Lakes region is particularly ignored.[3] It would appear that Canada and its peoples had little connection

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[1]The term American usually refers to all inhabitants of both North and South America. In this paper, the term is restricted to inhabitants of the United States. The term, Canadian, will refer to inhabitants of Canada.

[2]Willis F. Dunbar, "Frontiersmanship in Michigan," Michigan History, L (1960), p. 99.

[3]The only substantial work concerned with the interaction of Canadian and American peoples in the settling of the continent is Marcus Lee Hansen and John Bartlett Brebner, The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940).

with the settlement of Michigan,[4] and that the chronicle of settlement ceases as one takes leave of the Ohio River Valley and approaches Michigan and the Canadian-American border.

Of the studies concerning the Great Lakes region of the United States, foreign-born groups such as the Dutch, Germans, Finns, Swedes, and Norwegians receive considerable attention.[5] Scholars also indicate interest in religious groups such as the Quakers and Mennonites. Perhaps research concerning these groups is encouraged by their uniqueness, but actual settlement of North America is not usually considered a mosaic of unique nationality and religious groups. Possibly it is the "non-unique" nature of Canadians that discourages geographers from investigating the role of

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[4]Historical geographers have noted the early French Canadian influence at Detroit and the influx of settlers from the Eastern States and Ohio; see Almon Ernest Parkins, The Historical Geography of Detroit (Lansing, Mich.: Michigan Historical Commission, 1918). However, two of the most distinguished historical geographers of the United States make no mention of the thousands of Canadians who made their new homes in Michigan or other Great Lakes States; see Ralph H. Brown, Historical Geography of the United States (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1948) and Harlan H. Barrows, Lectures on the Historical Geography of the United States as Given in 1933, ed. by William A. Koelsch, Department of Geography Research Paper No. 77 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[5]Of the numerous studies dealing with foreign-born settlement in the Great Lakes region, special mention should be made of those studies concerning foreign-born settlement in Michigan such as Erdman D. Benyon, "The Hungarians of Michigan," Michigan History, XXI (1937), pp. 89-102; Martin L. D'Ooge, "The Dutch Pioneers of Michigan," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, XXXVIII (1912), pp. 204-212; James Fisher, "Michigan's Cornish People," Michigan History, XXIX (1945), pp. 377-385; Richard C. Ford, "The French-Canadians in Michigan," Michigan History, XXVII (1943), pp. 239-257; Hildegard Binder Johnson, "The Location of German Immigrants in the Middle West," Annals, Association of American Geographers, XLI (1951), pp. 1-41; Mark O. Kistler, "The German Language Press in Michigan - A Survey and Bibliography," Michigan History, XLIV (1960), pp. 303-323; Carlton C. Qualey, "Pioneer Scandinavian Settlement in Michigan," Michigan History, XXIV (1940), pp. 435-450; Lois Rankin, "Detroit Nationality Groups," Michigan History, XXIII (1939), pp. 129-206; John Russell, The Germanic Influence in the Making of Michigan (Detroit: Herald Press, 1927), Andrew Ten Brook, "Our German Immigrations," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, XXVI (1894-1895), pp. 241-255; John Wargelin, "The Finns in Michigan," Michigan History, XXIV (1940), pp. 179-203; and Carl Wittke, "Ora et Labora: A German Methodist Utopia," Ohio Historical Quarterly, LXVII (1958), pp. 129-140.

Canada's people in settling the region.

## Statement of Problem

From the earliest date of white man's occupance to the present, Canadian-born persons accounted for significant proportions of Michigan's total foreign-born population. Canada has contributed the largest number of persons of foreign-nativity for each census decade since 1850, excepting only 1860. However, studies concerning immigrant settlement in Michigan fail to relate the Canadian contributions to the settlement and development of the state. It is the purpose of this dissertation to analyze the demographic characteristics, interrelationships, and significance of the Canadian-born and other significant foreign-born groups and their impact in the settlement of Huron, Sanilac, and St. Clair counties of eastern Michigan from 1850 to 1880 (see Figure 1).

In more specific terms, nativity or country of origin of all foreign-born persons residing in the study area from 1850 to 1880 will be determined. Demographic attributes such as nativity, age, and sex will be analyzed with respect to distribution, interrelationships, change, and the significance of change on both a spatial and temporal basis. Economic and political activities of the Canadian and other major foreign-born groups such as occupation, voting behavior, and participation in local government will also be analyzed.

## Collection of Data

In order to make such an analysis, the number and distribution of Canadian-born and other foreign-born persons who helped settle the study area was determined. For a meaningful and precise analysis, data were obtained on township level. Any spatial analysis on the basis of townships reflects reality more precisely and is more lucid in illustrating patterns

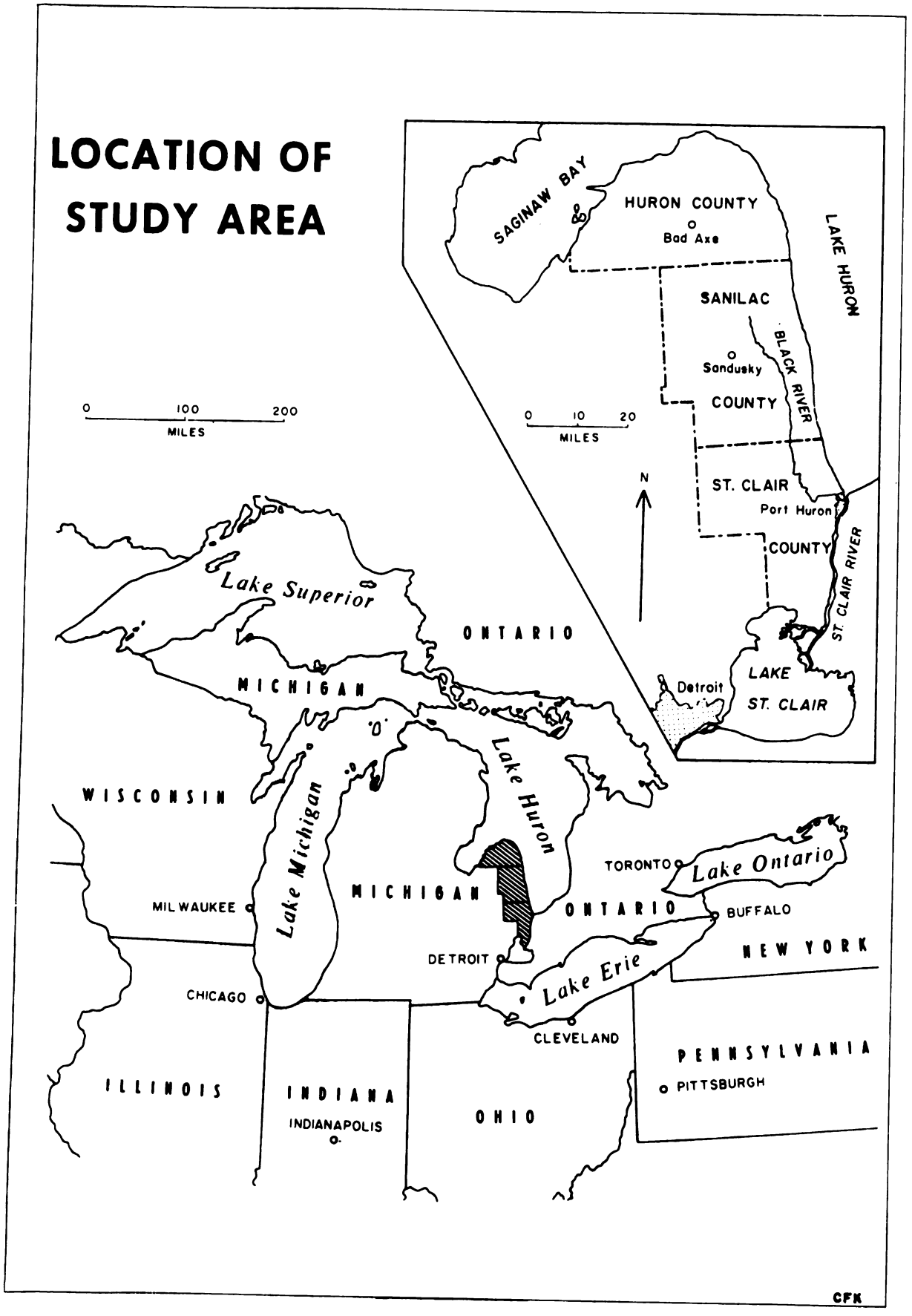
LOCATION OF
STUDY AREA
SAGINAW BAY
HURON COUNTY
Bad Axe
LAKE HURON
SANILAC
BLACK RIVER
Sandusky
COUNTY
0 10 20
MILES
N
ST. CLAIR
Port Huron
COUNTY
ST. CLAIR RIVER
LAKE
ST. CLAIR
Detroit
0 100 200
MILES
Lake Superior
ONTARIO
MICHIGAN
WISCONSIN
Lake Michigan
Lake Huron
MICHIGAN
ONTARIO
TORONTO
Lake Ontario
BUFFALO
NEW YORK
MILWAUKEE
DETROIT
Lake Erie
CHICAGO
CLEVELAND
PENNSYLVANIA
PITTSBURGH
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS
OHIO
CFK

Figure 1.

and relationships than an analysis at the county level.

The United States Census first reported country of origin data in 1850. In both 1850 and 1860, summaries included country of origin only by state. Nativity was first summarized by county in 1870; the practice was continued to 1950.[6] Unfortunately, there are no summaries by township. Data by township had to be gleaned from individual hand script enumeration sheets.

The manuscript enumeration sheet is the primary census document. It contains, in the hand script of the enumerator for the particular district, all data the Bureau of Census requests for the specific decade. The amount of detail varies with each census period. This source, and only the manuscript census records, provides data concerning foreign-born persons which can be organized on a township basis. Microfilmed copies of the manuscript enumeration sheets are available from the National Archives.[7]

The gathering of country of origin data at the township level is a slow and tedious task. Five months (summer and fall of 1968) were spent at the Michigan State Library microfilm reading facilities gathering data for this dissertation. Several thousand enumeration sheets were examined, and tallies of each Canadian-born and the country of origin of all other foreign-born persons in the study area were recorded plus age, sex, and occupational status. All data concerning foreign-born persons utilized in this paper for the decades 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 were collected from

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[6]Country of origin was not reported by county in the 1960 census. Country of origin of the foreign stock and mother tongue of the foreign-born population were reported by selected counties in 1960.

[7]Microfilm copies of the original Federal population census schedules for 1800 to 1890 may be purchased from the National Archives. Most of the 1890 schedules were destroyed or badly damaged by fire; none are available for Michigan. For a complete list of prices and availability see National Archives, Federal Population Censuses, 1790-1890: A Price List of Microfilm Copies of the Schedules, National Archives Publication No. 60-3 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1969).

the manuscript census records unless otherwise footnoted.

In gathering data utilizing a tally method, some error is certain to be made. A comparison of tallied township totals and reported county totals does show some inconsistencies. The error in per cent between the totals is so slight that it was recommended to the writer to utilize his own totals. Conversations with Dr. J. Allan Beegle, demographer at Michigan State University, encouraged the writer to use the tallied data with no reservations. When the data are presented, however, differences will be footnoted.

## Methodological Considerations

Geography attempts to comprehend spatial reality. Geography, especially cultural and historical geography, has maintained a long tradition of attempting to ascertain the population origins of particular regions. One of the major conceptual notions of both cultural and historical geography is that the nature of a particular cultural landscape is in large part determined by the character of its population. Knowledge of a region's population origins certainly adds to the understanding of its spatial reality. It is hoped that this study, in determining the origins, interrelationships, and significance of the Canadian-born and other foreign-born population groups significantly adds to our understanding of the Thumb region. It is also hoped that this study will serve as an aid to the comprehension of the spatial reality of other sections of Michigan which were settled by large numbers of Canadians.

The dissertation clearly falls into that systematic division of the geographical discipline called historical geography. Historical geography is concerned with the spatial realities of the past and geographical change through time. If spatial reality could be understood by examining purely contemporaneous phenomena, a geography concerned with analyzing temporal

elements of spatial phenomena would be incidental. Clearly, contemporaneous analyses answer questions concerning the what and where qualities of spatial phenomena. If the questions of when, why, and how need to be answered, there is a need for investigation of temporal factors. Only by examination of the temporal dimension can geographers answer the when, why and how of spatial reality.

Perhaps the major goals of all scientific endeavor are the ability to explain certain phenomena, and to predict. All explanation and prediction is based upon the present comprehension of reality. Prediction implies a future condition, either repetition of a previous condition, status quo, or change. Geographers in attempting to understand either reality or change must utilize temporal as well as spatial qualities of phenomena. The temporal dimension is fundamental to the comprehension of change. Historical geography can provide insights into the nature of both reality and change.

Change is a significant factor in geography--either past, present, or future. Change should not be examined for its own sake; attempts should be made at determining the significance of change. Historical geography adds to the comprehension of spatial reality by explaining the what and where of past and present spatial realities through the analysis of the when, where, and how, and significance of change factors.[8]

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[8]For a further explanation of the nature and substance of historical geography see J.O.M. Broek, "The Relations Between History and Geography," Pacific Historical Review, X (1941), pp. 321-325; Andrew H. Clark, "Historical Geography," in P.E. James and C.F. Jones (eds.), American Geography: Inventory and Prospect (Syracuse: Association of American Geographers by the Syracuse University Press, 1954), pp. 71-105; H.C. Darby, "On the Relations of Geography and History," Journal of the Institute of British Geographers. XIX (1954), pp. 1-11 reprinted in Fred E. Dohrs and Lawrence M. Summers (eds.), Cultural Geography: Selected Readings (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company 1967), pp. 30-42; H.C. Darby, "Historical Geography," in H.P.R. Finberg (ed.), Approaches to History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), pp. 127-156; Richard Hartshorne, "The Relations of History to Geography," The Nature of Geography (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Association of American Geographers, 1939), pp. 175-188; and Richard Hartshorne, "Time

Although historical geography is commonly considered a sub-discipline of geography, it has been suggested that historical geography be considered a method or an approach to the solution of geographical problems. Andrew H. Clark denies that historical geography is "a field of topical specialization."[9] Within the realm of historical geography, numerous approaches have been advocated. Geography as a factor in history,[10] sequent occupance,[11] cross sectional,[12] period reconstruction,[13] vertical theme,[14] and culture history[15] have all been exposed as methods to analyze geographical problems in a historical context.

The approach utilized in this dissertation is the changing geographies

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and Genesis in Geography," in Perspective on the Nature of Geography (Chicago: Association of American Geographers by Rand McNally & Company, 1959), pp. 81-107.

[9]Clark, Inventory and Prospect, p. 71

[10]An early approach in the development of historical geography in North America. The geographic influence on history was stressed. The attempt was to illustrate the significance of the environment on history. A good example of this approach is reflected in Ellen Churchill Semple, American History and Its Geographic Conditions (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1903).

[11]This theme was brought forth by Derwent S. Whittlesey, "Sequent Occupance," Annals, Association of American Geographers, XIX (1929), pp. 162-165. Geographical reconstructions of past occupance eras were described and one era was contrasted with the next.

[12]The attempt to describe the past geography of a region in horizontal sections through time.

[13]This approach aims at the reconstruction of the past geography for a specific period, usually on a regional basis. Perhaps the best example is Ralph H. Brown, Mirror for Americans: Likeness of the Eastern Seaboard, 1810 (New York: American Geographical Society, Special Publication 27, 1943).

[14]This approach selects a phenomenon or group of phenomena and traces the developments and changes through time, see H. C. Darby, "The Changing English Landscape," Geographical Journal, CXVII (1951), pp. 377-398.

[15]The emphasis of this approach is directed to the recontruction of past cultures and the development of the cultural landscape. Carl O. Sauer is most responsible for the development of this approach, and his philosophy is clearly defined in Carl O. Sauer, "Foreward to Historical Geography," Annals, Association of American Geographers, XXI (1941), pp. 1-24.

approach advocated by Andrew H. Clark.[16] Regions are usually in a state of flux and rarely in a state of equilibrium. The approach conceptualized by Clark considers areas as changing entities and is concerned with location, identification, direction, and rate of change of specific or associated phenomena within an areal context. One may be concerned with a specific phenomenon, group of associated phenomena, or a region. The emphasis is upon change, changing interrelationships through time and space, and the significance of change.

This approach utilizes a standard geographical tool -- the map. Distribution maps of a specific phenomenon are constructed for various time periods. Here, maps portraying the Canadian-born and other foreign-born group population distributions, by township, for decades 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 are presented. Such distributions are merely the first step which provide a means to determine the location, time, and rate of change.

Distributions are not ends but a means to further research concerning the process and significance of change. It is from the analysis of distributions that questions arise concerning change. The distributions are examined and changes noted for each period. The next step is to analyze the where, when, why, and significance of change. Changes in the Canadian-born or other foreign-born population distributions are examined with respect to change in related spatial phenomena such as: demographic factors other than nativity (age and sex), occupation, voting behavior, and participation in local gov-

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[16] Clark noted his interest in geographic change through time in Clark, Inventory and Prospect, pp. 70-105. His notions are more fully outlined in Andrew H. Clark, "Geographical Change: A Theme for Economic History," Journal of Economic History, XX (1960), pp. 607-613. Clark also expressed his concern for the study of geographical change in an unpublished paper, see Andrew H. Clark, "The Coordinates of Historical Geography" (paper to the Plenary Session, Association of American Geographers, Annual Meeting, Syracuse, N. Y., March 30, 1964), pp. 1-13. Perhaps the best measure of Clark's approach is exemplified in his work. See Andrew H. Clark, Three Centuries and the Island (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959).

ernment. Emphasis is on the changing relationships and the significance of change.

## Organization

To acquaint the reader with the organization and the relationships between the various parts of this dissertation, a brief preview is offered.

Chapter II is concerned with the study area. First, Canadian settlement is considered with emphasis on the spatial and temporal distribution of the Canadian-born in Michigan. The Thumb area stands as a significant area of Canadian settlement. Topography, climate, soils, and vegetation are discussed to illustrate the physical character of the landscape. Consideration is given to the development of some significant man-land relationships.

The aim of Chapter III is to provide a perspective, or context, in which the analysis of Canadian-born and other foreign-born settlement in the Thumb region from 1850 to 1880 can be viewed with respect to the overall population growth, settlement, and development of Michigan. Population growth from first white settlement to 1960 is discussed in terms of total, total foreign-born, Canadian-born, and other significant foreign-born groups. Population growth is analyzed for both Michigan and the Thumb. General settlement trends and development are also considered for the Lower Peninsula and the Thumb.

The theme of Chapter IV is to establish the origins of the Thumb's foreign-born population and to report and analyze, by township, the distribution of population from 1850 to 1880. Density patterns of total, foreign-born, and Canadian-born populations are presented. All data utilized in Chapter IV were gleaned from the manuscript census records.

Chapter V is devoted to the changes in population patterns from 1850

to 1880 and the significance of these changes. The significance of population change is determined by change in related spatial phenomena.

Chapter VI is reserved for summary and concluding remarks.

# CHAPTER II

# STUDY AREA

## Canadians, Michigan, and the Thumb

Two nations, Canada and the United States, occupy Anglo-America. Independently, from two separate core areas, both began the conquest of North America. Together they developed and settled a considerable portion of this huge land mass. As time passed and settlement slowly moved forward, the border constructed to divide the two fledgling nations rarely served as a barrier to settlement. The westward movement must not be considered unique to one nation but a unified movement from both core areas.

At certain points in time people south of the Canadian border sought opportunities in the north, and people in the north sought a better way of life in the south. A serpentine movement of population and settlement was manifested as groups of pioneers advanced, mingled, and meandered about the imaginary line that separates Canada from the United States.

If the general patterns of settlement from both Anglo-American core areas are examined, the position of Michigan becomes particularly significant especially with regard to the expansion of Canadian settlement. Settlement in the United States advanced almost uninterrupted from the east coast, along the Ohio River valley, to the Mississippi River. Michigan, considerably north of the Ohio, was relatively isolated from the major avenues of settlement to the south although the opening of the Erie Canal, in 1825, did provide important access. Substantial portions of Indiana, Illi-

nois, and Missouri were settled before Michigan. Most of Illinois and Missouri were occupied by 1840, while only the southern portion of Lower Michigan received a significant number of settlers.

The westward movement from the Canadian core paralleled, to a degree, the fluid movement south of the border. The frontier of the St. Lawrence and Ontario Lowlands presents an avenue of settlement analogous to the Ohio River valley, but occupance was not as rapid. However, once this corridor was occupied, expansion beyond the Ontario Lowland was virtually curtailed.

Canada had no middle west of continuous fertile soils that welcomed pioneer settlement and compensated the pioneer's efforts with a prosperous agriculture. In contrast to the United States, the Midwest of Canada was the hostile Canadian Shield -- a region of pre-Cambrian crystalline rock, thin glaciated soils, and dense forest. The Shield served as a liability rather than an asset with respect to westward expansion.[1] When the good lands of the St. Lawrence and Ontario Lowlands were taken up and productive land to accommodate population increase was unavailable, when settlers became disgruntled with their fate, or when people simply felt the urge to move there was no easily accessible and attractive land in Canada. To achieve their goals, these people necessarily had to leave Canada. Mere proximity and land availability testify to the strategic position of eastern Michigan with respect to the expansion of settlement by Canadian peoples.

Thousands of Canadians elected to come to Michigan.[2] Distribution

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[1]For an account of the unsuccessful settlement attempts on the Canadian Shield during the 1850's see A.R.M. Lower, "The Assault on the Laurentian Barrier, 1850-1870," Canadian Historical Review, X (1929), pp. 297-304.

[2]The Canadian-born population of Michigan swelled from 14,008 in 1850 to 184,398 in 1900. It dropped to 164,747 in 1920 only to reach a peak of 203,302 in 1930. Since 1930, there has been a steady decline to 126,095 Canadian-born in 1960. In 1880, 9.1 per cent of the total and 38.3 per cent of the foreign-born population of Michigan were Canadian-born. Further discussion of population growth is reserved for Chapter III.

maps, based on Canadian nativity by county, were constructed for selected decades to determine which areas of the state received significant number of Canadians.[3] From these maps, three general patterns can be determined. Figure 2 illustrates counties which reported 4,000 or more Canadian-born in three periods; 1870-1880, 1890-1910, and 1830-1950. The value, 4,000 or more, was arbitrarily selected. Respective counties are listed in Table 1 by decade.

Three definite nodes of Canadian-born settlement can be identified for the 1870-1880 period. Major concentrations were in Wayne County, Sanilac and St. Clair counties in the Thumb region, and the Saginaw Bay area. Most of the Canadian settlers chose to locate in the southeastern portion of the Lower Peninsula. Little Canadian settlement took place in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Canadian settlement reached its greatest areal extent between 1890-1910 with five areas of concentration. Two areas predominate in the Upper Peninsula, one a swath from Houghton to Marquette counties to Menominee County and the other at the Sault in Chippewa County. In extreme southeastern Michigan, the Canadian population of Wayne County doubled during this period, thereby, forming the densest concentration. Kent County is an outlier area, undoubtedly due to the concentration in Grand Rapids. The extensive area of Canadian settlement occurs along the shore and inland of Lake Huron, including all counties that rim Lake Huron from Alpena southward to St. Clair. This region is the result of the expansion and coalescense of the two nodes, Saginaw Bay and Sanilac-St. Clair.

Between 1930 and 1950, the distribution of Canadian-born becomes most

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[3]The published census contains country of origin data by county for the decades 1870 to 1950. Only state totals are available for 1850 and 1860. The distribution maps were constructed for the decades 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1930, and 1950.

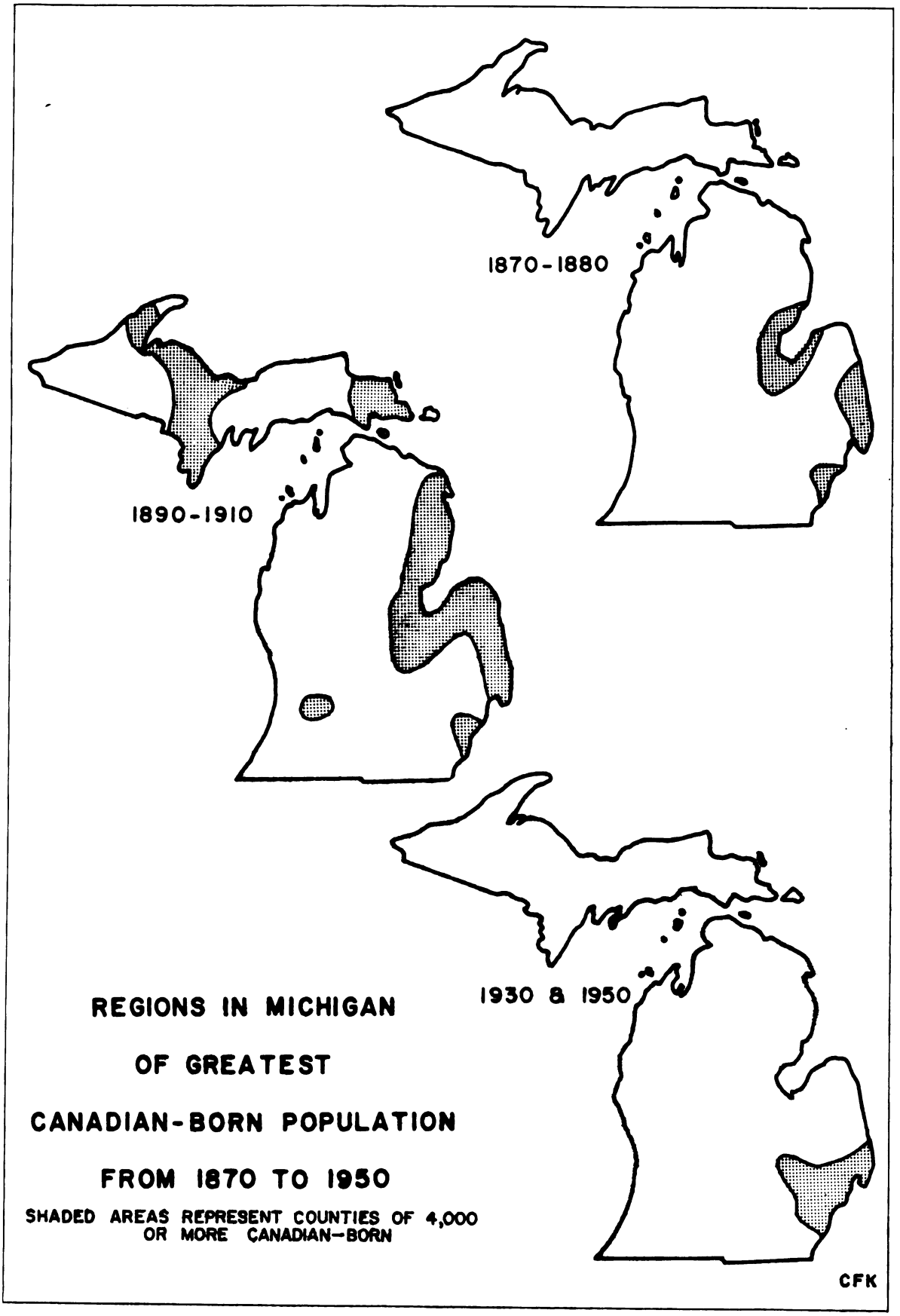
1870-1880
1890-1910
1930 & 1950
REGIONS IN MICHIGAN
OF GREATEST
CANADIAN-BORN POPULATION
FROM 1870 TO 1950
SHADED AREAS REPRESENT COUNTIES OF 4,000
OR MORE CANADIAN-BORN
CFK

Figure 2.

TABLE 1.

MICHIGAN COUNTIES OF 4,000 OR MORE CANADIAN-BORN: 1870-1950

| Year | County | Number of Canadian-Born | Per Cent of Canadian Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1870 | Wayne | 10,095 | 11.7 |
| | St. Clair | 8,113 | 9.4 |
| | Sanilac | 6,011 | 7.0 |
| | Saginaw | 5,511 | 6.4 |
| | Bay | 4,273 | 4.9 |
| 1880 | Wayne | 13,647 | 9.2 |
| | Bay | 10,160 | 6.8 |
| | St. Clair | 9,701 | 6.5 |
| | Sanilac | 9,170 | 6.1 |
| | Saginaw | 8,864 | 5.9 |
| | Lapeer | 5,649 | 3.7 |
| | Huron | 5,387 | 3.6 |
| | Tuscola | 4,840 | 3.2 |
| | Marquette | 4,647 | 3.1 |
| | Kent | 4,312 | 2.8 |
| 1890 | Wayne | 21,291 | 11.7 |
| | St. Clair | 10,767 | 5.9 |
| | Saginaw | 10,695 | 5.8 |
| | Sanilac | 10,139 | 5.5 |
| | Bay | 8,805 | 4.8 |
| | Huron | 6,620 | 3.6 |
| | Chippewa | 5,362 | 2.9 |
| | Kent | 5,265 | 2.9 |
| | Tuscola | 5,247 | 2.8 |
| | Marquette | 4,868 | 2.7 |
| | Menominee | 4,420 | 2.4 |
| | Lapeer | 4,322 | 2.3 |
| | Alpena | 4,234 | 2.3 |
| | Iosco | 4,082 | 2.2 |
| 1900 | Wayne | 32,501 | 17.7 |
| | St. Clair | 9,586 | 5.1 |
| | Bay | 8,373 | 4.5 |
| | Sanilac | 8,266 | 4.4 |
| | Chippewa | 7,957 | 4.3 |
| | Saginaw | 7,042 | 3.8 |
| | Huron | 6,749 | 3.6 |
| | Houghton | 5,627 | 3.0 |
| | Kent | 5,019 | 2.7 |
| | Tuscola | 4,877 | 2.6 |

TABLE 1 (cont'd.)

| Year | County | Number of Canadian-Born | Per Cent of Canadian Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1910 | Wayne | 45,829 | 26.7 |
| | St. Clair | 7,904 | 4.6 |
| | Chippewa | 6,381 | 3.7 |
| | Sanilac | 6,340 | 3.6 |
| | Bay | 6,159 | 3.5 |
| | Saginaw | 5,953 | 3.4 |
| | Huron | 5,198 | 3.0 |
| | Genessee | 4,723 | 2.7 |
| | Kent | 4,545 | 2.6 |
| | Houghton | 4,093 | 2.3 |
| 1930 | Wayne | 119,130 | 54.4 |
| | Oakland | 13,485 | 6.6 |
| | Genessee | 8,683 | 4.2 |
| | St. Clair | 6,261 | 3.0 |
| 1950 | Wayne | 81.878 | 57.6 |
| | Oakland | 13,945 | 9.8 |
| | Genessee | 5,295 | 3.7 |
| | Macomb | 5,295 | 3.7 |
| | St. Clair | 4,105 | 2.8 |

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

dense and spatially limited. There are only four counties in 1930 and five in 1950 that include 4,000 or more Canadian-born. They represent 68 and 78 per cent of the total state Canadian-born population, respectfully. The distribution is definitely restricted to southeastern Michigan, focusing on Wayne County, with only slight scattering throughout the remainder of the state. The general rural to urban population movement, deaths among Canadians who resided in rural areas in previous periods, and greater opportunity in urban areas for more recent immigrant arrivals account for the concentration.

Selection of the Thumb region[4] for intensive analysis of the Canadian role in the settlement of eastern Michigan rests on two significant factors. First, the Thumb region certainly received significant numbers of Canadian-born settlers. Secondly the Thumb region, in many respects, is typical of the general settlement pattern and development of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

## Land and Man in the Thumb

The regional place name, the Thumb, has a geographic origin. Examination of a map of the Lower Peninsula quickly reveals the origin of the term. The outline of the peninsula resembles a left-handed mitten placed palm down. The area occupied by St. Clair, Sanilac, and Huron counties shapes the thumb of the mitten. As a result, the land area surrounded by Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron is commonly called the Thumb of Michigan.[5]

The region encompasses 2,514 square miles with Sanilac County contrib-

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[4]In this dissertation, the Thumb region is areally defined by the political units of St. Clair, Sanilac, and Huron counties.

[5]It is not uncommon for inhabitants of the Thumb to utilize the thumb of their left hand to indicate their place of residence. One gentleman told me he lived in the "crease of the knuckle"!

uting 961 square miles, Huron 819, and St. Clair 734 square miles. The Black, Pine, and Belle Rivers provide the major arteries of drainage (see Figure 3). These three streams empty into the St. Clair River and drain the southern two-thirds of the study area. The northern portion, particularly Huron County, is drained by numerous short streams which flow into Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron.

## Topography

Fenneman includes the Thumb as part of the Great Lakes section of the Central Lowland in his physiographic divisions of the United States.[6] All of the landforms within the study area are the result of the last glacial advance, the Wisconsin, of the Pleistocene.

Two lobes of the great ice sheet, the Saginaw and Huron, converged at the Thumb and left a complicated physiography. Figure 4 illustrates the surface features of the study area. Sand dunes along the northwestern shore of Huron County, eskers in southeastern Sanilac County, ancient beach ridges throughout the area, and the low marshy lands of the St. Clair River delta all lend variety to the landscape.

For the purpose of this paper it is sufficient to state that ancient lake beds or lacustrine plains and moraines dominate the topography. In general the topography varies from very flat lands of the delta, level to gently rolling lacustrine plains, to rolling and rather hilly terrain of the Port Huron moraine and interlobate area. Lowest elevations occur along the coast, gradually increase on the lacustrine plains, and reach a maximum in morainal areas. Elevation ranges from somewhat below 600 feet along the shore to slightly over 800 feet in morainal areas. Local relief is greatest

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[6]Nevin M. Fenneman, Physiography of Eastern United States (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938), pp. 456-499.

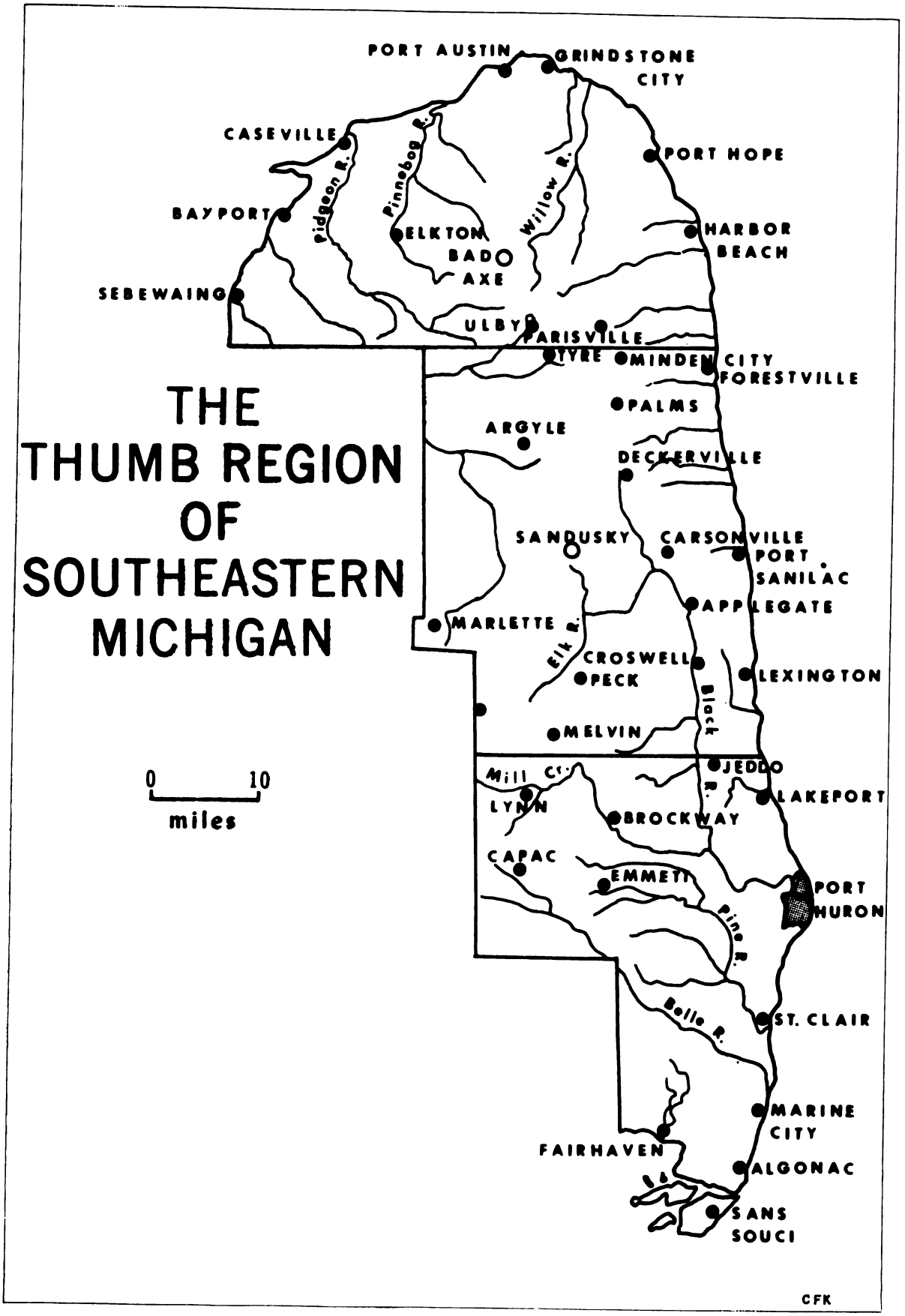
THE
THUMB REGION
OF
SOUTHEASTERN
MICHIGAN
0
10
miles
PORT AUSTIN
GRINDSTONE CITY
CASEVILLE
PORT HOPE
BAYPORT
HARBOR BEACH
SEBEWAING
ELKTON
BADO AXE
ULBY
PARISVILLE
TYRE
MINDEN CITY
FORESTVILLE
PALMS
ARGYLE
DECKERVILLE
SANDUSKY
CARSONVILLE
PORT SANILAC
APPLEGATE
MARLETTE
CROSWELL
PECK
LEXINGTON
MELVIN
JEDDO
LAKEPORT
LYNN
BROCKWAY
CAPAC
EMMETT
PORT HURON
ST. CLAIR
MARINE CITY
FAIRHAVEN
ALGONAC
SANS SOUCI
Pigeon R.
Pinnebog R.
Willow R.
Elk R.
Black R.
Mill Cr.
Pine R.
Belle R.
CFK

Figure 3.

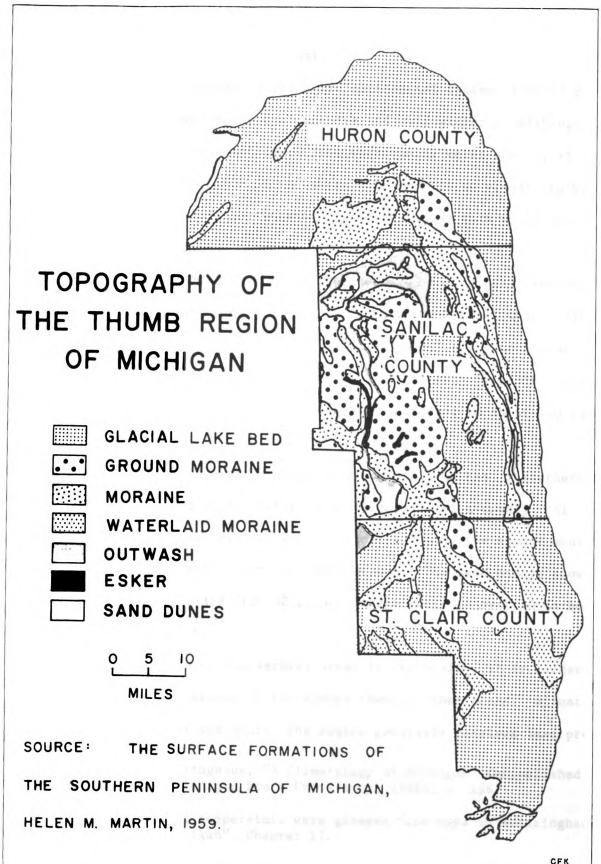
TOPOGRAPHY OF
THE THUMB REGION
OF MICHIGAN
HURON COUNTY
SANILAC
COUNTY
ST. CLAIR COUNTY
GLACIAL LAKE BED
GROUND MORAINE
MORAINE
WATERLAID MORAINE
OUTWASH
ESKER
SAND DUNES
0 5 10
MILES
SOURCE: THE SURFACE FORMATIONS OF
THE SOUTHERN PENINSULA OF MICHIGAN,
HELEN M. MARTIN, 1959.
CFK

Figure 4.

along the major rivers of the region.

## Climate

The Thumb is included in the humid continental regime of world climates and is characterized by cool summers and cold winters. Although the area does experience some influence from surrounding water bodies, it is situated on the leeward side of the state with respect to prevailing winds. There is less effect from the surrounding water bodies than would normally be expected.[7]

Mean annual temperatures range from near 50° F in southeastern St. Clair County to slightly less than 47° F in northern Huron County. January temperatures vary from 27° F in the south to 23° F in the north. July temperatures average from 74° F to 60° F from south to north. The frost-free season ranges from 160 days in the southeast to about 140 days in the northwest.[8]

Mean average precipitation varies from over 31 inches in southern St. Clair County to less than 28 inches in northwestern Huron County. Although there is no real wet or dry season in the Thumb, the summer months receive more precipitation than any other season. The mean annual snowfall exhibits a wide range from 30 inches in the south to over 50 inches at the tip of the Thumb.[9]

The Thumb is one of the warmest areas in the state: it is milder during the winter and warmer in the summer than in other areas. Situated on the leeward side of the state, the region generally receives less pre-

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[7]Thomas E. Niedringhaus, "A Climatology of Michigan" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1966), p. 198.

[8]Data concerning temperature were gleaned from maps in Neidringhaus, "A Climatology of Michigan", Chapter II.

[9]*Ibid*.

cipitation than other agricultural portions of the state.

## Soils

Soils of the Thumb region represent two of the great soil groups of the world. Huron, Sanilac, and northern St. Clair counties are situated within the zone of podzol soils while southern St. Clair County is classified as a gray-brown podzolic region. Six major areas based on soil association are represented in the Thumb and are delineated in Figure 5.[10]

The level, poorly drained soils formed from loams, silt loams, and clay loams of Area I form the most extensive soil associations. These soils are associated with the lacustrine plain and cover large areas in Huron and Sanilac counties. They are high in organic matter, nitrogen, and lime. The soils retain moisture well, have good natural fertility, and are durable under cultivation. They were developed on fairly level, wet, swampy, and originally heavily timbered lands in areas of poor natural drainage. The soils are productive when adequate drainage is provided and are not subject to serious erosion.

Three other groups of soil associations are represented in the podzol region of the Thumb. Area II is characterized by well drained, level to rolling soils developed from limy loams, sandy loams, and loams. Its distribution conforms to the morainal areas. The soils are high in lime, high in moisture retaining capability, and are relatively fertile. Area III, in extreme northwestern Sanilac County, is represented by level, poorly drained soils developed from limy loams to clay loams and tend to

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[10]The six major soil associations and Figure 5 are based on E.P. Whiteside, I.F. Schneider, and R.L. Cook, Soils of Michigan, Agricultural Experiment Station, Special Bulletin 402 (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1959), pp. 32-52. For a detailed account of the soils of Sanilac County see U.S., Department of Agriculture, Soils Conservation Service, Soil Survey: Sanilac County, Michigan by Ivan F. Schneider, et al., Series 1953, No. 10 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 1-83.

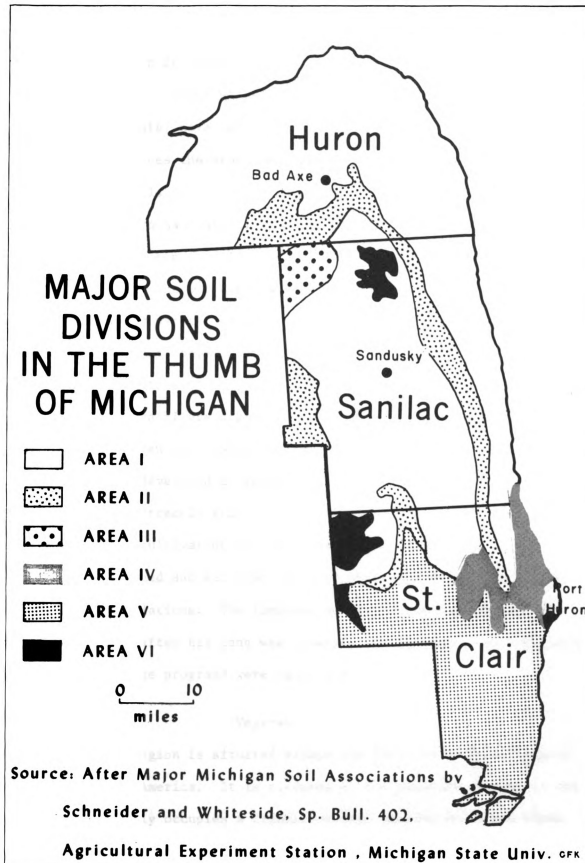
Huron
Bad Axe
MAJOR SOIL DIVISIONS IN THE THUMB OF MICHIGAN
Sandusky
Sanilac
AREA I
AREA II
AREA III
AREA IV
AREA V
AREA VI
St.
Clair
0 10
miles
Source: After Major Michigan Soil Associations by
Schneider and Whiteside, Sp. Bull. 402,
Agricultural Experiment Station, Michigan State Univ. CFK

Figure 5.

have a considerable sand or sandy loam overburden. The soils are generally wet and sandy and are characterized by poor natural drainage. Area IV, in northeastern St. Clair County, is an area of mixed wet and dry sands with organic soils. These soils, a combination of wet and sandy textures and associated peats, have low value for agriculture.

Area V outlines the gray-brown podzolic great soil group. The level, poorly drained soils formed from loams, silt loams, clay loams and clays occupy the southern half of St. Clair County. These soils are high in organic matter, nitrogen, and lime. They have good moisture retention, good natural fertility, and are durable under cultivation. The soils were developed under poor natural drainage conditions and the land was wet and originally heavily timbered. Where proper drainage has been applied, the soils prove productive.

Soils in Area VI are organic, mucks and peats, and appear as small islands in north central Sanilac and northwestern St. Clair counties. These soils were developed in swamps and have limited use for agriculture. They range from extremely acid to mildly akaline and in Sanilac County are utilized for the cultivation of mint, onions and truck crops.

Poorly drained and wet describes the most salient characteristics of the soil associations. The fundamental problem facing the pioneer agriculturalist, after his land was cleared, was drainage. As settlement developed, drainage programs were initiated.

## Vegetation

The Thumb region is situated within the Beech-Maple Forest region of eastern North America. It is situated at the northern extreme of the region and actually occupies a transition area between the Beech-Maple Forest region and the Great Lakes section of the Hemlock-White Pine North-

ern Hardwoods Forest region.[11] In such a transition zone, the composition of the natural vegetation is obviously complex.

A simplified classification of the natural vegetation has been devised especially for this dissertation from Veatch's map.[12] Included are regions of deciduous forest, deciduous and pines forest, white pine and deciduous trees, and prairie vegetation. Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of these major vegetation types.

The deciduous forest includes areas in which the trees were almost solely deciduous. Species dominance varied with local differences in soil and topography. The dominant types of trees were: maple, beech, elm, oak, ash, basswood, hickory, sycamore, and cottonwood. In most cases, the area of deciduous forest occupied inland locations. On a gross scale, the deciduous forest was established on portions of the Port Huron moraine and ground moraine in Sanilac and St. Clair counties. Some deciduous forest was situated on the old glacial lake beds of western Huron and southern St. Clair counties.

A similar variety of trees occupied the area delineated as deciduous and pines forest, however, there was a definite mixture of white pine and other pines. Again, local variations in topography and soil accounted for the dominance of a particular species. The associations within this classification covered a considerable portion of the study area. The deciduous and pines forest was most closely associated with the lacustrine plain, but some was situated on the Port Huron moraine in Huron County and in the interlobate area of northeastern Sanilac County. The white pine was frequently a constituent of this forest.

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[11] Lucy E. Braun, Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 305-326, 337-364.

[12] J. O. Veatch, "Presettlement Forest in Michigan" (Department of Resource Development, Michigan State University, 1959).

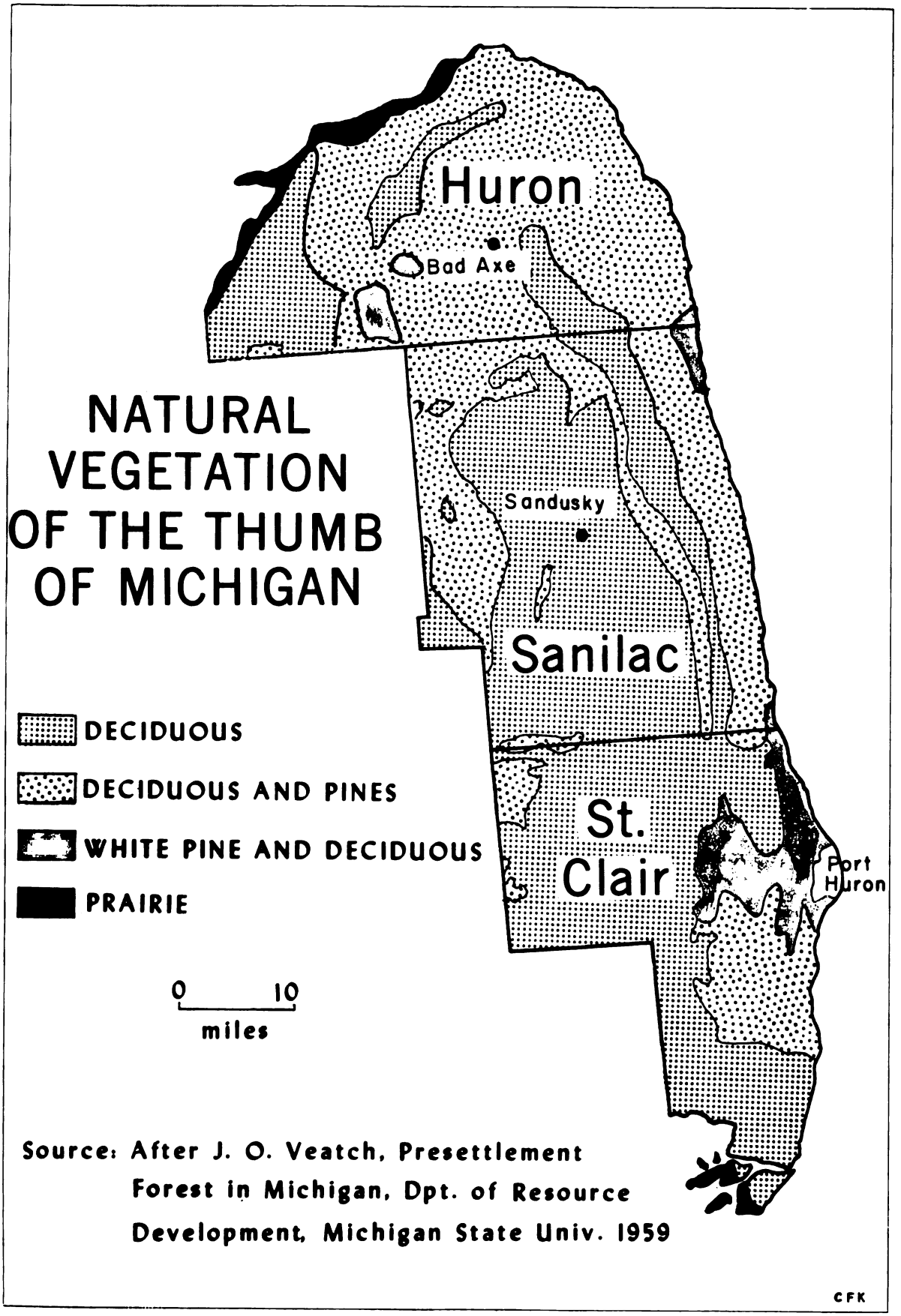
NATURAL VEGETATION OF THE THUMB OF MICHIGAN
Huron
Bad Axe
Sandusky
Sanilac
St. Clair
Port Huron
DECIDUOUS
DECIDUOUS AND PINES
WHITE PINE AND DECIDUOUS
PRAIRIE
0 10
miles
Source: After J. O. Veatch, Presettlement Forest in Michigan, Dpt. of Resource Development, Michigan State Univ. 1959
CFK

Figure 6.

The area of white pine and deciduous forest includes stands which were characterized by a dominance of white pine with a variety of deciduous trees. The dominant species was the white pine, so highly valued by the lumbermen. White pine grows under a variety of conditions, but the largest area was associated with sandy textured soils of northeastern St. Clair County. White Pine also occupied sites on the lacustrine plain in extreme northeastern Sanilac County and south central Huron County.

Veatch's map indicates two areas of prairie within the study area. Wet prairie occupied the delta lands of the St. Clair River and was mostly marsh grasses with individual and scattered clumps of willow and tamaracks. Dry prairie was located along the coast of northwestern Huron County. This prairie was associated with a narrow sand dune belt and contained grasses with scattered oaks or aspen.

The first white settlers were confronted with heavy timber. Deciduous trees were dominant, but large areas were forested with a combination of deciduous, white pine, and pine trees. There were four areas where white pine was the dominant species. The ax of both lumberman and early agriculturalist dealt destruction to the forest; very little evidence of the natural vegetation is present on the contemporary landscape.

## The First White Men

The hope of finding a transcontinental route, establishing a vast empire, and the zeal of missionaries to save souls brought French explorers to Michigan. The Thumb was among the first areas of the Lower Peninsula to be viewed through white man's eyes. Its peninsular position probably accounts for its early discovery.

Adrien Jolliet, returning to New France after an unsuccessful attempt to locate copper deposits near Lake Superior, paddled along the Lake

Huron shore in 1669. Fathers Dollier and Gallinee, assured by Jolliet of many heathen tribes, retraced Jolliet's route via the St. Clair River and the Michigan shore of Lake Huron in 1670.[13] Although the shoreline of the Thumb was known early, the interior remained unknown. Surely some coureurs de bois must have explored the watershed of one of the streams that drain the Thumb.

Besides seeking a route to Asia and christening natives, the French developed a lucrative fur trade in the Great Lakes region. It was the French practice to establish outposts at strategic and accessible sites. Michilimackinac, near the Sault, was the center of French fur trading interests.

When English traders began to make inroads into the region, the French decided to build a stockade to prevent the English from reaching the upper lakes. A fort at the head of the St. Clair River offered a site which could guard the route between Lakes Huron and Erie. Fort St. Joseph, at the site of the present city of Port Huron, was built by Sieur Duluth in 1686. In 1688, it was decided the stockade was not worth maintaining; it was burned.[14]

Although Fort St. Joseph was short lived, it was the first attempt by white men to gain a foothold in southeastern Michigan. This location, in present St. Clair County, preceeded Cadillac's efforts at Detroit by fifteen years.

Soon after Great Britain took possession over Michigan land in 1763, another post in present St. Clair County was constructed. Lieutenant Patrick Sinclair built Fort Sinclair at the strategic confluence of the

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[13]F. Clever Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), pp. 34-35.

[14]William Lee Jenks, St. Clair County, Michigan: Its History and Its People (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), I, pp. 88-90.

Pine and St. Clair rivers in 1765. The stockade stood for about twenty years and acted as a military and trading post.[15]

## The Earliest Settlers

French Canadians were the first permanent settlers of southeastern Michigan. Lamotte Cadillac founded Detroit in 1701, and it quickly became the leading fur trading center of the Lower Peninsula.[16] From this core, subsequent waves of pioneers embarked on the settlement of the state.

Prior to 1805, when Michigan became a territory, the white population was essentially French Canadian. French Canadian settlement focused on the Michigan shores of Lakes Erie and St. Clair, Detroit River, St. Clair River, and the streams draining into these waters. There was little inland settlement, no substantial attempts at agriculture; the economy depended largely on the fur trade.[17] The Thumb's southern reaches, especially along Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River, maintains as old a settlement history as any area in the Lower Peninsula.

## Lumbering

The dense deciduous and pine forests and numerous rivers and streams provided a suitable habitat for fur bearing animals which led to early exploration of Michigan. When the supply of furs began to wane, man was already familiar with the forest and began its exploitation. Logging, especially for white pine, dominated the state's economy for half a century. The lumber industry attracted immigrants, provided jobs, gave impetus to

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[15] Ibid., p. 92

[16] Ida Amanda Johnson, The Michigan Fur Trade (Lansing, Mich.: (Lansing, Mich.: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co. for the Michigan Historical Association, 1919), p. 31.

[17] George Newman Fuller, Economic and Social Beginning of Michigan (Lansing, Mich.: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., 1916), p. 489.

agriculture, created towns and cities of the wilderness, and supplied capital for other development.

The Thumb was heavily forested with hardwoods and pines. Areas which included white pine were of particular interest to lumbermen (see Figure 6). The forest of St. Clair County was utilized as early as 1765 when white pine was felled for the construction of Fort Sinclair. When the need for building materials at Detroit appeared, St. Clair County offered the closest desirable source of lumber. In the 1780's, French Canadians established some of Michigan's first lumber mills at the mouths of streams flowing into the St. Clair River.[18]

There were at least seven small mills in operation in St. Clair County by 1800, and some ambitious development began after 1816.[19] Impetus was given to the lumber industry through increased demand as midwestern prairie states and cities were settled and developed. These small mills provided the origin of Michigan's lumber industry.

As pineries were exhausted, mills were established father north at the mouths of the Cass, Saginaw, Au Gres, Au Sable, and Thunder Bay rivers. Later the industry moved west to rivers draining into Lake Michigan. Lumber production in Michigan reached its peak late in the nineteenth century, however, it remains an important factor in the economy of the Upper Peninsula.

## Agriculture

Agriculture was also introduced into the Thumb area at an early date. Its development, however, was somewhat thwarted with respect to areas to the west. Wet and poorly drained soils, particularly those associated with the lacustrine plain, heavy timber, and the availability of fertile lands

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[18] Jenks, St. Clair County, p. 363.

[19] Ibid., p. 380.

in south central and southwestern Michigan hindered early agricultural expansion. Sedentary agricultural settlements did not dominate the landscape until the fur trade and lumbering eras passed.

Agricultural methods employed by the French Canadians were poor. The French Canadians were primarily interested in the fur trade and did not attempt to become accomplished agriculturalists. It was left for the lumber industry to stimulate agricultural development. Small clearings were cultivated to supply the needs of men and animals of the lumber camps and mills. After the pinery had been raped of white pine, the people attracted by the lumbering industry either moved on or turned to agriculture.

Potatoes, hay, wheat, and oats were among the first crops grown. Not until the 1870's did interest in livestock become significant.[20] From these meagre beginnings, the Thumb progressed to become one of the richest agricultural regions of the state. Its counties rank high today in value of farm products sold.

In 1960 the Thumb counties led in the production of many significant crops. Sanilac was the number one producer of hay, for example, followed by Huron; St. Clair was fourth. Sanilac and Huron ranked first and second in the production of alfalfa. Huron was one of the top three wheat producing counties. Sanilac was first and Huron second in the production of oats. Huron County led the state in bean production. Sanilac and Huron ranked one, two in number of dairy cattle.[21] The Thumb region is classified as a dairy and cash crop farming region.

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[20] Ibid., p. 380.

[21] Bert Hudgins, Michigan: Geographic Backgrounds in the Development of the Commonwealth (4th ed., Detroit: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1961), pp. 72-77.

## Summary

The counties of St. Clair, Sanilac, and Huron define the study area of this dissertation and, hereafter, will be termed the Thumb region, or simply the Thumb. Factors which led to the selection of the study area are also significant elements with respect to Michigan's settlement. The analysis of Canadian settlement in the Thumb should lead to generalizations concerning the role of the Canadian settler in the Lower Peninsula.

The Thumb occupies a peninsular location in southeastern Michigan, fronting on Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay, and includes 2,514 square miles. Early contact by explorers and fur traders can be attributed to this peninsular location. A stockade overlooking the St. Clair River, a strategic link between lakes Erie and Huron, was the first attempt by white men to gain a foothold in southeastern Michigan.

Glaciation is responsible for the varied surface features of the study area. Rolling to hilly terrain of the morainal areas and the generally level lacustrine plain dominate the topography. Latitudinal extent, inland and coastal location, and differences in local relief create slight climatic variations. However, the Thumb lies on the leeward side of the state and experiences milder weather than most other areas.

Permanent settlement in the Thumb and Lower Peninsula have common beginnings. The early French Canadians, who settled along the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair, were poor agriculturalists. Agriculture was hindered by wet and naturally poorly drained soils. Once drainage programs were initiated, the soils provided a rich agricultural base.

Heavy timber also discouraged agricultural development. However, the dense forest and particularly stands of white pine attracted lumbermen. It was in the Thumb where Michigan's lumbering era was spawned.

Lumbering attracted immigrants and stimulated agricultural settlement.

The settlement and development of the Thumb region paralleled that of the Lower Peninsula in many respects. Most significant, to the goal of this dissertation, large numbers of Canadian-born settlers took up land in the study area. Canadian-born persons have contributed a significant proportion of the population of the Thumb and the State. The principal problems that the physical-biotic environment posed for settlement were the clearing of forests and soil drainage.

# CHAPTER III

## THE GROWTH OF POPULATION, SETTLEMENT, AND THE FOREIGN-BORN IN MICHIGAN AND THE THUMB REGION

### Population Growth and Settlement

White men arrived in Michigan for the first time in the late seventeenth century. French Canadians were the first to establish a foothold in both Michigan and the Thumb. Tardy settlement, claims of misrepresentation, deterioration of the French Canadian influence by the arrival of easterners, south to north and coastal to interior direction of settlement, lumbering, land speculation, and the rural to urban phenomenon were characteristic of the settlement process in both Michigan and the Thumb.

#### The French Canadian Era to Statehood

##### Michigan

Although the French established several settlements prior to 1701, the efforts of Cadillac at Detroit were the most enduring. Cadillac brought seeds, horses, and cattle to his outpost, but the settlement languished for a century. Agriculture was not the main interest at early Detroit, and its people made few attempts to expand their holdings or encourage more settlement. Nearly a half century later (1749) an attempt was made by the Governor General of Canada to induce settlement at Detroit.[1] Tools, wagons, seeds and livestock were offered to those willing to take up land. In the

[1]William L. Jenks, "Michigan Immigration," Michigan History, XXVIII (1944), p. 67.

next two years, only 103 persons responded and the government suspended any further attempts to induce settlement. Development at Detroit was slow. As late as 1803, the town included only four acres.[2]

After initial occupance at Detroit, settlement was sporadic. The founding of most of the French settlements in southeastern Michigan did not antecede the American Revolution. Several settlements were established during the Revolutionary War, but immigration was heaviest after the peace with Great Britain. Indian Agent Jouett described the French Canadian settlements in 1803 in a message communicated to Congress.[3] Table 2 and Figure 7 were prepared from Jouett's message and give some insight into the location, extent, and date of settlement. Jouett makes no attempt at estimating the population, but from his report it can be conservatively inferred, that well over 1,000 persons inhabited the region. With only a few exceptions, all were French Canadians.

Expansion westward commenced from New York and New England after the peace with Great Britain. Pioneers followed rivers and streams to the Ohio River Valley. Mere location was in large part the principal factor accounting for the late settlement of Michigan. Michigan was far removed from the mainstream of settlement. Regardless of the significance attached to claims of land quality misrepresentation and the famed Tiffin Report,[4] not only Michigan but the whole western Great Lakes region was late in receiving the impact of the westward movement. Kuhn asserts that any publicity Michigan

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[2]U. S. Congress, Legislative and Executive Documents, American State Papers, "Description of the Lands and Settlers in the Vicinty of Detroit," by C. Jouett, Class VIII, Public Lands, I (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832), p. 191.

[3]Ibid., pp. 190-193.

[4]U. S. Congress, Legislative and Executive Documents, American State Papers, "Military Bounty Lands," by Edward Tiffin, Public Lands, III (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834), pp. 164-165.

TABLE 2.

FRENCH CANADIAN SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN, 1803

| Location | Families | Inhabitants | Farms | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Monroe County | | | | |
| Otter Creek | | 33 | | Settled 1779-1794 |
| River Raisin | 121 | | | Settled 1784-1786 |
| Sandy Creek | | 16 | | Settled 1792 |
| Rocky River | 2 | | | House, distillery grist mill worth $10,000 |
| Huron River | 1 | | | |
| Detroit Area | | | | |
| Ecorce River | | 16 | | Settled before 1797 |
| River Rouge | 43 | | | Settled 1780 |
| Detroit River | | | 23 | |
| Detroit | | | | Only four acres including the fort |
| Grosse Isle | | | 10 | Settled 1776 |
| Detroit to Grosse Point | | | 60 | 60 farms in 9 miles French land grants before 1760 |
| Macomb County | | | | |
| Milk River to Clinton River | | 30 | | Settled 1797, squatters |
| River Clinton | 34 | | | Settled 1788-1800 |
| Clinton to St. Clair | 2 | | | Settled 1801 |
| St. Clair River Area | | | | |
| Six Miles Upstream | | | 12 | Settled 1780-1790 |
| Belle River | | | 19 | Settled 1780-1782 |
| Pine River (Sinclair) | | | 5 | Settled 1800 |
| TOTAL | 203 | 85 | 129 | |

Source: U. S. Congress, American State Papers, C. Jouett.

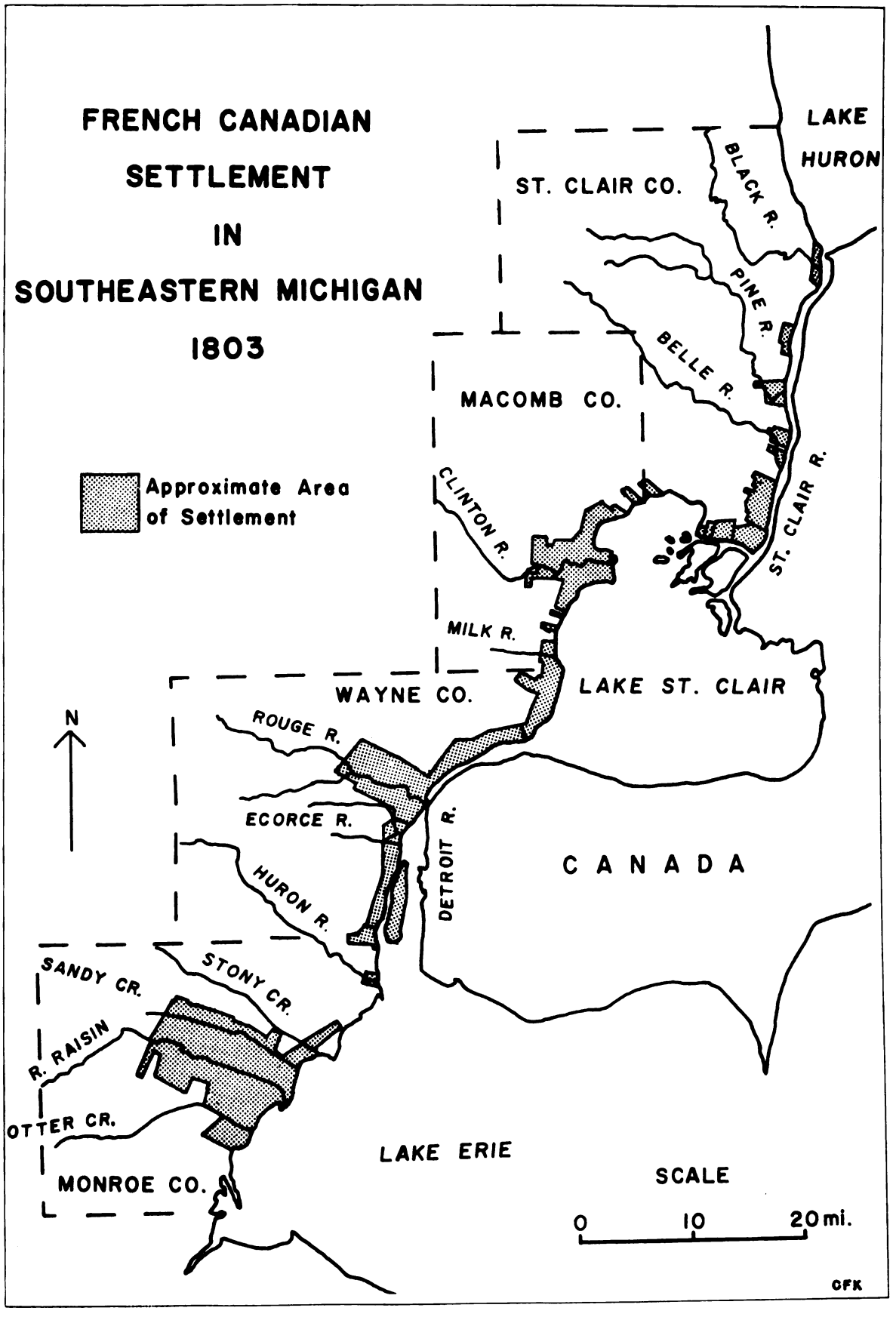
FRENCH CANADIAN
SETTLEMENT
IN
SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
1803
Approximate Area of Settlement
N
LAKE HURON
ST. CLAIR CO.
BLACK R.
PINE R.
BELLE R.
MACOMB CO.
CLINTON R.
ST. CLAIR R.
MILK R.
LAKE ST. CLAIR
WAYNE CO.
ROUGE R.
ECORCE R.
HURON R.
DETROIT R.
CANADA
SANDY CR.
STONY CR.
R. RAISIN
OTTER CR.
MONROE CO.
LAKE ERIE
SCALE
0
10
20 mi.
CFK

Figure 7.

received in the east was usually favorable.[5]

The first census of Michigan, taken in 1800 as part of the National Census, reports only 551 inhabitants. Michigan did not assume its present boundaries until 1837. In 1800 a large part of the Lower Peninsula was organized as Wayne County, and its inhabitants were reported in the Ohio totals. About nine-tenths of Wayne County was in Michigan.[6] The total of 551 does not include inhabitants of Wayne County. When 90 per cent of the Wayne County total is added, a more representative 3,436 persons can be inferred as the population in 1800. Table 3 represents the population growth as reported by the census with some adjustments.

In 1810 the census enumerated 4,762 persons as inhabitants of the Territory of Michigan. This is an increase of approximately 1,300 persons from the estimated total of the previous decade. The settled area expanded only slightly from 1800 to 1810, and population concentrations focused on the rivers and shore lines of southeastern Michigan. Figure 8 portrays the settled areas and the direction of settlement from 1790 to 1900.

In 1820 the census reported 8,896 persons in the Territory. Seven counties and Detroit were included in the enumeration. Of the seven counties two, Brown and Crawford, were situated in the present state of Wisconsin. The area within the contemporary boundaries of Michigan included 7,452 persons. Settlement moved further inland from the old French Canadian centers and beginnings were made in the Saginaw Valley.

Michigan first felt the real impact of the westward movement from 1820 to 1830. In 1830 the census reported a population of 31,639 for the Terri-

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[5]Madison Kuhn, "Tiffin, Morse, and the Reluctant Pioneer," Michigan History, L (1966), pp. 111-138.

[6]Census of Michigan, 1904: Population, I (Lansing, Mich: Wynkoop Hollenbeck Crawford Co., State Printers, 1906), p. xivi.

TABLE 3.

POPULATION GROWTH OF MICHIGAN: 1800 - 1960

| Year | Number |
|---|---|
| 1800[1] | 3,436 |
| 1810 | 4,762 |
| 1820[2] | 7,452 |
| 1830[3] | 28,004 |
| 1837 | 175,025 |
| 1840 | 212,267 |
| 1850 | 397,654 |
| 1860 | 749,113 |
| 1870 | 1,184,059 |
| 1880 | 1,636,937 |
| 1890 | 2,093,890 |
| 1900 | 2,420,982 |
| 1910 | 2,810,173 |
| 1920 | 3,668,412 |
| 1930 | 4,842,325 |
| 1940 | 5,256,106 |
| 1950 | 6,371,766 |
| 1960 | 7,823,194 |

Notes:

Because Michigan did not have fixed boundaries before statehood, 1837, the population reported by the Federal Census does not represent the actual number of residents residing within the present state boundaries. Some adjustments have been made to present a more representative population for the state before boundaries were fixed.

[1]The Federal Census reports only 551 inhabitants for the state which accounted for the population of the northern county of Mackinac. Wayne County reported 3,206 inhabitants, of which nine-tenths resided in Michigan. The summation of the 551 inhabitants of Mackinac County and the 2,885 residents of Wayne County results in a total of 3,436.

[2]The Federal Census reports 8,896 residents for Michigan. Two counties totaling 1,444 persons were entirely within the present boundaries of Wisconsin leaving a more representative total of 7,452 persons residing within the present boundaries of Michigan.

[3]The Federal Census reports 31,369 residents for Michigan. Three counties were outside the confines of contemporary Michigan and totaled 3,635 persons. The actual number of persons residing within Michigan was 28,004.

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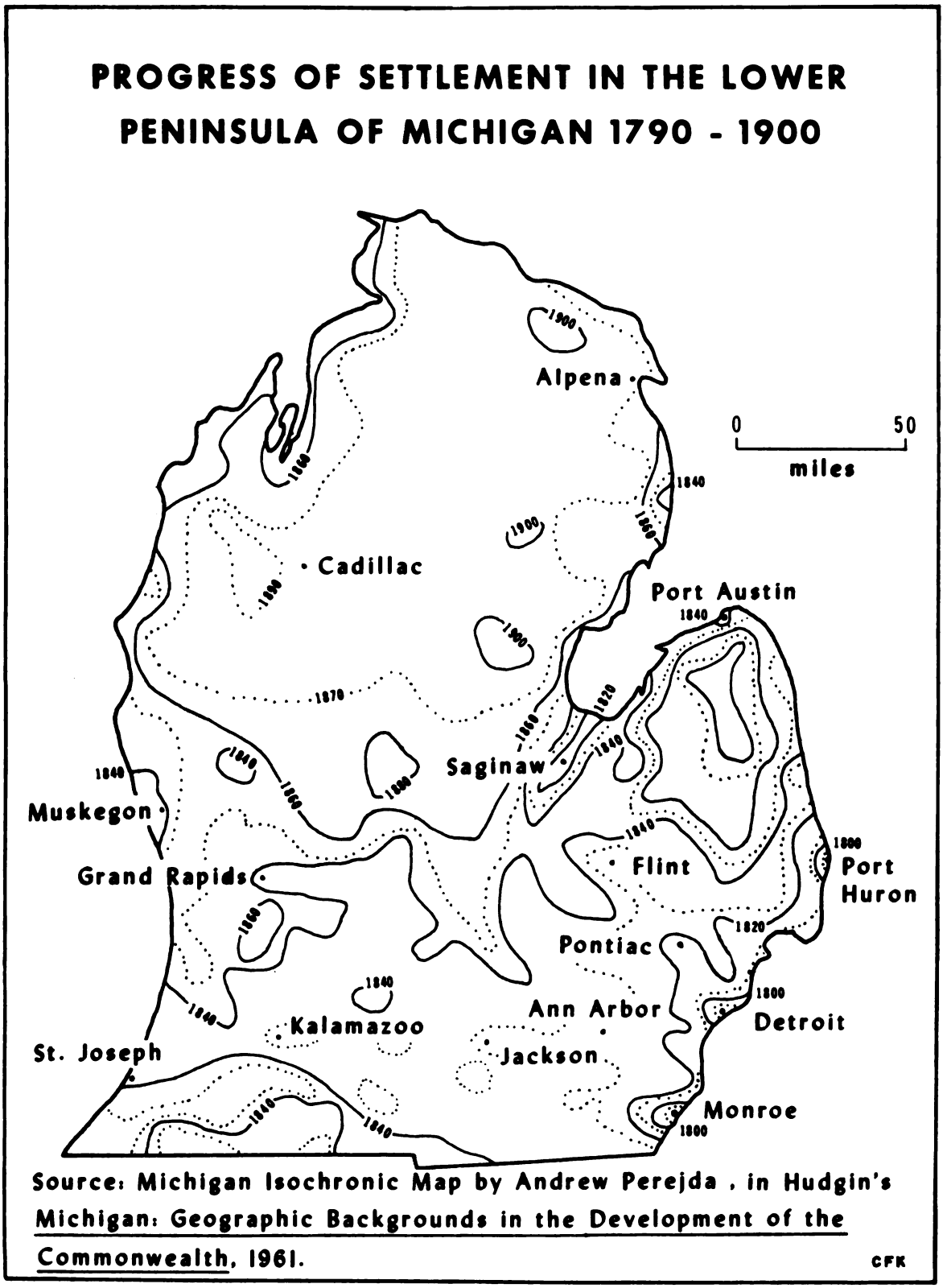
Source: U. S. Bureau of Census.




Source: Michigan Isochronic Map by Andrew Perejda, in Hudgin's Michigan: Geographic Backgrounds in the Development of the Commonwealth, 1961.

Figure 8.

tory. Three thousand six hundred and thirty-five persons, included in the total, actually lived in counties now in Wisconsin. Sixteen Michigan counties and Detroit totaled 28,004 inhabitants. Pioneers reached further into the interior and the settled area expanded considerably. Outlier nodes of settlement appeared in southwestern portions of the state and the Saginaw Valley settled area was enlarged. It was during this period that French Canadian dominance gave way to the peoples of New England and New York.

Michigan became a state in 1837. It entered the Union with a population of 175,025 persons, an increase of almost 150,000 from the 1830 total. Thirty-one counties were organized. Population was concentrated in the southeast, but villages were established at Kalamazoo, Niles, Jackson, Flint, and Saginaw. Most of the increase was the result of the westward movement of peoples from New England and New York.

## The Thumb

Fifteen years before Cadillac's efforts at Detroit, occupance was attempted in the Thumb at Fort St. Joseph. The short-lived stockade (1686-1688) was defended by fifty men.[7] It was intended to secure the detroit between lakes Erie and Huron against English encroachment. The next significant attempt at occupance was the construction of Fort Sinclair just south of the Pine and St. Clair River confluence. The British stockade was maintained from 1765 until independence was granted the colonies. Lieutenant Patrick Sinclair, command officer and a native of Scotland, obtained a deed from the Indians for 3,749 acres along the Pine River in 1765. Utilizing the pine timber and deriving large profits from a saw mill, Sinclair maintained his claim for seventeen years.[8]

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[7]Jenks, St. Clair County, pp. 88-89.

[8]U.S. Congress, American State Papers, "Lands and Settlers in Detroit," p. 193.

Sinclair was not the first to realize the potential of the white pine in the region. Campbell asserts that pine from the St. Clair River area was used to construct homes in Detroit as early as 1742.[9] Exploitation of white pine was an early activity in the southern reaches of the Thumb. The activity was pursued by both the British and French Canadians.

There were no desirable building materials in the environs of Detroit. The St. Clair River area afforded the closest supply. Excepting the early forest exploitation of the 1740's, no French Canadian settlements were established prior to 1780. By this time Detroit had developed into a settlement of about 2,000 inhabitants. Duperon Baby built a saw mill near the present site of Algonac in 1780 and began to supply Detroit with timber.[10]

Others from the Detroit settlement soon realized the need for timber and the potential of the St. Clair pinery. Slowly settlements were established along the North Channel of the St. Clair River, upstream from Algonac, and at the mouths of the Belle, Pine, and Black rivers. Although the saw mills were small, crudely constructed, and often only temporary; they were among the first saw mills built in Michigan. From this primitive beginning, the lumbering frontier which later swept both the Lower and Upper Peninsulas was launched.

After the United States gained control over the area, there was need for a statement from Congress concerning land title. C. Jouett, Indian agent at Detroit, was ordered to report the land claims to Congress in 1803. Jouett's district included all the French Canadian settlements from Otter Creek in Monroe County to the St. Clair River area (see Table 2 and Figure

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[9] James V. Campbell, "Early French Settlements in Michigan," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, II (1877-1878), p. 102.

[10] Jenks, St. Clair County, p. 363.

7).[11] Thirty-six farms were reported along the banks of the St. Clair River upstream to the Pine River. All were occupied between 1780 and 1800. In addition, Jenks claims ten settlers located near the mouth of the Black River between 1782 and 1796.[12]

These farms were typical of the long-lot settlements established elsewhere by the French and French Canadians in North America. All of the farms fronted on water. Farms along the St. Clair River upstream to Algonac were smaller in total acreage than those to the north. None of the farms south of Algonac exceeded 240 acres. These farms included from three to five acres of frontage and extended about forty acres inland. Soils were described as low and sandy "showing every mark of poverty".[13]

North of Algonac, farms were larger. Ten and twenty acres of river frontage was common, two claimed forty to forty-five acres. Again each extended inland to a rear line at forty acres. The farms were described as improved on cultivated, fertile soils.[14]

Typical of the long-lot system of land tenure is a narrow but extenuated land holding with water frontage which provided a means for transportation, communication, fishing and trapping. The limited size of the claims indicate little desire for agriculture and land acquisition. The French Canadian was characteristically a poor farmer.

In the St. Clair area the dwelling was usually situated on the river bank. A garden was started immediately behind the dwelling and usually in-

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[11] U. S. Congress, American State Papers, "Lands and Settlers in Detroit," pp. 190-193.

[12] Jenks, St. Clair County, pp. 139-141.

[13] U. S. Congress, American State Papers, "Lands and Settlers in Detroit," p. 192.

[14] Ibid.

cluded a small orchard. A field of corn or wheat extended beyond the garden. The largest portion of the claim was left in forest.[15] Fuller claims the habitant was not conscious of his poverty, adhered to old farming techniques, and was resistant to change.[16]

Fifty-two Private Claims were finally settled in St. Clair County which included 19,500 acres.[17] Under provisions of the act concerning the regulation of deeds granted or purchased from the Indians, granted by France before 1763, or granted by England between 1763 and 1783, persons who settled, occupied and improved land before July 1, 1796 and maintained it up to 1807 would be granted title if the claim did not exceed 640 acres.[18] Figure 9 illustrates the location of the Private Claims, all of which front on Lake St. Clair, the St. Clair River, or along the lower reaches of the Belle, Pine and Black rivers.

The French Canadian settlements in St. Clair County were significant because not only were they the first permanent settlers, but they supplied lumber for the Detroit area and focused attention upon the pineries of the Thumb. By 1800, there were seven mills in operation. Two were situated on the Black River, two on the Pine River, and three on small creeks which drained into the St. Clair River.[19]

French Canadians dominated the region until the 1820's. The United States officially displayed an interest in the area when Fort Gratiot was constructed, in 1814, at the confluence of the Black and St. Clair rivers.

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[15] Fuller, Economic and Social, p. 106.

[16] Ibid., p. 113.

[17] Jenks, St. Clair County, p. 70.

[18] Ibid., pp. 69-70.

[19] Ibid., p. 109.

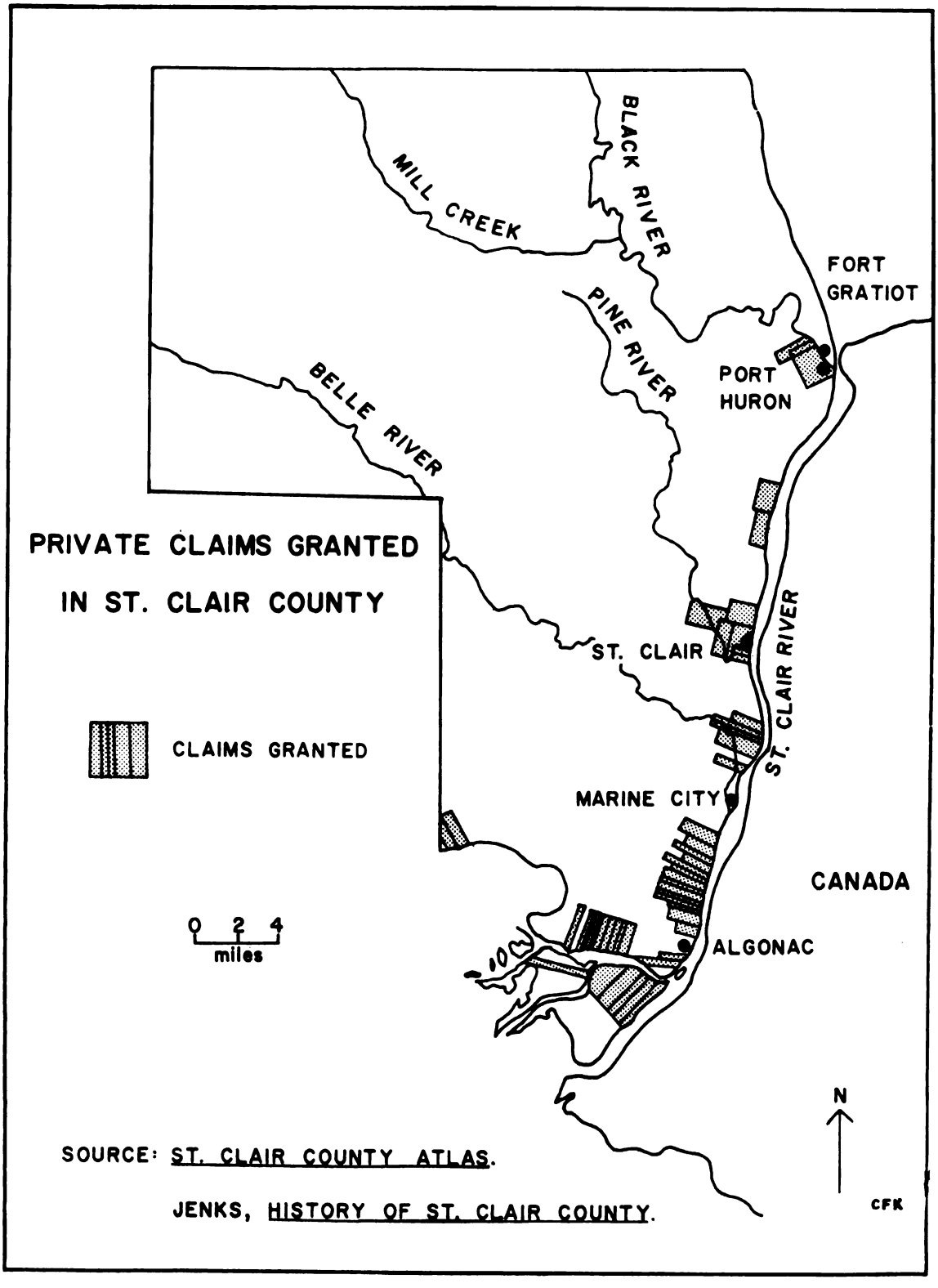
PRIVATE CLAIMS GRANTED
IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY
CLAIMS GRANTED
0 2 4
miles
MILL CREEK
BLACK RIVER
PINE RIVER
BELLE RIVER
FORT
GRATIOT
PORT
HURON
ST. CLAIR
ST. CLAIR RIVER
MARINE CITY
CANADA
ALGONAC
N
CFK
SOURCE: ST. CLAIR COUNTY ATLAS.
JENKS, HISTORY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY.

Figure 9.

The stockade was built largely as a protective measure against the Indians, but the complete garrison of forty men did not arrive until 1817.[20] In 1819, after their term was served, some soldiers remained to settle.

Land in the public domain was offered for sale in 1818, but little was sold in St. Clair County. Only a portion of the county was surveyed. The entire county wasn't surveyed until 1823. Land sales proceeded slowly and from 1818 to 1829 only forty-one sales were transacted.[21]

Although St. Clair County was officially organized in 1821 and divided into three townships in 1823, settlement came slowly. Evidence of inactivity is dramatically illustrated in that the small garrison of forty men at Fort Gratiot was considerably reduced in 1821 and, by 1826 the stockade lay in ruins.[22] The abandonment of the stockade, which was initially established to protect settlers, clearly indicates that the government had little faith in any immediate settlement activity.

Excluding Indians, only about 300 inhabitants resided in St. Clair County in 1821. Most of the population was distributed along the St. Clair River with a few settlers engaged in lumbering in the lower reaches of the Black River. River locations were preferred since there were no roads. Seventy-nine persons were assessed for taxation in 1821, and about one-third of the surnames on the tax roll indicate French Canadian descent.[23]

Saw mills were established in 1816 and 1818.[24] Activity in the early twenties focused chiefly on the fledgling lumber industry and more mills were

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[20]Western Historical Company, History of St. Clair County (Chicago: A. T. Andreas & Co., 1883), p. 263.

[21]Jenks, St. Clair County, pp. 80-81

[22]Ibid., pp. 99-100.

[23]See reprint of assessment roll in Western Historical Company, History of St. Clair County, pp. 131-132.

[24]Jenks, St. Clair County, p. 365.

constructed. Associated with the abundant timber supply, the shipbuilding industry enjoyed an early start. The first ship built on the banks on the St. Clair River was produced by the government at Fort Gratiot in 1818 -- a thirty-four foot revenue cutter.[25] Samuel Ward arrived at Marine City in 1819, from New York, and in 1824 constructed the "St. Clair", foreseeing a trade link with the East via the Erie Canal. The Ward family later grew wealthy from shipbuilding and lumbering and produced Michigan's first millionaire. Fishing was also an early activity and some restrictions concerning the quantity of catch were set in 1825.[26]

The first Federal Census to include St. Clair County (1830) reported 1,114 inhabitants. Relatively few persons took up land in the twenties, but land sales picked up in 1830. Rampant speculation in land, which swept the entire state, accounted for 200,000 acres sold in 1836 -- almost one-half the area of St. Clair County.[27]

Tne northern counties of the Thumb first felt the frontier impact in the thirties. Sanilac County was surveyed in 1834, and its first permanent settler arrived in the same year. Unchecked speculation in timber lands, especially along the Lake Huron shore and inland areas offering river transport, accounted for the purchase of 70 to 90 per cent of the land in some townships.[28] Also in 1834, Canadian-born A. G. Peer opened development in Huron County when he began quarrying stone on a seasonal basis at Grindstone City. The stone was shipped to Detroit and was utilized in the paving of

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[25] Ibid., p. 403.

[26] Ibid., p. 377.

[27] Ibid., p. 81.

[28] Portrait and Biographical Album of Sanilac County Containing Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1884), p. 453.

Woodward and Jefferson Avenues.[29]

Unrestrained land speculation spawned the "paper city"[30] era throughout the state. White Rock, situated fifty miles north of Port Huron on the Lake Huron coast of Huron County, was one of the famed speculative endeavors. White Rock was widely advertised in Detroit as a growing metropolis containing busy saw mills, churches, schools, a bank and a magnificent harbor catering to steamboats. However, Bela Hubbard a visitor in 1837 remarked:

> We found the entering river: it hardly admitted our canoe. Harbor there was none. Churches, houses, mills, people were all a myth. A thick wilderness covered the whole site.[31]

Only fifteen or twenty families had taken up land in the two northern counties by 1837.[32]

While settlers were first arriving in the northern portions of the Thumb, St. Clair County (1837) included 3,673 inhabitants. Lumbering was the chief activity and displayed rapid growth from 1830 to 1837.[33] In 1837 four grist mills were operating while thirty mills were sawing timber.

Lumbering activities centered on the city of Port Huron and St. Clair and the lower reaches of the Black River. Many of the large capacity mills were established at Port Huron and St. Clair from 1833 to 1836. The first

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[29] Portrait and Biographic Album of Huron County Containing Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens of the County (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1883), p. 451.

[30] Paper cities were a speculative device where persons or groups of people purchased land at a suitable site for a town or city. A plat was drawn and the land divided into lots. To sell the lots, these plats were highly publicized as prosperous towns. Despite the publicity, most of the paper cities were merely wilderness sites.

[31] Bela Hubbard, "A Michigan Geological Expedition," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collection, III (1884), p. 200.

[32] Album of Sanilac County, p. 455

[33] Jenks, St. Clair County, pp. 365-369.

steam powered mill established in Michigan began operation at Port Huron in 1833.[34] It utilized saw dust for fuel. The capitalists who purchased timber lands and established saw mills were largely natives of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. These early entrepreneurs represented the Yankee tide which began to invade the southern portion of the Thumb in the thirties.

Interest in agriculture lagged prior to statehood as emphasis focused on lumbering and shipbuilding. Men working in the forest depended on lumbering for a living and only tilled the soil for a short period during the summer months. Potatoes and vegetables were cultivated to supply their immediate needs. Some crops were planted in clearings to furnish feed for the livestock used in the pineries. Here farming was secondary when compared to counties to the southwest where there were no pine forests.

Figure 10 represents the progress of settlement in the Thumb. French Canadians, who were virtually the only settlers in 1800, located along Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River. Settlement was slow during the next thirty years. Some pioneers moved inland, but only the twelve most southeastern townships of St. Clair County received settlers by 1830. The most northern settled area reached up the Black River. No locations were made in either Huron or Sanilac counties by 1830, and only a few coastal settlements were established by 1837.

Settlement was retarded in the Thumb for many of the same reasons population growth lagged throughout Michigan. Just as Michigan was removed from the mainstream of settlement--the Ohio River Valley--so the Thumb was situated away from the general route of settlement in Michigan. While inland settlement proceeded through the southern tier of counties, dense forests and wet lands stymied overland movement to the Thumb. Paralleling the claims

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[34] Ibid., p. 368.

of misrepresentation of Michigan as a poor place for potential settlement back East, Fuller asserts the Thumb was misrepresented as a swamp by Detroit interests who were fearful of the proximity of the St. Clair area to Detroit.[35]

## Early Years of Statehood: 1837 to 1850

### Michigan

From statehood to 1850, the settled area of the Lower Peninsula was significantly enlarged. The outlier areas of the 1830's became centers with large hinterlands. By 1850 settlement extended to Muskegon well beyond Grand Rapids and Lansing. The Saginaw Valley was occupied (see Figure 8). In the Thumb region most of St. Clair County was settled by 1850, but only the Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron shorelines of Huron and Sanilac counties attracted settlers.

The first years following statehood were turbulent. The state government embarked on an ambitious program of internal improvements which included road, canal, and railroad construction. The schemes failed. Speculation in land and capital continued unchecked and "paper cities" multiplied. The financial problems of the late thirties slowed the pace of settlement only momentarily.

Population stood at 175,025 at statehood, increased to 212,267 in 1840, and reached 397,654 in 1850 (see Table 3). Population increase from 1830 to 1840 was 180,628 and 185,387 from 1840 to 1850. Considering the similar increase in both decades, it can be inferred that growth from 1840 to 1850 was due more to natural increase than immigration.

Land for agricultural settlement was the chief focus of this period. The agricultural southern tier of counties were well settled by 1850. Al-

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[35]Fuller, Economic and Social, pp. 164-165.

though agriculture was paramount, the lumber industry was beginning to show its potential. Saw mills multiplied along the Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay shores. Thirty-one counties were organized in 1837; by 1850 there were forty-three counties. The agricultural frontier crept northward.

## The Thumb

While settlement began to fix firm roots throughout the southern tier of Michigan's counties, southern portions of the Thumb were also becoming occupied. The general statewide pattern of settlement advanced from south to north and from coastal to interior locations. An analogous pattern was displayed in the Thumb. Settlement became secure in St. Clair County while the northern counties of Huron and Sanilac were first receiving pioneers. Sanilac County wasn't organized until 1848. It had previously been attached to St. Clair for judicial purposes.[36] Huron County finally warranted organization in 1859 after it had been attached to Saginaw and later Sanilac counties.[37]

Population increased from 3,673 in 1837 to 13,219 in 1850. St. Clair County was inhabited by 10,899 persons, Sanilac 2,112, and Huron as part of Sanilac County reported only 210 persons in 1850. In Huron and Sanilac counties, townships adjacent to Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay were the first to attract pioneers. There was little or no activity in the inland townships of the northern counties (see Figure 10).

Settlement and pioneer economic development focused on the southeastern section of the Thumb while settlements to the north were mere wilderness outposts. Northeastern St. Clair County contained a luxuriant stand of white pine (see Figure 6). It was here that lumbering was most significant. Saw

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[36] Album of Sanilac County, p. 459.

[37] Album of Huron County, p. 430.

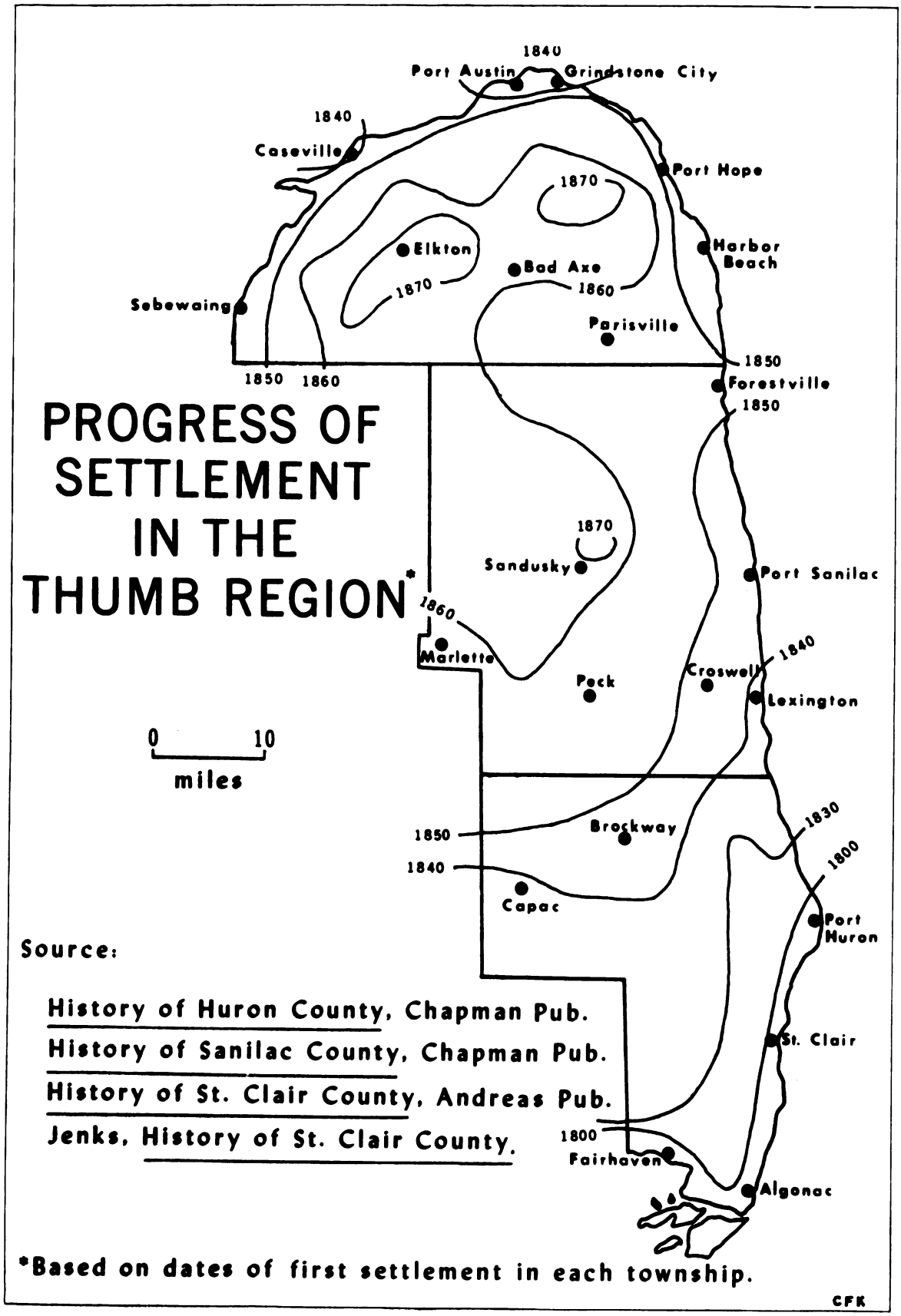
PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT IN THE THUMB REGION*
1840
Port Austin
Grindstone City
1840
Caseville
Port Hope
1870
Elkton
Bad Axe
Harbor Beach
1870
1860
Sebewaing
Parisville
1850
1850
1860
Forestville
1850
1870
Sandusky
Port Sanilac
1860
Marlette
Croswell
1840
Peck
Lexington
0
10
miles
1850
Brockway
1830
1840
1800
Capac
Port Huron
Source:
History of Huron County, Chapman Pub.
History of Sanilac County, Chapman Pub.
History of St. Clair County, Andreas Pub.
Jenks, History of St. Clair County.
St. Clair
1800
Fairhaven
Algonac
*Based on dates of first settlement in each township.
CFK

Figure 10.

mills multiplied from 1837 to 1850. New mills, both steam and water powered, were also constructed at St. Clair, Marine City, and Algonac tapping the forests in the Belle and Pine river hinterlands. Chief markets for the lumber were Chicago, Milwaukee, Oswego and Buffalo, New York.[38]

Mill towns grew as the increased demand for woodsmen, raftsmen, and sawyers attracted pioneers. Samuel Ward's shipbuilding endeavors at Marine City offered opportunity for carpenters, joiners, caulkers, and sailors. In 1840, Ward launched the steamer "Huron" which soon commanded the St. Clair River route from Detroit to Port Huron.[39] Port Huron and St. Clair were incorporated as villages in 1849 and 1850 respectfully.[40]

Lumbering and associated shipbuilding were the chief activities of the period. Workers in the mill towns and forests were dependent on outside sources for their foodstuffs. Most of the flour and corn was brought from Detroit.[41] It wasn't until 1847 that farmers produced enough surplus wheat to justify the construction of a flouring mill.[42]

Settlement expanded slowly to the north. Extreme southeastern Sanilac received the first settlers, but by 1850 only townships adjacent to Lake Huron experienced any development. Coastal locations were selected largely for transportation convenience. Lumbering once again provided the stimulus, but development was not as rapid or intensive as in St. Clair County. The first steam powered saw mill was built in 1846 at Lexington.[43] Shingle-

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[38]Western Historical Company, History of St. Clair County, p. 463.

[39]Jenks, St. Clair County, p. 403.

[40]Ibid., p. 253.

[41]Western Historical Company, History of St. Clair County, p. 242.

[42]Ibid., p. 463.

[43]Album of Sanilac County, p. 454.

making was an important activity, and many took up temporary residence to make enough shingles to accumulate capital to buy land.[44] Only Lexington bore any resemblance to a village. The first steamboat docked there in 1846.[45]

Huron County reported only 210 inhabitants in 1850, and population was distributed in isolated settlements along the coast. To the Lake Huron coast came lumbermen, shingle-makers, trappers, and fishermen; many of whom made no claim to the land. At Grindstone City, A. G. Peer made a claim of 400 acres and was soon turning out grindstones.[46] At Sebewaing, a colony of German missionaries arrived in 1845 bent on christianizing the Indians.[47]

Most of the settlers perceived the forest as the source of their prosperity. Agriculture was neglected. Those who came north to the Thumb were in direct contrast to their fellow pioneers to the southwest who would rather plow a field than fell a pine. Those who came to the Thumb to work in the forests, mills, and shipbuilding yards were the predecessors of thousands who were to create scores of mill towns along the shores of both the Upper and Lower Peninsulas.

## Completion of Settlement: 1850 to 1900

### Michigan

Initial settlement, in both peninsulas of Michigan, was completed by the turn of the century. All Michigan counties had a population density of at least two persons per square mile in 1900.

While portions of the northern Lower Peninsula were receiving initial

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[44] Oliver Raymond, "Port Sanilac Settler," Michigan History, XXXIII (1949), pp. 167-170.

[45] Album of Sanilac County, p. 479.

[46] Album of Huron County, p. 269.

[47] Ibid., p. 430.

settlement, population densities in the southern tier of counties were increasing. Most of the southern half of the Lower Peninsula, excepting interior portions of the Thumb, had been settled by 1870. By 1880, almost all of the Lower Peninsula was settled save a few isolated interior localities (see Figure 8). In the northern Lower Peninsula, settlement was first established along the shores of lakes Huron and Michigan, leaving the interior as the last area of settlement.

Michigan's population increased steadily from 397,654 in 1850 to 2,420,982 in 1900. Each decade averaged an approximate 400,000 increase over the preceding decade (see Table 3). The rural population ratio declined from 95.7 per cent in 1850 to 79.6 in 1870, to 60.7 per cent in 1900. There was an associated rise in the urban population ratio from 4.3 per cent in 1850 to 39.3 per cent in 1900.[48] Although the rural population ratio diminished in this period, each decade exhibited an increase in total rural population. The urban population was growing at a more rapid rate than the rural which accounts for the decreasing rural to total population ratio.

The area south of a line from the northern border of St. Clair County to Muskegon included the state's best known agricultural lands of the time and was the most densely populated. Within this half century, Michigan emerged from the wilderness and entered the ranks of the agricultural states. It was during these fifty years that the foundations for Michigan's present industrial and commercial economy were laid. Many factors account for the quick expansion and development of almost all facets of life. Some of the more significant factors associated with this development were the completion of the Michigan Central Railroad from Detroit to Chicago in 1852, sub-

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[48] Amos H. Hawley, The Population of Michigan 1840 to 1960: An Analysis of Growth, Distribution, and Composition, Michigan Governmental Studies, No. 19 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1949), p. 26.

sequent railroad construction, the Homestead Act of 1862, the Civil War, technological developments in agriculture, and the lumber industry.

Markets for agricultural and manufactured products created from Civil War demands stimulated Michigan's economy. Agriculture boomed throughout the War period. Michigan became a significant wheat producing state and ranked as high as eighth in the nation as late as 1890.[49] Wool production was also stimulated by military demand. Michigan ranked either third or fourth in the nation in wool production from 1860 to 1890. Since the traditional markets of Michigan were along the Atlantic seaboard, military activity had little effect on marketing practices. Trade with the industrial East was very profitable, and transportation rates actually decreased during the War.[50]

In the 1850's speculators turned their attention and capital to the pine lands. Lumbering diffused from the Thumb, and the associated economic boom struck the Saginaw Valley. From here the industry moved northward with mill towns established at Oscoda, Alpena, and Cheboygan. Rivers flowing into Lake Michigan also tapped rich pine hinterlands; mills were constructed at Grand Haven, Muskegon, and Manistee. Mill towns flourished at the mouths of most rivers on both Lake Huron and Michigan shores. In the mid-1870's logging railways increased the lumbermen's range. Areas far from the rivers could be economically logged. Lumbering moved to the Upper Peninsula in the eighties, and Michigan attained its largest production in 1888.[51] It ranked

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[49]Willis F. Dunbar, "The Transformation of Rural Life in Michigan Since 1845," Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, XXIX (1943), p. 482.

[50]Richard H. Sewell, "Michigan Farmers and the Civil War," Michigan History, XLIV (1960), p. 367.

[51]Willis Frederick Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 474-475.

first in the nation in 1900.

Settlement followed lumbering developments. Farmers began to cultivate the cut-over lands. The lumbering heyday produced Michigan's first millionaires. Capital was now available for investment. Industrial and commercial centers were beginning to develop as a result of the boom in agriculture and lumbering. Early manufacturing was usually limited to the immediate local area; only the lumber and furniture industries had markets out of the state. Each local area was independent with respect to the necessary manufactures; each company had a local monopoly. In the 1880's and 1890's, changes in this organization came about with increased demand and availability of investment capital.[52] Manufacturing became concentrated in larger urban areas about 1900.

The Thumb

Most of the major man-land relationships of the contemporaneous landscape of the Thumb region were established during the last half of the nineteenth century. The foreign-born settlers and their contributions in establishing these relationships is the focus of this dissertation. Therefore, much of the detail is left to the remaining chapters. In an attempt to maintain continuity, only general trends are presented here.

Paralleling the state pattern, settlement continued to diffuse from south to north and from coastal to interior locations. Only a few interior townships had not received their first permanent inhabitants by 1870, and every organized township had received settlers by 1880 (see Figure 10). Emulating the statewide pattern, population densities were greatest in the south and least in the northern counties.

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[52]Sidney Glazer, "The Beginnings of the Economic Revolution in Michigan," Michigan History, XXIV (1950), p. 194.

The population of the tri-county region stood at 13,219 in 1850. Population steadily increased to 124,445 in 1900. St. Clair County remained the most populous with 10,899 inhabitants in 1850 and 55,228 in 1900. Sanilac County increased from 2,112 in 1850 to 35,055 inhabitants in 1900. Huron County displayed a rapid growth from 210 in 1850 to 34,162 persons in 1900. The steady population increase was by no means uniform in each county. Table 4 indicates the population growth of the Thumb counties from 1830 to 1960.

St. Clair County sustained its greatest increase from 1850 to 1870. Between 1870 and 1890, Sanilac and Huron counties tallied larger numerical increases than St. Clair. The greatest gains in population were recorded from 1870 to 1880 for Sanilac and Huron counties. More population was added to St. Clair than Sanilac during the last decade of the century, but Huron County enjoyed the greatest increase. Sanilac County reached its peak population in 1900.

As the pineries of the Thumb were depleted, either by the ambitious ax of man or the ravaging fires of 1870 and 1881, economic emphasis switched from lumbering to agriculture. Agriculture became the prime activity, especially north and west of Port Huron. Port Huron soon became the metropolis of the region and supported a population of 19,158 in 1900. Other incorporated places of over 1,000 persons in 1900 were Marine City with 3,829, St. Clair with 2,543, Algonac with 1,216, and Yale with 1,125 inhabitants. Sanilac County reported no incorporated place of over 1,000 persons in 1900; Marlette was the largest town with 996 inhabitants. Sebewaing was the largest incorporated place in Huron County with 1,243 inhabitants in 1900 followed by Bad Axe with 1,241 and Harbor Beach with 1,149 persons. Only Port Huron enjoyed any significant industrial development.

The major pattern established in this fifty year period was the development of a highly productive rural-agricultural system with only one sig-

Table 4.

POPULATION GROWTH IN THE THUMB REGION: 1830-1960

| Year | County | Population | Thumb |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1830 | St. Clair | 1,114 | 1,114 |
| 1837 | St. Clair | 3,673 | 3,673 |
| 1840 | St. Clair | 4,606 | 4,606 |
| 1845 | St. Clair | 8,375 | 8,375 |
| 1850 | St. Clair | 10,899 | |
| | Sanilac | 2,112 | |
| | Huron | 210 | 13,219 |
| 1860 | St. Clair | 26,604 | |
| | Sanilac | 7,599 | |
| | Huron | 3,165 | 37,368 |
| 1870 | St. Clair | 36,661 | |
| | Sanilac | 14,562 | |
| | Huron | 9,049 | 60,272 |
| 1880 | St. Clair | 46,197 | |
| | Sanilac | 26,341 | |
| | Huron | 20,089 | 92,627 |
| 1890 | St. Clair | 52,105 | |
| | Sanilac | 32,589 | |
| | Huron | 28,545 | 113,239 |
| 1900 | St. Clair | 55,228 | |
| | Sanilac | 35,055 | |
| | Huron | 34,162 | 124,445 |
| 1910 | St. Clair | 52,341 | |
| | Sanilac | 33,930 | |
| | Huron | 34,758 | 121,029 |
| 1920 | St. Clair | 58,009 | |
| | Sanilac | 31,237 | |
| | Huron | 32,786 | 122,032 |
| 1930 | St. Clair | 67,563 | |
| | Sanilac | 27,751 | |
| | Huron | 31,132 | 126,446 |
| 1940 | St. Clair | 76,222 | |
| | Sanilac | 30,114 | |
| | Huron | 32,584 | 138,920 |

Table 4 (cont'd.)

| Year | County | Population | Thumb |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1950 | St. Clair | 91,599 | |
| | Sanilac | 30,837 | |
| | Huron | 33,149 | 155,585 |
| 1960 | St. Clair | 107,201 | |
| | Sanilac | 32,314 | |
| | Huron | 34,006 | 173,521 |

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

nificant commercial-industrial center. Primarily due to the developments at Port Huron, St. Clair County was the most populous. It would appear that during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century new lands in the north were perceived to offer more opportunity than the more settled southern portions of the Thumb.

## The Rural to Urban Movement: 1900-1960

### Michigan

The development of an industrial and commercial economy and the burgeoning growth of urban places are the two most salient features of Michigan's development since 1900. The most dramatic changes in Michigan's cultural landscape of today as compared to that of the 1890's can be attributed to the rural to urban movement of population and the development of the automobile industry. The automobile industry and the mobility afforded to society altered the way of life for all Americans, but the industry has special significance for Michigan.

Both urbanization and industrialization owe much of their development to the automobile. Certainly there were other significant industries operating in Michigan at the turn of the century; but the automobile industry with its associated services and auxilliary industries, must stand as the most significant in developing and maintaining manufacturing. The industry boomed from the early 1900's until the Depression slowed the economy down in the thirties. During World War II, the industry turned to the production of munitions and war materiel.[53] Since the War the automobile industry has maintained and created jobs in its factories, in allied industries, and in services related to the automobile.

From 2,420,982 inhabitants in 1900, the total population catapulted

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[53]Dunbar, Michigan: A History, pp. 574-575.

to 7,832,194 by 1960 (see Table 3). The population increased by about 400,000 between the decades of 1900 and 1910, a pace similar to that of the last half of the nineteenth century. The rate of increase more than doubled from 1910 to 1920 and tripled from 1920 to 1930. The depression years of the thirties halted rapid population increase; the rate returned to the 400,000 increase of the late nineteenth century. During the 1940's population swelled by over 1,100,000 to a total of 6,371,766 persons in 1950. An even greater increase was exhibited in the fifties, and Michigan reported 7,823,194 inhabitants in 1960.

Although the population increased during each decade from 1900 to 1960, not all counties in the Lower Peninsula enjoyed a consistent population increase. Fifty-four of the sixty-eight Lower Peninsula counties report a peak population in 1960, but only fourteen had a consistent population growth since 1900 (see Figure 11). Each of these fourteen counties are located in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula and ten have within their boundaries an urban place of over 25,000 inhabitants. Only Berrien, St. Joseph, Monroe, and Ottawa counties displayed a continual growth and do not contain an urban place of 25,000 persons. The rural to urban trend is reflected by the consistent growth of counties which contain large urban places as compared to the vascillating growth of counties without significant urban development. In most cases, those counties which did not include an urban place of 25,000 inhabitants did not enjoy a consistent population growth.

Fourteen of the sixty-eight Lower Peninsula counties reported peak populations in years previous to 1960. Excepting Huron and Sanilac counties, which reached peak populations in 1910 and 1900 respectively, all are located in the northwestern quarter of the Lower Peninsula. All of these

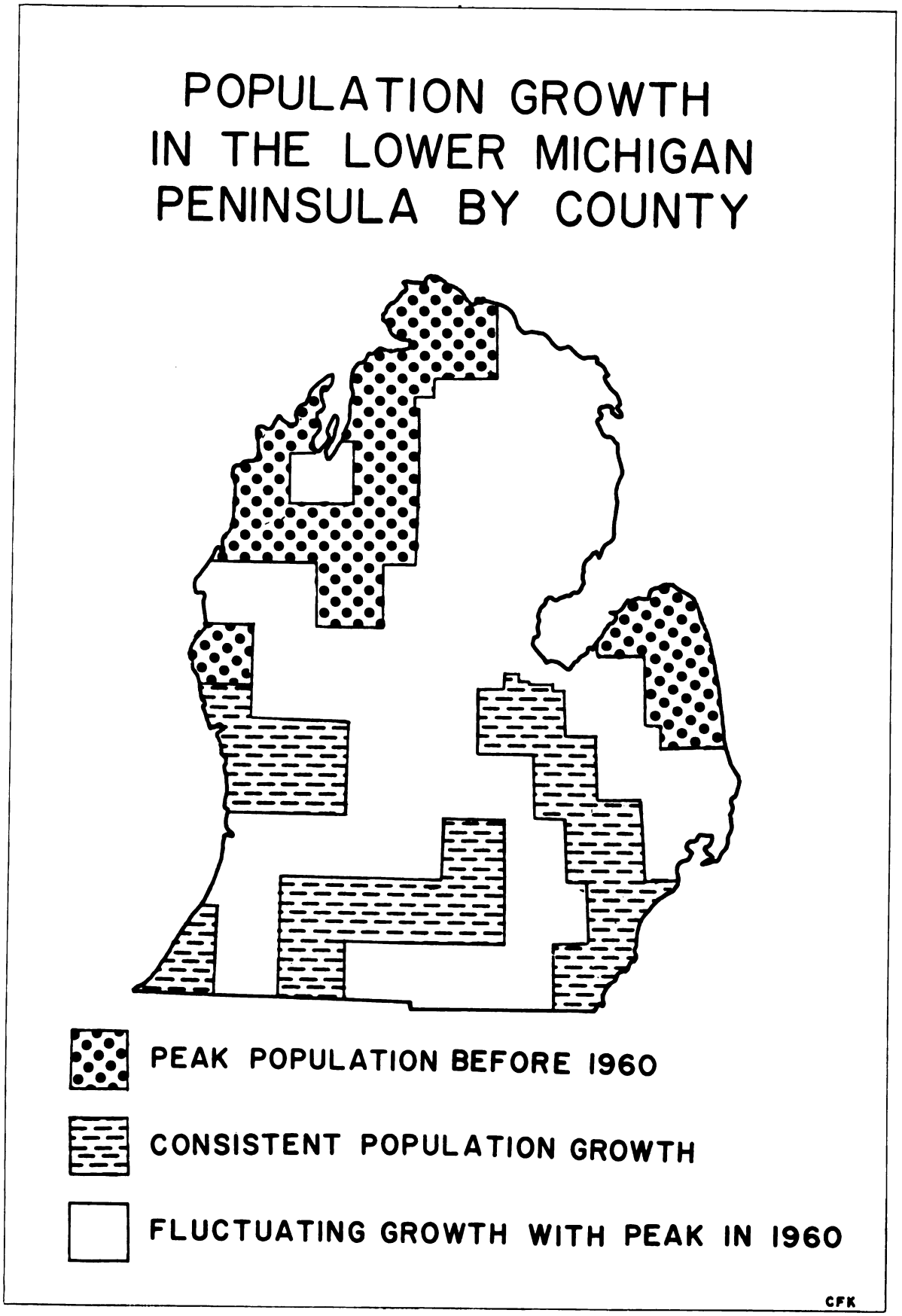
POPULATION GROWTH
IN THE LOWER MICHIGAN
PENINSULA BY COUNTY
PEAK POPULATION BEFORE 1960
CONSISTENT POPULATION GROWTH
FLUCTUATING GROWTH WITH PEAK IN 1960
CFK

Figure 11.

counties attained their greatest numbers by 1920 with three reaching a peak in 1900, nine in 1910, and two in 1920. In general, these counties are located in the cut-over region of the northwestern Lower Peninsula where the soils are of low agricultural potential.

The change from a largely rural-agricultural to a complex urban-industrial economy has significantly altered the nature of the population distribution since 1900. In 1900 only two cities reported a population greater than 50,000 inhabitants, five in 1920, nine in 1950, and in 1960 seventeen cities reported a population greater than 50,000 persons. Urban growth has concentrated in the southern half of the peninsula with all thirty-seven cities of over 25,000 persons in 1960 situated south of a line drawn from Muskegon to Midland to Bay City. Population is most dense in the Detroit vicinity where twenty-two of the thirty-seven cities are located.

The ratio of rural to total population declined from 60.7 per cent in 1900 to 26.6 per cent in 1960 while the urban ratio climbed from 39.3 per cent in 1900 to 73.4 per cent in 1960. These changing ratios reflect not only changes in population distribution but also economic emphasis. Michigan changed from rural-agricultural in 1900 to a sophisticated urban-industrial economy in 1960. However, Michigan still maintains a strong agricultural foundation.

## The Thumb

The three counties comprising the Thumb reported a population of 124,445 persons in 1900. In 1960, the population was reported at 175,521 persons. Population growth lagged behind the rapid growth displayed on a statewide basis. Table 5 illustrates population growth in the Thumb region from 1900 to 1960.

Total population was at a virtual standstill from 1900 to 1930 and act-

TABLE 5.

RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION: 1900-1960

| Year | County | Population | Thumb Population | Urban | Thumb Urban | Rural | Thumb Rural |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1900 | St. Clair | 55,228 | | 25,530 | | 29,698 | |
| | Sanilac | 35,055 | | ------ | | 35,055 | |
| | Huron | 34,162 | 124,445 | ------ | 25,530 | 34,162 | 98,915 |
| 1910 | St. Clair | 52,341 | | 25,266 | | 27,075 | |
| | Sanilac | 33,930 | | ------ | | 33,930 | |
| | Huron | 34,758 | 121,029 | ------ | 25,266 | 34,758 | 95,763 |
| 1920 | St. Clair | 58,009 | | 32,879 | | 25,130 | |
| | Sanilac | 31,237 | | ------ | | 31,237 | |
| | Huron | 32,786 | 122,032 | ------ | 32,879 | 32,786 | 89,153 |
| 1930 | St. Clair | 67,563 | | 38,212 | | 29,351 | |
| | Sanilac | 27,751 | | ------ | | 27,751 | |
| | Huron | 31,132 | 126,446 | ------ | 38,212 | 31,132 | 88,234 |
| 1940 | St. Clair | 76,222 | | 39,863 | | 36,359 | |
| | Sanilac | 30,114 | | ----- | | 30,114 | |
| | Huron | 32,584 | 138,920 | 2,624 | 42,487 | 29,960 | 96,433 |
| 1950 | St. Clair | 91,599 | | 49,266 | | 42,333 | |
| | Sanilac | 30,837 | | ------ | | 30,837 | |
| | Huron | 33,149 | 155,585 | 2,973 | 52,239 | 30,176 | 103,346 |
| 1960 | St. Clair | 107,201 | | 53,065 | | 54,136 | |
| | Sanilac | 32,314 | | ------ | | 32,314 | |
| | Huron | 34,006 | 173,521 | 2,998 | 56,063 | 31,008 | 117,458 |

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

ually declined from 1900 to 1920. Sanilac County reached its peak population in 1900, but steadily declined to 27,751 persons in 1930 which approximated its 1880 population. Since 1930, the population has risen moderately. Huron County attained its greatest population in 1910 when 34,758 persons claimed residence, but the total fell to 31,132 in 1930. Additions since 1930 account for the 34,006 inhabitants in 1960.

St. Clair has always been the most populous of the Thumb counties. Growth has not been uniform, however. Population increased in each decade to 55,228 persons in 1900, but declined to 52,341 in 1910. Population has grown steadily since 1910 to 107,201 persons in 1960. Industrial and commercial development at Port Huron accounts for much of the increase. Excepting the Port Huron vicinity, the Thumb region has remained largely rural.

The rather passive population growth, as compared to Michigan's population boom, is a result of the large rural population. Eighty per cent of the population was classified as rural in 1900. The ratio has fallen steadily since 1900, but in 1960 the rural population still accounted for 68 per cent of all residents. Sanilac and Huron counties are virtually completely rural. The only urban place in the two northern counties is Bad Axe, the seat of Huron County. St. Clair County also supports a large rural population, but from 1920 to 1950 urban residents outnumbered their rural counterparts. Since 1940, St. Clair County has maintained a greater number of rural resident than either Huron or Sanilac.

The Thumb region followed the general rural to urban trend from 1900 to 1930 when the rural population was reduced by nearly 10,000. In the same period, the urban population added over 12,000 persons. Rural and urban population increased by 29,224 and 17,851 inhabitants respectfully since 1930. Due to the paucity of urban places, one in Huron and five in St. Clair County,

rural residents outnumbered urban dwellers in 1960. Port Huron is the only significant urban area; it has grown from 19,158 persons in 1900 to 36,084 in 1960.

Bad Axe in Huron County, Algonac, Marine City, Marysville, and St. Clair are the other urban places. Numerous small incorporated towns and villages supply local areas with goods and services.

Port Huron moved from the saw mill era into the twentieth century when manufacturing turned to agricultural implements, road building equipment, and automobile parts. The Port Huron Engine and Thresher Company was noted for its agricultural implements and maintained warehouses in Peoria, Des Moines, Wichita, Minneapolis, and Winnipeg. Later the company turned to the manufacture of road building equipment, and in 1900 laid the first mile of hard surface macadam road in the nation.[54] From 1907 to 1920, four companies began automobile parts production. All operations were suspended by 1926. Port Huron attracted foundries and factories; by 1968, seventy-seven industries were producing brass products, magnets, automotive and aircraft wire and cable, automobile parts, marine engines, paper, small boats, and salt.[55]

## Foreign-Born Population Trends

### Michigan

The first white men to explore and found permanent settlement in Michigan were of foreign nativity. Michigan maintained its French and French Canadian identity for over a century following initial occupance. Unfortunately the censuses of 1790 through 1840 were not concerned with the population's nativity. It isn't until 1850 that an accurate statement con-

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[54]Dorothy Marie Mitts, That Noble Country (Philadelphia: Dorrance & Company, 1968), p. 247.

[55]Ibid., pp. 246-252.

cerning nativity can be made.

Five periods can be utilized to discuss the growth of the foreign-born population of Michigan. The first period deals with the foreign-born population before census data becomes available in 1850. From 1850 to 1890, the foreign-born population experienced constant growth. The period from 1890 to 1910 marks a pause in growth. Peak foreign-born population was attained in 1930 after a spurt of growth from 1910. Since 1930 there has been a steady decline. Table 6 illustrates the growth of the foreign-born population in Michigan from 1850 to 1960.

Foreign-Born to 1850

Foreign-born persons have a long history in Michigan, with the French and French Canadians founding the first permanent settlement. In 1800, more than three-fourths of the population residing in what was later to become Michigan spoke French.[56] Ford suggests that the French Canadians were in the majority until 1825 when the first wave of New England settlers arrived.[57]

Canadians from Upper Canada drifted across the Detroit and St. Clair rivers before 1850 as the more adventurous sought new opportunities. Political and economic unrest plus agitation by reformers (Mackenzie in Upper Canada and Papineau in Lower Canada) against the Family Compact resulted in the short lived Rebellion of 1837 in Canada.[58] The Rebellion of 1837 or Patriot's War stimulated many Canadians, disappointed with conditions

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[56] Census of the State of Michigan, 1884: Population, I (Lansing, Mich.: Thorp & Godfrey, State Printers and Binders, 1886), p. xx.

[57] Ford, "The French Canadians in Michigan," p. 257.

[58] Gerald M. Craig, The United States and Canada (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 119-132.

TABLE 6.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF MICHIGAN AND SIGNIFICANT COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN: 1850-1960[1]

| Year | Country of Origin | Number | Per Cent of Total | Per Cent of Foreign Born |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850 | Total Foreign-Born | 54,703 | 13.8 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 14,008 | 3.5 | 25.6 |
| | Ireland | 13,385 | 3.4 | 24.5 |
| | England | 10,620 | 2.7 | 19.4 |
| | Germany | 10,223 | 2.6 | 18.7 |
| 1860 | Total Foreign-Born | 149,903 | 19.9 | 100.0 |
| | Germany | 38,127 | 5.1 | 25.6 |
| | Canada | 36,493 | 4.9 | 24.5 |
| | Ireland | 30,049 | 4.0 | 20.2 |
| | England | 26,102 | 3.5 | 17.5 |
| | Netherlands | 6,335 | 0.8 | 4.2 |
| 1870 | Total Foreign-Born | 268,010 | 22.6 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 89,590 | 7.6 | 33.4 |
| | Germany | 64,143 | 5.4 | 23.9 |
| | Ireland | 42,013 | 3.5 | 15.7 |
| | England | 35,635 | 3.0 | 13.3 |
| | Netherlands | 12,559 | 1.1 | 4.7 |
| 1880 | Total Foreign-Born | 388,508 | 23.7 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 148,866 | 9.1 | 38.3 |
| | Germany | 89,085 | 5.4 | 22.9 |
| | England | 44,096 | 2.7 | 11.4 |
| | Ireland | 43,413 | 2.7 | 11.2 |
| | Netherlands | 17,177 | 1.0 | 4.4 |
| 1890 | Total Foreign-Born | 543,880 | 26.0 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 181,416 | 8.7 | 33.4 |
| | Germany | 135,509 | 6.5 | 24.9 |
| | England | 56,157 | 2.7 | 10.3 |
| | Ireland | 39,065 | 1.9 | 7.2 |
| | Netherlands | 29,410 | 1.4 | 5.4 |
| 1900 | Total Foreign-Born | 541,653 | 22.4 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 184,398 | 7.6 | 34.0 |
| | Germany | 125,074 | 5.2 | 23.1 |
| | England | 44,677 | 1.8 | 8.2 |
| | Netherlands | 30,406 | 1.3 | 5.6 |
| | Ireland | 29,182 | 1.2 | 5.4 |
| | Poland | 28,286 | 1.2 | 5.2 |
| | Sweden | 26,956 | 1.1 | 5.0 |
| | Finland | 18,910 | 0.8 | 3.5 |
| | Scotland | 10,343 | 0.4 | 1.9 |

TABLE 6 (cont'd.)

| Year | Country of Origin | Number | Per Cent of Total | Per Cent of Foreign Born |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1910 | Total Foreign-Born | 595,524 | 21.2 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 172,237 | 6.1 | 28.9 |
| | Germany | 105,912 | 3.8 | 17.8 |
| | Poland | 62,419 | 2.2 | 10.5 |
| | England | 43,510 | 1.5 | 7.3 |
| | Netherlands | 33,471 | 1.2 | 5.6 |
| | Finland | 31,144 | 1.1 | 5.2 |
| | Sweden | 26,374 | 0.9 | 4.4 |
| | Ireland | 20,434 | 0.7 | 3.4 |
| | Italy | 16,860 | 0.6 | 2.8 |
| | Austria | 16,442 | 0.6 | 2.8 |
| | USSR | 15,833 | 0.6 | 2.7 |
| | Hungary | 11,597 | 0.4 | 1.9 |
| 1920 | Total Foreign-Born | 726,635 | 19.8 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 164,747 | 4.5 | 22.7 |
| | Poland | 103,926 | 2.8 | 14.3 |
| | Germany | 86,047 | 2.3 | 11.8 |
| | England | 48,303 | 1.3 | 6.6 |
| | U.S.S.R. | 45,313 | 1.2 | 6.2 |
| | Netherlands | 33,499 | 0.9 | 4.6 |
| | Italy | 30,216 | 0.8 | 4.2 |
| | Finland | 30,096 | 0.8 | 4.1 |
| | Sweden | 24,707 | 0.7 | 3.4 |
| | Hungary | 22,607 | 0.6 | 3.1 |
| | Austria | 22,004 | 0.6 | 3.0 |
| | Ireland | 16,531 | 0.5 | 2.3 |
| | Scotland | 13,175 | 0.4 | 1.8 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 11,161 | 0.3 | 1.5 |
| | Belgium | 10,501 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| 1930 | Total Foreign-Born | 849,297 | 17.5 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 203,302 | 4.2 | 23.9 |
| | Poland | 119,228 | 2.5 | 14.0 |
| | Germany | 81,714 | 1.7 | 9.6 |
| | England | 64,957 | 1.3 | 7.6 |
| | Italy | 43,087 | 0.9 | 5.1 |
| | Scotland | 35,257 | 0.7 | 4.2 |
| | U.S.S.R. | 34,348 | 0.7 | 4.0 |
| | Netherlands | 32,128 | 0.7 | 3.8 |
| | Finland | 27,022 | 0.6 | 3.2 |
| | Sweden | 23,905 | 0.5 | 2.8 |
| | Hungary | 19,188 | 0.4 | 2.3 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 17,646 | 0.4 | 2.1 |
| | Ireland | 17,528 | 0.4 | 2.1 |
| | Yugoslavia | 16,468 | 0.3 | 1.9 |

TABLE 6 (cont'd.)

| Year | Country of Origin | Number | Per Cent of Total | Per Cent of Foreign Born |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1930 | Belgium | 13,931 | 0.3 | 1.6 |
| | Austria | 13,299 | 0.3 | 1.6 |
| | Rumania | 11,482 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| | Greece | 10,061 | 0.2 | 1.3 |
| 1940 | Total Foreign-Born | 683,030 | 12.9 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 159,248 | 3.0 | 23.3 |
| | Poland | 96,826 | 1.8 | 14.2 |
| | Germany | 59,783 | 1.1 | 8.8 |
| | England | 49,099 | 0.9 | 7.2 |
| | Italy | 40,631 | 0.8 | 5.9 |
| | U.S.S.R. | 32,229 | 0.6 | 4.7 |
| | Scotland | 27,306 | 0.5 | 4.0 |
| | Netherlands | 24,722 | 0.5 | 3.6 |
| | Finland | 21,151 | 0.4 | 3.1 |
| | Hungary | 20,593 | 0.4 | 3.0 |
| | Austria | 17,918 | 0.3 | 2.6 |
| | Sweden | 17,346 | 0.3 | 2.5 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 12,725 | 0.2 | 1.9 |
| | Yugoslavia | 12,517 | 0.2 | 1.8 |
| | Ireland | 12,506 | 0.2 | 1.8 |
| | Belgium | 11,641 | 0.2 | 1.7 |
| 1950 | Total Foreign-Born | 603,735 | 9.5 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 142,258 | 2.2 | 23.6 |
| | Poland | 81,595 | 1.3 | 13.5 |
| | Germany | 45,323 | 0.7 | 7.5 |
| | England | 42,726 | 0.7 | 7.1 |
| | Italy | 39,937 | 0.6 | 6.4 |
| | U.S.S.R. | 30,804 | 0.5 | 5.1 |
| | Scotland | 24,887 | 0.4 | 4.1 |
| | Netherlands | 20,215 | 0.3 | 3.3 |
| | Hungary | 18,818 | 0.3 | 3.1 |
| | Finland | 15,501 | 0.2 | 2.6 |
| | Sweden | 12,322 | 0.2 | 2.0 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 12,168 | 0.2 | 2.0 |
| | Yugoslavia | 11,453 | 0.2 | 1.9 |
| | Ireland | 10,534 | 0.2 | 1.7 |
| | Belgium | 10,518 | 0.2 | 1.7 |
| 1960 | Total Foreign-Born | 529,624 | 6.8 | 100.0 |
| | Canada | 126,095 | 1.6 | 23.8 |
| | Poland | 63,378 | 0.8 | 12.0 |
| | Germany | 43,655 | 0.5 | 8.2 |
| | Italy | 36,879 | 0.5 | 7.0 |

TABLE 6 (cont'd.)

| Year | Country of Origin | Number | Per Cent of Total | Per Cent of Foreign Born |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1960 | England | 34,706 | 0.4 | 6.6 |
| | U.S.S.R. | 25,784 | 0.3 | 4.9 |
| | Scotland | 21,258 | 0.3 | 4.0 |
| | Netherlands | 20,395 | 0.3 | 3.9 |
| | Hungary | 14,996 | 0.2 | 2.8 |
| | Yugoslavia | 11,633 | 0.1 | 2.2 |
| | Austria | 10,649 | 0.1 | 2.0 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 10,005 | 0.1 | 2.0 |

Notes:

[1]Foreign-born through 1900
Foreign-born white: 1910-1960

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

at home, to move across the border.[59] Michigan was sympathetic to the reformers, and border counties were centers of activity in support of the Rebellion. Refugees and exiles were afforded sanctuary and assistance. The militia was called upon to keep the peace.[60]

Germans came to the Ann Arbor region as early as 1829, and by 1833 established the first German Lutheran Church in Michigan.[61] An article published in a German magazine in 1835, later translated in Michigan History, described the numerous German settlements near Ann Arbor in 1835.[62] Russell claims that German settlements in Michigan prior to 1848 were missionary endeavors.[63] Michigan made its first official effort to encourage immigrants in 1845 when the Foreign Emigration Agency was established at New York. Pamphlets were published and distributed in 1845 and 1849 lauding Michigan as a new home to potential immigrants. From 1846 to 1851 German missionary colonies were established at Frankenmuth, Frankentrost, Frankenlust, and Frankenhuelf in the Saginaw Basin.[64]

A party of fifty-three under the direction of Reverend A. C. Van Raalte marks the arrival of the Dutch in 1846. The group arrived at Detroit, Van Raalte immediately set out to explore western Michigan for a favorable colony site. Most of the party remained behind and found employment in the shipbuilding yards along the St. Clair River. The colony

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[59]R. S. Langley, "Emigration and the Crisis of 1837 in Upper Canada," Canadian Historical Review, XVII (1936), pp. 29-40.

[60]George C. Bates, "Reminiscences of the Brady Guards," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, XIII (1888), pp. 530-538.

[61]Ten Brook, "Our German Immigrations," pp. 250-255.

[62]Karl Neidhard, "Reise Nach Michigan," trans. by Frank X. Braun. Michigan History, XXXV (1951), pp. 35-84.

[63]Russell, The Germanic Influence in Michigan, pp. 32-34.

[64]Jenks, "Michigan Immigration" pp. 69-71.

was established at Holland in 1847.[65]

Finns were also early arrivals in Michigan. The first family came to Detroit in 1832.[66] The group at Detroit was small and Finns did not come to Michigan in any great numbers until 1864 when they found employment in the mines of the Keweenaw.[67] The Cornish left England in 1844, also coming to Keweenaw County to practice their time-honored traditions.[68] Scandinavians were not numerous before 1850; only about 200 Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians were resident.[69]

Although some foreign-born groups gained initial footholds before 1850 -- notably the Canadians, Germans, French, English, Irish, and Dutch -- the total foreign-born population was only 54,703 in 1850. It wasn't until after 1850 that the foreign-born assumed a significant proportion of the total population.

Foreign-Born from 1850 to 1890

A marked and continued growth in the number of foreign-born persons occurred from 1850 to 1890. The foreign-born grew at a rate of more than twice that of the native population. The foreign-born increased tenfold from 54,703 in 1850 to 543,880 in 1890 while the native population increased by slightly less than five times (see Table 6).

Foreign-born persons accounted for 13.8 per cent of the total population in 1850; by 1860 almost one of every five residents was foreign-

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[65]D'Ooge, "The Dutch Pioneers of Michigan," pp. 204-209.

[66]Rankin, "Detroit Nationality Groups," p. 132.

[67]Wargelin, "The Finns in Michigan," p. 179.

[68]Fisher, "Michigan's Cornish People," p. 379.

[69]Qualey, "Pioneer Scandinavian Settlement in Michigan," p. 435.

born. With continued growth, the foreign-born made up 26.0 per cent of the total population in 1890. More than one of every four persons residing in Michigan was of foreign nativity. Since 1890, the ratio has steadily declined.

Persons born in Canada, Germany, England, Ireland, and the Netherlands accounted for 92.8 per cent of all foreign-born in 1850. The same five nativities maintained their predominance among the foreign-born population but dropped to only 81.2 per cent of the total in 1890.

From 1850 to 1890, the foreign-born population increased by 489,177 (see Table 7). Canadians accounted for the greatest increase and were responsible for 34 per cent of the growth. Germans also increased significantly and made up 26 per cent of the growth. English, Irish, Swedish, and Dutch peoples also increased in numbers but were proportionally less significant.

TABLE 7.

INCREASE OF SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN MICHIGAN: 1850-1890

| Country of Origin | Increase |
|---|---|
| Canada | 167,408 |
| Germany | 125,286 |
| England | 45,537 |
| Ireland | 30,029 |
| Sweden | 27,350 |
| Netherlands | 26,878 |
| Total Foreign-Born | 489,177 |

Source: Compiled by author.

In 1850 and 1860, Canadians and Germans each accounted for nearly one of every four foreigners. Canadians provided more than one-third of the foreign-born from 1870 to 1900, and in 1880 achieved their peak

ratio of 38.3 per cent of all foreign-born and 9.1 per cent of the total population. Persons born in Germany attained their peak in numbers and proportion in 1890 when 135,509 resided in the state and amounted to 6.5 per cent of the population. The Irish in 1880 with 43,413 persons and Swedes in 1890 with 27,366 attained their greatest numbers.

In this period of sustained growth, persons born in Canada and Germany accounted for most of the increase. Other groups such as Irish, English, Dutch, and Swedes also increased but were numerically less significant. Germans, Irish, and Swedes reached their greatest numbers in this period.

Foreign-Born from 1890 to 1910

Only 51,644 foreign-born were added from 1890 to 1910 while the total population continued to grow by more than 700,000 persons. The foreign-born actually decreased by 2,227 from 1890 to 1900. The proportion of foreign-born persons in the population of Michigan diminished from an all time high of 26.0 per cent in 1890 to 21.2 per cent in 1910. This decline was to continue to the low of 6.8 per cent in 1960 (see Table 6). This period marks a pause in the increase of foreign-born residents and the point at which the foreign-born no longer kept pace with total population growth.

The foreign-born population stood at 543,880 persons in 1890, 541,653 in 1900, and 595,524 inhabitants in 1910. Although the foreign-born population displayed only a meagre increase, the number of foreign-born groups accounting for more than 10,000 persons was eight in 1890, nine in 1900, and twelve in 1910, as compared to six in 1880, five in 1870, and four in both 1850 and 1860. These statistics indicate a change in the overall composition of the foreign-born population with substan-

tial increases in the number of persons born in eastern and southern Europe as well as Finland.

As in previous decades (excepting 1860) Canadians were the largest foreign-born group. Persons born in Germany maintained their second rank. However both the Canadians and Germans suffered losses in total numbers (see Table 6 and 8). Persons of Irish and English nativity, major components of the foreign-born population since 1850, also diminished in numbers. Persons born in Poland ranked seventh in both 1870 and 1880, jumped to third in 1910; they accounted for 10.5 per cent of all foreigners. Finns were first enumerated in 1900. They reached their highest total in 1910 and were the sixth largest foreign-born group with 31,144 inhabitants. Russians, Italians, Hungarians, and Austrians each displayed growth during this period.

TABLE 8.

INCREASE OF SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN MICHIGAN: 1890-1910

| Country of Origin | Increase |
|---|---|
| Poland | 46,750 |
| Finland | 31,144 |
| U.S.S.R. | 15,822 |
| Italy | 13,772 |
| Hungary | 10,960 |
| Austria | 10,498 |
| Netherlands | 4,061 |
| Sweden | - 992 |
| Scotland | - 2,116 |
| Canada | - 9,179 |
| England | -12,647 |
| Ireland | -18,631 |
| Germany | -29,597 |
| Total Foreign-born | 51,644 |

Source: Compiled by author.

Foreign-Born from 1910 to 1930

Between 1910 to 1930, the foreign-born population of Michigan swelled

by 253,773 to its all time high of 849,297 persons. Although the greatest number of foreign-born was reached in 1930, the proportion of foreign-born to total population continued to decline to 17.5 per cent. This period marks the end of foreign-born population growth.

The composition of the foreign-born population became more diverse. Twelve countries of origin in 1910, fifteen in 1920, and eighteen in 1930 each accounted for 10,000 or more foreign-born persons (see Table 6). Canadians remained the most populous group attaining a total of 203,302 persons in 1930 -- the largest number of any foreign-born group for any decade. In spite of this peak in total numbers, the ratio of Canadians to total population fell from 6.1 per cent in 1910 to 4.2 per cent in 1930.

Poles tallied the greatest increase from 1910 to 1930 (see Table 9). The Poles assumed second rank among the foreign-born in 1920 and maintained that position to 1960 while Germans fell to third. The English remained fourth. Persons born in the U.S.S.R. and Italy also became important components of the population. Persons born in Poland, Canada, Italy, Scotland, England, the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia made the most dramatic increases while the number of Germans in Michigan suffered the greatest loss.

Since the foreign-born population reached its greatest numbers in this period, many groups attained their highest totals. Persons born in the U.S.S.R., the Netherlands, Hungary, and Austria reached their peak numbers in 1920. Zeniths were achieved by persons born in Canada, Poland, England, Italy, Scotland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Belgium, Rumania, and Greece in 1930. Mexicans, Lithuanians, Danes, French, and the Swiss also gained their greatest totals but as individual groups never added up to 10,000 persons.

TABLE 9.

INCREASE OF SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS
IN MICHIGAN: 1910-1930

| Country of Origin | Increase |
|---|---|
| Poland | 56,809 |
| Canada | 31,065 |
| Italy | 26,227 |
| Scotland | 25,305 |
| England | 21,447 |
| U.S.S.R. | 18,526 |
| Czechoslovakia | 17,246 |
| Yugoslavia | 16,468 |
| Rumania | 10,972 |
| Greece | 10,061 |
| Belgium | 8,248 |
| Hungary | 7,591 |
| Netherlands | -1,343 |
| Sweden | -2,469 |
| Ireland | -2,906 |
| Austria | -3,143 |
| Finland | -4,122 |
| Germany | -24,198 |
| Total Foreign-Born | 253,773 |

Source: Compiled by author.

Foreign-Born from 1930 to 1960

After reaching a high of 849,297 in 1930, the foreign-born population suffered a steady decline to its lowest total since 1880 when 529,624 were reported in 1960 (see Table 6). The ratio of foreign-born to total population fell from 17.5 per cent in 1930 to the lowest ratio of any decade when 6.8 per cent was reported in 1960. Foreign-born residents comprised a less significant component of the total population from 1940 to 1960 than in any period in Michigan's history.

The composition of the foreign-born population continued to be varied, but the number of groups reporting over 10,000 inhabitants dropped from eighteen in 1930, to sixteen in both 1940 and 1950, and to only twelve in

1960. In 1930 four groups provided at least one per cent of the total population, three in 1940, two in 1950, and only the Canadian-born made up more than one per cent in 1960.

The foreign-born decreased by 319,673 during this period (see Table 10). Each group over 10,000 persons lost population. Canadians remained the most populous foreign-born group but lost 77,207 persons and declined from 4.2 per cent of the total population to 1.6 per cent in 1960. Poles and Germans maintained their second and third positions but lost 55,850 and 38,059 respectively. England, long ranked as the fourth largest group, was displaced by Italy in 1960. Except for the Poles, foreign-born groups from eastern and southern Europe suffered less decrease because of their smaller totals and more recent arrival. Not one group recorded an increase from 1930 to 1960, therefore no group reached a peak during this period.

## The Thumb Region

Long before the frontier reached Michigan, attempts at occupance in the wilderness of the Thumb were made by persons of foreign nativity. Duluth's construction of Fort St. Joseph preceded Cadillac's Detroit settlement by fifteen years. Expansion of the French Canadian settlement at Detroit reached the pineries of the Thumb by 1780. The Thumb maintained its French Canadian identity until 1820.

In contrast to the cyclic growth of Michigan's foreign-born population, the foreign-born in the Thumb sustained a continued growth to 1890 and diminished every decade thereafter. Ratios of foreign-born to total population have been lower for the Thumb than the state since 1930. Canadians, however, have accounted for significantly greater percentages of the total population in the Thumb. Well over 50 per cent of the Thumb's

TABLE 10.

DECREASE OF SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN MICHIGAN: 1930-1960

| Country of Origin | Decrease |
|---|---|
| Greece | 2,279 |
| Austria | 2,650 |
| Hungary | 4,192 |
| Yugoslavia | 4,835 |
| Belgium | 4,897 |
| Rumania | 5,445 |
| Italy | 6,208 |
| Czechoslovakia | 7,641 |
| U.S.S.R. | 8,564 |
| Ireland | 8,932 |
| Netherlands | 11,733 |
| Scotland | 13,999 |
| Sweden | 16,115 |
| Finland | 17,911 |
| England | 30,251 |
| Germany | 38,059 |
| Poland | 55,850 |
| Canada | 77,207 |
| Total Foreign-Born | 319,673 |

Source: Compiled by author.

foreign-born were Canadians in each decade prior to 1940.

## Foreign-Born to 1850

The pineries of the Thumb attracted French Canadian settlement from Detroit in 1780. They were the first to come to the Thumb with the intention of establishing permanent settlements. The majority of the population was French Canadian until the 1820's when the pineries once again served as a lure for settlement. New Englanders and New Yorkers arrived at the banks of the St. Clair River. Canadians were also attracted to the saw mill settlements, and many lived in shanties and worked in mills near the mouth of the Black River.[70]

[70] Western Historical Company, History of St. Clair County, p. 496.

The reform movement against British rule in Canada (during the mid-thirties) enjoyed considerable support in both Canada and Michigan. Many Canadians were vehement in their belief that Canada should adopt the system of popular government under which their neighbors to the south were prospering. Many of those who were not as spirited as the true reformers became more and more dissatisfied as reform propaganda reached its peak in 1837. After the reform movement was squelched, reformers and the dissatisfied left Canada to make a new home in border states.[71]

Patriots and sympathizers on both sides of the border created conflicts which threatened the relationship between Canada and the United States. Fort Gratiot was the cause of alarm in 1836.[72] A large body of patriots and sympathizers, estimated at from 600 to 800, gathered at the abandoned fort. The intent was to seize arms and munitions and utilize the stockade as a base for an invasion of Canada. A detail of militia was sent from Detroit to remove the arms and munitions for safekeeping. Enroute to Detroit, the militia stopped at St. Clair to pick up a large amount of money from an anxious banker who feared for its safety.

More significant than the confrontation of Fort Gratiot was the movement of Canadians to Michigan. Many of the reformers and discontented came to the Thumb to begin anew. Canadians came to the growing saw mill towns along the St. Clair River and some removed to the wilderness of Sanilac and Huron counties. One historical account of Sanilac County claiming that many of its early settlers were active in the rebellion, and suffered great losses in the move, states the plight of the migrant:

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[71]For a biography of the principal reform leader in Upper Canada, Alexander MacKenzie, see William Kilbourn, The Firebrand (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1956).

[72]Bates, "Reminisences of the Brady Guards," pp. 534-536.

> Having subdued the wilds of the Canadian forests, they came here to repeat their experiences of removing the dense woods from homesteads, and by incessant toil and the most rigid economy to provide subsistence for their families.[73]

Several of the Canadians who were prompted to come to Michigan during and after the reform movement were among the first settlers in Sanilac and Huron counties. In 1837 John Smith was the first to arrive at the site later to become Lexington in Sanilac County and was followed by other Canadian families.[74] Canadian A. G. Peer began quarrying stone at Grindstone City in 1834. Jonathan Bird, a reformer who fled from Canada, built the first saw mill in Huron County in 1838 near Port Austin.[75] John Allen, also sympathetic to the rebellion, built a saw mill near Sand Beach in 1838.[76] Walter Hume was also a patriot who became one of the most prominent settlers of Huron County. The township of Hume was named in his honor. Hume was almost shot by Canadian officials as he crossed the river at St. Clair. His companion, Wesley Armstrong who later became the first sheriff of Huron County, was not as fortunate. Armstrong's arm was shot off during the escape.[77] Once the first attempts at settlement succeeded, more pioneers arrived. Peoples from Canada and the eastern states began arriving in greater numbers by 1841.[78]

Too much emphasis can be attributed to the effect of the reform movement. Not all Canadians who came to the Thumb area before 1850 were re-

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[73]Album of Sanilac County, p. 454.

[74]Ibid.

[75]Album of Huron County, p. 448.

[76]Ibid., p. 456.

[77]Chet Hey and Norman Eckstein, Huron County, Centennial History: 1859-1959 (N.P.: Copyright, Chester Andrew Hey, 1959), p. 21.

[78]Album of Sanilac County, p. 456.

formers or discontents. Many left Canada for the same reasons people left their homes in New York, Pennsylvania, and the New England States. The lure of the pineries, new lands, and new opportunities were as important to the Canadian as to the easterner who decided to pull up stakes and start out on a new life in the Thumb.

Other foreign-born persons also contributed to the population of the Thumb area before 1850, but Canadians made up almost two-thirds of all foreign-born. English, Irish, Scots, and Germans comprised most of the remaining foreign-born. One group which was destined to dominate the northwestern corner of Huron County was the German settlement at Sebewaing. John J. Auch, a German Lutheran missionary sent from Ann Arbor, established the colony in 1845.[79]

Foreign-born from 1850 to 1890

The foreign-born population of the Thumb region increased in each decade from 1850 to 1890. Foreigners arrived by the thousands, and the total foreign-born increased tenfold from 4,440 in 1850 to 44,706 persons in 1890. Both Michigan and the Thumb increased at the same time. However, foreign-born in the Thumb accounted for more significant proportions of the total population. Table 11 illustrates the growth of the foreign-born and selected nativities for this period.[80]

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[79] Florence McKinnon Gwinn, Pioneer History of Huron County (Bad Axe, Mich.: Tribune Print for the Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society, 1922), p. 55.

[80] The statistics utilized concerning foreign-born inhabitants from 1850 to 1890 are the result of the author's personal research of the microfilmed manuscript census records. Statistics for 1890 are those published by the United States Bureau of the Census. The statistics tabulated by the author and those reported in the census do not agree for the decades of 1860, 1870, and 1880. To maintain continuity and because the per cent of variation is slight, the author elects to utilize his data.

TABLE 11.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1890

| Year | County | Foreign-Born Number | Foreign-Born % of Total | Canadian Number | Canadian Per Cent of Total | Canadian Per Cent of F.B. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850[1] | St. Clair | 3,279 | 30.1 | 1,952 | 17.9 | 59.5 |
| | Sanilac | 1,066 | 50.5 | 856 | 40.5 | 80.3 |
| | Huron | 95 | 45.2 | 60 | 28.6 | 63.2 |
| | Thumb | 4,440 | 33.6 | 2,868 | 21.7 | 64.6 |
| 1860[1] | St. Clair | 11,737 | 44.1 | 6,071 | 22.8 | 51.7 |
| | Sanilac | 4,478 | 58.9 | 3,060 | 40.3 | 68.3 |
| | Huron | 1,855 | 58.6 | 802 | 25.3 | 43.2 |
| | Thumb | 18,070 | 48.4 | 9,933 | 26.7 | 55.0 |
| 1870[1] | St. Clair | 14,859 | 40.5 | 8,056 | 22.0 | 54.2 |
| | Sanilac | 7,700 | 52.9 | 5,519 | 37.9 | 71.7 |
| | Huron | 4,771 | 52.7 | 2,443 | 27.0 | 51.2 |
| | Thumb | 27,330 | 45.2 | 16,018 | 26.6 | 58.6 |
| 1880[1] | St. Clair | 17,214 | 27.3 | 9,842 | 21.3 | 57.2 |
| | Sanilac | 12,864 | 48.8 | 9,170 | 34.8 | 71.3 |
| | Huron | 9,748 | 48.5 | 5,401 | 26.9 | 55.4 |
| | Thumb | 39,826 | 43.0 | 24,413 | 26.4 | 61.3 |
| 1890[1] | St. Clair | 18,406 | 35.3 | 10,767 | 20.7 | 58.5 |
| | Sanilac | 13,931 | 42.7 | 10,139 | 31.1 | 72.8 |
| | Huron | 12,369 | 43.3 | 6,630 | 23.2 | 53.5 |
| | Thumb | 44,706 | 39.5 | 27,526 | 24.3 | 61.6 |

TABLE 11 (cont'd.)

| German | | | English | | | Irish | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Per Cent of | | | Per Cent of | | | Per Cent of | |
| Number | Total | F.B. | Number | Total | F.B. | Number | Total | F.B. |
| 155 | 1.4 | 4.7 | 343 | 3.1 | 10.5 | 553 | 5.1 | 16.9 |
| 12 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 54 | 2.6 | 5.1 | 87 | 4.1 | 8.2 |
| 2 | 10.0 | 2.1 | 5 | 2.4 | 5.3 | 20 | 9.5 | 21.1 |
| 169 | 1.3 | 3.8 | 402 | 3.0 | 9.1 | 660 | 5.0 | 14.9 |
| 1,722 | 6.5 | 14.7 | 922 | 3.5 | 7.9 | 1,703 | 6.4 | 14.5 |
| 248 | 3.3 | 5.5 | 395 | 5.2 | 8.8 | 503 | 6.6 | 11.2 |
| 638 | 20.2 | 34.4 | 129 | 4.1 | 7.0 | 144 | 4.5 | 7.8 |
| 2,608 | 6.9 | 14.4 | 1,446 | 3.9 | 8.0 | 2,350 | 6.3 | 13.1 |
| 3,001 | 8.2 | 20.2 | 1,026 | 2.8 | 6.9 | 1,787 | 4.9 | 12.0 |
| 441 | 3.0 | 5.7 | 569 | 3.9 | 7.4 | 715 | 4.9 | 9.3 |
| 988 | 10.9 | 20.7 | 305 | 3.4 | 6.4 | 341 | 3.8 | 7.1 |
| 4,430 | 7.4 | 16.2 | 1,900 | 3.2 | 7.0 | 2,843 | 4.7 | 10.4 |
| 3,239 | 7.0 | 18.8 | 1,268 | 2.7 | 7.4 | 1,813 | 3.9 | 10.5 |
| 1,243 | 4.7 | 9.7 | 824 | 3.1 | 6.4 | 909 | 3.5 | 7.1 |
| 2,057 | 10.2 | 21.1 | 496 | 2.5 | 5.1 | 582 | 2.9 | 6.0 |
| 6,539 | 7.1 | 16.4 | 2,588 | 2.8 | 6.5 | 3,304 | 3.6 | 8.3 |
| 3,725 | 7.1 | 20.2 | 1,391 | 2.7 | 7.6 | 1,511 | 2.9 | 8.2 |
| 1,315 | 4.0 | 9.4 | 939 | 2.9 | 6.7 | 831 | 2.5 | 6.0 |
| 3,119 | 10.9 | 25.2 | 1,032 | 3.6 | 8.3 | 621 | 2.2 | 5.0 |
| 8,159 | 7.2 | 18.3 | 3,362 | 3.0 | 7.5 | 2,963 | 2.6 | 6.6 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[1]Statistics for the decades of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 are the result of the author's tabulations from the manuscript census sheets. The statistics do vary from those reported by the U.S. Census (see Appendix A).

The foreign-born population recorded its greatest increment from 1850 to 1860 when 13,630 persons were added to the total. In the following decades to 1890 the foreign-born increased by 9,260, 12,496, and 4,840 respectively. Perhaps more significant than total numbers is the ratio of foreign-born to total population. Foreign-born inhabitants of the Thumb provided 33.6 per cent of the total population in 1850 and attained a peak ratio of 48.4 per cent in 1860. The proportion dropped from 45.2 per cent in 1870 to 39.5 per cent in 1890. In comparison, Michigan's highest ratio was 26.0 per cent recorded in 1890. Clearly, foreign-born persons assumed a most significant role in the population of the Thumb. From one-third to nearly one-half of all residents from 1850 to 1890 were born outside the United States.

When examined by county, it appears that greater proportions of the population in more remote and newly settled areas were foreign-born. Conversely, native-born persons accounted for greater proportions in established, settled areas. Supporting this notion St. Clair County, although contributing the greatest number of foreign-born in each decade, exhibits a range of from 30.1 to 44.1 per cent foreign-born to total population. Counties to the north reveal greater proportions of foreign-born. The range in Huron County is from 43.3 to 58.6 per cent. Sanilac County registered the greatest ratios and ranged from 42.7 to 58.9 per cent. More than one-half of all Sanilac County residents were foreigners from 1850 to 1870.

Canadians far outnumbered all other foreign-born groups residing in the Thumb. Canadians numbered 2,868 in 1850 and increased each decade thereafter to a peak of 27,526 in 1890. The Canadian and foreign-born populations displayed a similar growth pattern from a low in 1850 to a peak in 1890. However, the foreign-born experienced its greatest increment from

1850 to 1860 while Canadians sustained the greatest increase from 1870 to 1880.

Canadians accounted for over one of every five residents of the Thumb in 1850 and more than one of every four from 1860 to 1880. Canadians made up 21.7 per cent of all inhabitants in 1850 and reached a peak of 26.7 per cent in 1860. The ratio declined to 24.3 per cent in 1890. In comparison, the greatest ratio of Canadians to Michigan's total population was 9.1 per cent in 1880.

The dominance of Canadians over all other foreign-born is dramatically revealed in the proportions of Canadians to total foreign-born. Canadians provided 64.6 per cent of all foreign-born in 1850, dropped to 55 per cent in 1860, and increased steadily to 61.6 per cent in 1890. Substantially more than one-half of all foreign-born persons in the Thumb were of Canadian nativity from 1850 to 1890. Comparable ratios for Michigan ranged from one-fourth to one-third.

When examined by county, Canadians do not parallel the pattern displayed by the total foreign-born. While proportions of the foreign-born to total population were considerably higher in more recently settled counties, there is only a slight difference in the Canadian ratio to total population in St. Clair and Huron counties. Sanilac County reports the greatest Canadian proportions with over 40 per cent Canadian in both 1850 and 1860. It would appear that Canadians exercised the traits of both foreign and native-born settlers, some chose to settle in more established areas and some elected to locate in new areas.

Canadians were most dominant among foreign-born peoples in Sanilac County. Canadians contributed 80.3 per cent of all foreign-born in 1850, 68.3 per cent in 1860 and over 70 per cent for the subsequent three decates. Huron and St. Clair also reported substantial Canadian proportions

but never equalled the lowest ratio for Sanilac County. Well over one-half the foreigners in St. Clair County were Canadians. Excepting one decade, the same holds true for Huron County.

The next largest foreign-born groups consisted of persons born in Germany, England and Wales, and Ireland respectively. Never approaching the total numbers or proportions of the Canadian-born, each group did exhibit greater proportions of the total population of the Thumb than similar ratios for Michigan. However, due to the predominance of Canadians, the ratio of each group to the foreign-born population was lower in each case than the state average. Only the German population of Huron County in 1860 and 1870 exceeded the state average. Poles made up a significant portion of the foreign-born population of Huron County in 1870 and 1880 but were of little consequence in Sanilac and St. Clair.

Foreign-Born from 1890 to 1960

The foreign-born population of the Thumb declined steadily from the peak of 44,706 to 10,053 in 1960. The cyclical growth of Michigan's foreign-born was not manifested in the Thumb. Table 12 reveals the decline of the foreign-born from 1900 to 1960.

Although suffering a steady decline, the foreign-born percentage of total population remained greater in the Thumb than in the state from 1900 to 1920. The increases in Michigan's foreign-born from 1910 to 1930 were not reflected in the Thumb. The Thumb's foreign-born proportion was 16.4 per cent in 1930 while Michigan reported 17.5 per cent. The ratio fell to 5.8 per cent in 1960 as compared to Michigan's 6.8 per cent.

When the total foreign-born is examined by county, it must be reiterated that St. Clair enjoyed constant population growth. Both Huron and Sanilac suffered a decrease from 1900 and 1910 to 1950 respectively. The

TABLE 12.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION: 1900-1960

| Year | County | Foreign-Born Number | Foreign-Born % of Total | Canadian Number | Canadian Per Cent of Total | Canadian Per Cent of F.B. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1900 | St. Clair | 15,906 | 28.9 | 9,586 | 17.4 | 60.3 |
| | Sanilac | 11,456 | 32.7 | 8,266 | 23.6 | 72.1 |
| | Huron | 11,682 | 34.2 | 6,749 | 19.8 | 57.8 |
| | Thumb | 39,053 | 31.4 | 24,601 | 19.8 | 63.0 |
| 1910 | St. Clair | 12,796 | 24.4 | 7,904 | 15.1 | 61.9 |
| | Sanilac | 8,898 | 26.2 | 6,230 | 18.4 | 70.0 |
| | Huron | 9,817 | 28.2 | 5,198 | 15.0 | 52.9 |
| | Thumb | 31,511 | 26.0 | 19,332 | 16.0 | 61.4 |
| 1920 | St. Clair | 11,599 | 20.0 | 6,750 | 11.6 | 58.2 |
| | Sanilac | 6,579 | 21.0 | 4,289 | 13.7 | 65.3 |
| | Huron | 7,212 | 22.0 | 3,541 | 10.8 | 49.1 |
| | Thumb | 25,381 | 20.8 | 14,580 | 11.9 | 57.4 |
| 1930 | St. Clair | 11,182 | 16.6 | 6,261 | 9.3 | 56.0 |
| | Sanilac | 4,576 | 16.5 | 2,865 | 10.3 | 62.6 |
| | Huron | 4,841 | 15.9 | 2,450 | 7.9 | 49.6 |
| | Thumb | 20,699 | 16.4 | 11,576 | 9.2 | 55.9 |
| 1940 | St. Clair | 9,346 | 12.3 | 4,646 | 1.1 | 49.7 |
| | Sanilac | 3,608 | 12.0 | 1,850 | 6.2 | 51.5 |
| | Huron | 3,524 | 10.8 | 1,640 | 5.0 | 46.5 |
| | Thumb | 16,478 | 11.9 | 8,145 | 5.9 | 49.4 |
| 1950 | St. Clair | 8,555 | 9.3 | 4,105 | 4.5 | 48.0 |
| | Sanilac | 2,613 | 8.5 | 1,087 | 3.5 | 41.6 |
| | Huron | 2,260 | 6.8 | 932 | 2.8 | 41.2 |
| | Thumb | 13,428 | 8.6 | 6,124 | 3.9 | 45.6 |
| 1960 | St. Clair | 7,194 | 6.7 | | | |
| | Sanilac | 1,439 | 4.5 | Country of origin is not | | |
| | Huron | 1,420 | 4.2 | reported by county in the | | |
| | Thumb | 10,053 | 5.8 | Census of 1960. | | |

TABLE 12 (cont'd.)

| German | | | English | | | Irish | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Per Cent of | | | Per Cent of | | | Per Cent of | |
| Number | Total | F.B. | Number | Total | F.B. | Number | Total | F.B. |
| 3,289 | 6.0 | 20.7 | 1,133 | 2.1 | 7.1 | 1,016 | 1.8 | 6.4 |
| 1,297 | 3.7 | 11.3 | 753 | 2.1 | 6.6 | 555 | 1.6 | 4.8 |
| 2,793 | 8.2 | 23.9 | 456 | 1.3 | 3.9 | 458 | 1.3 | 3.9 |
| 7,379 | 5.9 | 18.9 | 2,342 | 1.9 | 6.0 | 2,029 | 1.6 | 5.2 |
| 2,514 | 4.8 | 19.7 | 841 | 1.6 | 6.6 | 597 | 1.1 | 4.7 |
| 1,086 | 3.2 | 12.2 | 538 | 1.6 | 6.0 | 325 | 1.0 | 3.7 |
| 2,804 | 8.1 | 28.6 | 350 | 1.0 | 3.6 | 266 | 0.8 | 2.7 |
| 6,404 | 5.3 | 20.3 | 1,729 | 1.4 | 5.5 | 1,188 | 1.0 | 3.8 |
| 1,601 | 2.8 | 13.8 | 784 | 1.4 | 6.8 | 336 | 0.6 | 2.9 |
| 633 | 2.1 | 10.1 | 302 | 1.0 | 4.6 | 158 | 0.5 | 2.4 |
| 1,580 | 4.8 | 21.9 | 216 | 0.7 | 3.0 | 128 | 0.4 | .18 |
| 3,814 | 3.1 | 15.0 | 1,302 | 1.1 | 5.1 | 622 | 0.5 | 2.4 |
| 1,208 | 1.8 | 10.8 | 769 | 1.1 | 6.9 | 168 | 0.2 | 1.5 |
| 425 | 1.5 | 9.3 | 169 | 0.6 | 3.7 | 73 | 0.3 | 1.6 |
| 1,168 | 3.8 | 23.6 | 134 | 0.4 | 2.7 | 57 | 0.2 | 1.2 |
| 2,801 | 2.2 | 13.5 | 1,072 | 0.8 | 5.2 | 298 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| 897 | 1.2 | 9.7 | 570 | 0.7 | 6.1 | 101 | 0.1 | 1.1 |
| 326 | 1.1 | 9.0 | 129 | 0.4 | 3.6 | 40 | 0.1 | 1.1 |
| 763 | 2.3 | 21.7 | 77 | 0.2 | 2.2 | 29 | 0.1 | 0.8 |
| 1,996 | 1.4 | 12.1 | 776 | 0.6 | 4.7 | 170 | 0.1 | 1.0 |
| 700 | 0.8 | 8.2 | 554 | 0.6 | 6.5 | 70 | 0.1 | 0.8 |
| 196 | 0.6 | 7.5 | 117 | 0.4 | 4.5 | 25 | 0.1 | 1.0 |
| 446 | 1.3 | 19.7 | 65 | 0.2 | 2.9 | 24 | 0.1 | 1.1 |
| 1,342 | 0.9 | 10.0 | 736 | 0.5 | 5.5 | 119 | 0.1 | 0.0 |

Country of origin is not reported by county in the Census of 1960

Source: Compiled by author.

[1]Statistics for the decades of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 are the result of the author's tabulations from the manuscript census sheets. The statistics do vary from those reported by the U.S. Census (see Appendix A).

general movement from rural to urban areas precipitated the decline in the latter two counties. The trend toward urban areas influenced the distribution of foreign-born. The virtually rural counties of Sanilac and Huron suffered more significant reductions in the ratio of foreign-born than St. Clair.

Canadians remained the most populous foreign-born group in the Thumb from 1900 to 1950 despite a constant decline. The number of Canadians dropped from 24,601 in 1900 to 6,124 in 1950.[81] The Canadian percentage of total population waned from 19.8 to 3.9 per cent but still remained above the state average in each decade. The Canadian ratio of total foreign-born also remained above the state average despite a drop from 63 to 45.6 per cent. Canadians continued to predominate over the rapidly diminishing foreign-born population.

Despite a decrease of 5,481, St. Clair County reported the greatest number of Canadians for each decade from 1900 to 1950. Sanilac County endured the largest decrease as 7,179 fewer Canadians were reported in 1950 than in 1900. Huron diminished by 5,817 Canadians. Paralleling the trend manifested by the total foreign-born population, the more rural counties suffered larger declines in the ratio of Canadian-born to total population. In 1950, for the first time, St. Clair County reported greater percentages of Canadians to both total and foreign-born populations that either Huron or Sanilac counties.

Germans, the second largest foreign-born group, suffered a decline from 7,379 to 1,342 from 1900 to 1950. Germans accounted for 10 per cent of the Thumb's foreign-born in 1950, well above the state average of 7.5 per cent. Huron County actually enjoyed an increase of Germans from 1900

[81]Unfortunately the U.S. Bureau of the Census discontinued reporting country of origin by county in 1960, but in keeping with the trend, the Canadian-born population no doubt continued to decline.

to 1910. Persons born in England, Poland, the U.S.S.R., Scotland, Italy, Hungary, and Belgium accounted for most of the remaining foreign-born. The Thumb never received the full thrust of the influx of migrants from eastern and southern Europe which invaded Michigan during this period. Foreign-born groups other than Canadians and Germans, rarely surpassed the state average reported for the group. Of the few eastern and southern Europeans who opted to locate in the Thumb, most were attracted to more urban St. Clair County.

## Summary

Persons born outside the confines of the United States and presently residing in either the Thumb region or anywhere in Michigan can look back upon a tradition which antedates that of their native-born brothers. French Canadians were the first white men to inhabit the Thumb. They established Michigan's first saw mills devoted to sawing pine timber. Since these early settlers, Canadians have accounted for the largest number of foreign-born persons in the state and completely dominated in numbers all other foreigners in the Thumb.

The chronicle of settlement in the Thumb closely parallels that of the entire Lower Peninsula. Tardy settlement, claims of misrepresentation, the deterioration of the French Canadian influence by the arrival of easterners, south to north and coastal to interior direction of settlement, land speculation, and the rural to urban phenomenon were characteristic of the process of settlement in both the Thumb and Michigan. The chief dissimilarity in the settlement process between the Thumb and Michigan centers on the fact that lumbering provided the fundamental activity before successful agriculture was established in the Thumb. Also, the lack of any widespread urban development caused the Thumb's population growth

to lag behind that of the state.

Foreign-born inhabitants of the Thumb and the state accounted for significant proportions of the population. The foreign-born increased by tenfold from 1850 to 1890 in both areas, but the total number decreased in the Thumb from 1900 to 1960 whereas Michigan's foreign-born reached a peak in 1930. From 1850 to 1890, foreign-born peoples in the Thumb constituted larger proportions of the population in more recently settled areas while the native-born appeared to settle in more established regions.

Canadians were the most numerous foreign-born group in both the Thumb and Michigan. More than one of every four Thumb area inhabitants from 1860 to 1880 was born in Canada. The highest percentage of Canadians ever attained in Michigan was 9.1 per cent registered in 1890. Canadians settling in the Thumb elected to locate in both frontier and more established areas in contrast to the total foreign-born who preferred the more recently settled areas. Canadians comprised well over one-half of all the foreign-born persons residing in the Thumb from 1850 to 1930. The Thumb region clearly presents a significant region of Canadian settlement.

Michigan achieved its greatest number of Canadians in 1930, but the Thumb recorded a decline beginning in 1890. The largest decline was experienced in the more rural counties of the study area. The Thumb did not benefit from the substantial influx of Canadians into the state from 1920 to 1930. On the contrary, the number of Canadians continued to wane.

Only the Germans maintained a considerable proportion of the foreign-born population of the Thumb, Canadians notwithstanding. While Michigan enjoyed an influx of foreigners from eastern and southern Europe from 1890 to 1930, few were attracted to the Thumb. No foreign-born group in the Thumb approached the 27,526 Canadians tallied in 1890 or approximated the state total of 203,302 in 1930. No group neared the 26.7 per cent of total

population achieved by Canadian residents of the Thumb in 1860 or reached the 9.1 per cent in the state for 1880. No group ever approximated the 64.6 per cent ratio of Canadians to foreign-born for the Thumb in 1850 or the 38.3 per cent reported for Michigan in 1880. No nation has contributed as many of her sons and daughters to the development of the Thumb region, or Michigan, as Canada.

## CHAPTER IV

## DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN THE THUMB: 1850 to 1880

### Introduction

The foreign-born population of the Thumb region exhibited continued growth from 1850 to 1890. Unlike Michigan's foreign-born growth, the Thumb received few of the eastern and southern European immigrants who arrived in the first three decades of the twentieth century. These arrivals were attracted to the opportunities offered by the burgeoning industrial development in the Detroit area. Few came to the largely rural milieu of the Thumb region. The origins of the Thumb's foreign-born were well established by 1880.

The analysis of the origin and distribution of the foreign-born population of the Thumb from 1850 to 1880 is a result of the author's research of the primary census document--the manuscript enumeration sheets. Several thousand handscript enumeration sheets were examined to prove the necessary data for the analysis of the foreign-born at the township level.[1] All

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[1]Microfilmed Census records examined for this dissertation:

Seventh Census of the United States, Michigan, 1850

| | |
|---|---|
| Huron County | Roll 351 |
| Sanilac County | Roll 363 |
| St. Clair County | Roll 362 |

Eighth Census of the United States, Michigan, 1860

| | |
|---|---|
| Huron County | Roll 545 |
| Sanilac County | Roll 558 |
| St. Clair County | Roll 559 |

Ninth Census of the United States, Michigan, 1870

| | |
|---|---|
| Huron County | Roll 674 |
| Sanilac County | Roll 703 |
| St. Clair County | Rolls 698 & 699 |

tables, maps,[2] and other data -- not otherwise cited -- are the result of the author's tallies and summaries of data gleaned from the manuscript census records.

## Population Distribution 1850

The population of the Thumb region stood at 13,221 inhabitants in 1850. St. Clair County was the most settled and numbered 10,899 persons. Sanilac, which only recently had achieved county status, contained 2,112 inhabitants. Huron County, attached as a single township to Sanilac, numbered only 210 settlers.

The population distribution in St. Clair County reveals densest concentrations along or near the St. Clair River (see Figure 12). There were fifteen organized townships in St. Clair County in 1850. The average population density for the county was 15.68 persons per square mile. Townships fronting on the St. Clair River reported the greatest number of inhabitants and provided the largest densities, and in each case, these eastern and southern townships exceed the average population density for the county. Toward the interior, densities diminish.

By far the most densely populated township was Port Huron with 58.49 persons per square mile accounting for 21 per cent of the county population. Development at the village of Port Huron explains the unusually high density. The village included 1,584 persons and 60 per cent of the township and nearly 15 per cent of the county population. Cottrellville, St. Clair,

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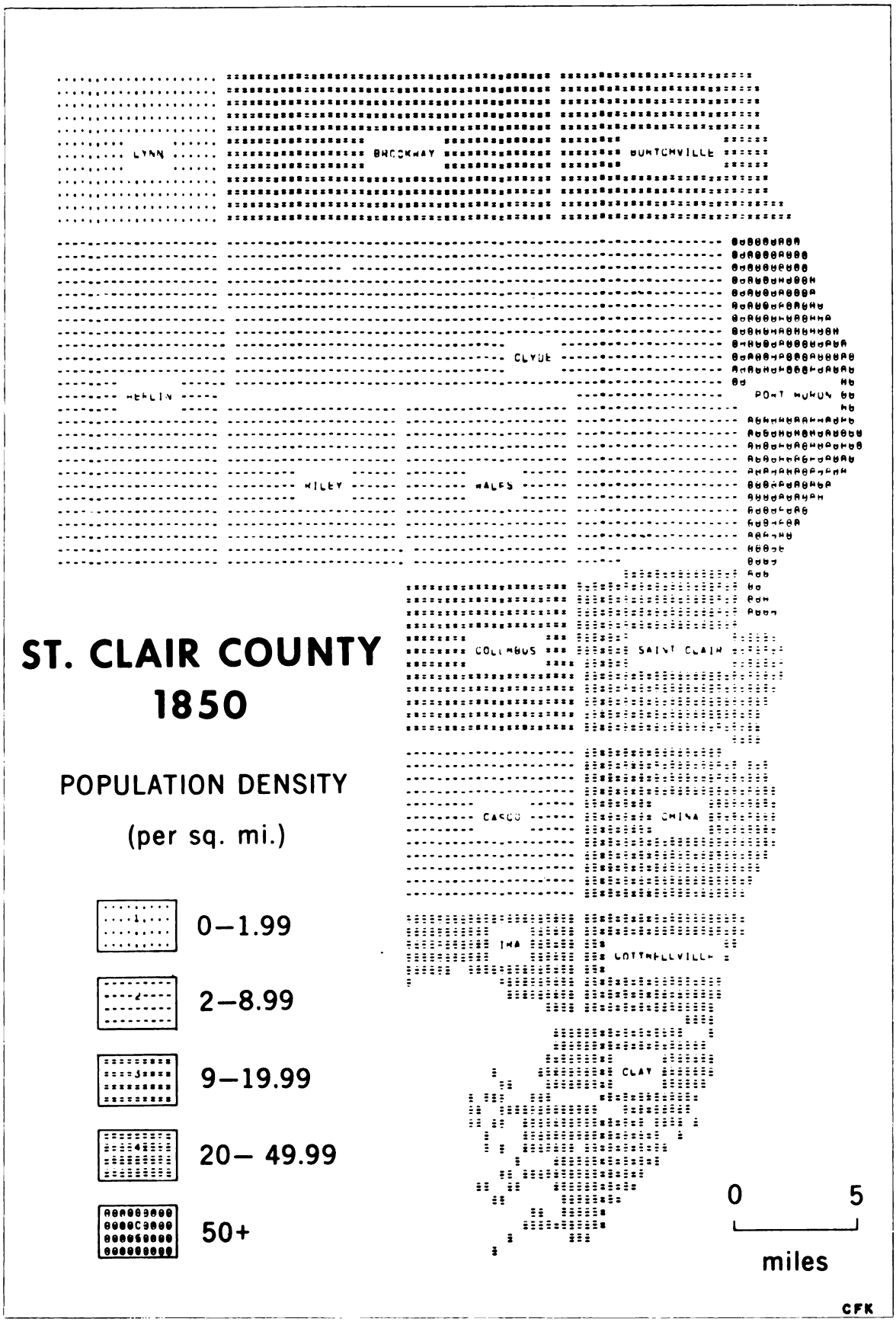
Tenth Census of the United States, Michigan, 1880

| | |
|---|---|
| Huron County | Roll 582 |
| Sanilac County | Rolls 605 & 606 |
| St. Clair County | Rolls 604 & 605 |

[2]Density maps were produced at The Computer Institute For Social Science Research at Michigan State University utilizing the Symap Program, Version 5 developed at the Department of City and Regional Planning, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.




SYMAP

Figure 12.

Clay, Ira, and China provided the remaining townships which demonstrated densities exceeding the county average. The least densely populated townships were situated to the west and northwest. Lynn Township, in the extreme northwest corner of the county, was the least densely populated, reporting only 1.53 persons per square mile.

Sanilac County reported a population density of only 2.19 per square mile. The population of the county was not sufficient to warrant more than three organized townships. Settlement of the county, yet in its incipient stage, proceeded along the Black River and along the coast of Lake Huron. In 1850 most of the population resided along the coast from the boundary with St. Clair County north to Port Sanilac. Settlement did not extend inland for more than a few miles. Probably the most densely populated area was in the vicinity of the present city of Lexington.

The area comprising contemporary Huron County was known as Huron Township in 1850. Only 210 persons were enumerated. These hardy pioneers were cut off from civilization, save for the occasional arrival of a ship. The settlements were scattered along the coast of either Lake Huron or Saginaw Bay and were isolated one from the other.

## Distribution of Foreign-Born

Foreign-born residents of the Thumb region numbered 4,410 and embodied 34 per cent of the population. St. Clair County, as expected, reported the greatest number with 3,279 foreign-born. Sanilac County enumerated 1,066, and Huron County reported only ninety-five foreign-born residents. St. Clair County tallied only 30 per cent of its population as foreign-born, and the majority of its residents were natives. Slightly over one-half of the residents of Sanilac County were foreign-born. Table 13 includes the total, foreign-born, Canadian, and the number of other selected nativities along

TABLE 13.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION BY TOWNSHIP: 1850

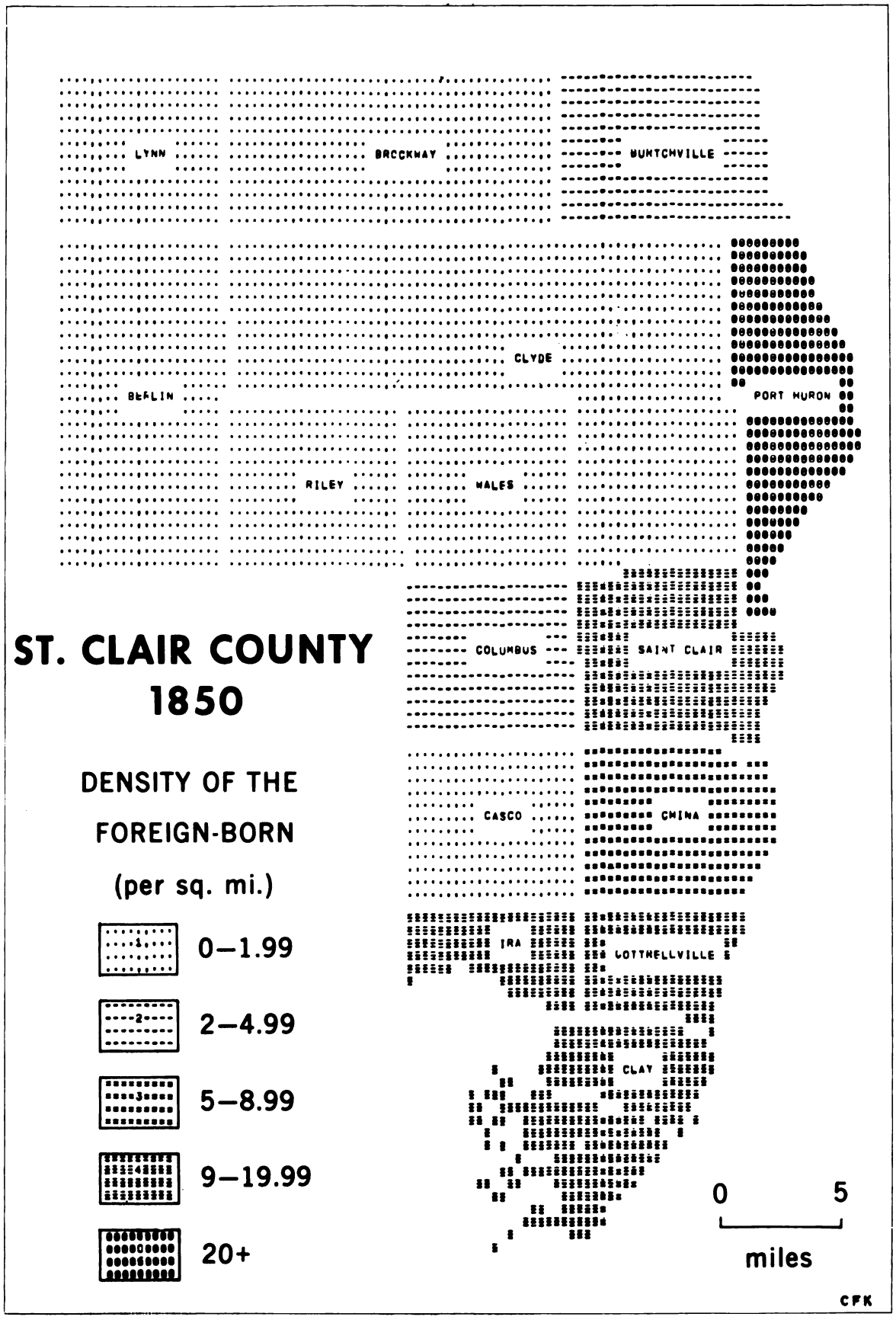
| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of Total | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Berlin | 533 | 7.41 | 108 | 1.50 | 20 | 63 | 0.88 | 12 | 58 | 1 | 4 | 11 |
| Brockway | 731 | 10.28 | 131 | 1.84 | 18 | 74 | 1.04 | 10 | 56 | 6 | 41 | 7 |
| Burtchville | 479 | 10.53 | 182 | 4.00 | 38 | 138 | 3.03 | 29 | 76 | .. | 12 | 16 |
| China | 1,037 | 27.71 | 299 | 7.99 | 29 | 126 | 3.37 | 12 | 42 | 67 | 31 | 38 |
| Casco | 134 | 3.76 | 31 | 0.87 | 23 | 24 | 0.67 | 18 | 77 | 5 | .. | 1 |
| Clay | 822 | 36.37 | 219 | 9.69 | 27 | 151 | 6.68 | 18 | 69 | 6 | 25 | 29 |
| Clyde | 691 | 4.82 | 256 | 1.79 | 37 | 184 | 1.28 | 27 | 72 | 6 | 31 | 7 |
| Columbus | 377 | 10.59 | 79 | 2.22 | 21 | 25 | 0.70 | 7 | 32 | 4 | 28 | 19 |
| Cottrellville | 913 | 41.95 | 288 | 13.23 | 32 | 158 | 7.26 | 17 | 55 | 22 | 52 | 31 |
| Ira | 596 | 33.01 | 221 | 12.24 | 37 | 173 | 9.58 | 29 | 78 | .. | .. | 2 |
| Lynn | 55 | 1.53 | 7 | 0.19 | 13 | 5 | 0.14 | 9 | 71 | .. | .. | .. |
| Port Huron | 2,302 | 58.49 | 890 | 22.61 | 39 | 553 | 14.05 | 24 | 62 | 10 | 169 | 105 |
| Township | 718 | ... | 283 | ... | 39 | 179 | ... | 25 | 63 | 7 | 48 | 36 |
| Port Huron | 1,584 | ... | 607 | ... | 38 | 374 | ... | 24 | 62 | 3 | 121 | 69 |
| Riley | 311 | 8.32 | 23 | 0.62 | 7 | 16 | 0.43 | 5 | 70 | .. | 7 | .. |
| Saint Clair | 1,729 | 39.40 | 527 | 12.01 | 30 | 253 | 5.77 | 15 | 48 | 28 | 144 | 77 |
| Wales | 189 | 5.32 | 18 | 0.51 | 10 | 9 | 0.25 | 5 | 50 | .. | 9 | .. |
| St.Clair County | 10,899 | 15.68 | 3,279 | 4.72 | 30 | 1,952 | 2.81 | 18 | 60 | 155 | 553 | 343 |
| Lexington | 1,176 | 7.93 | 562 | 3.79 | 48 | 477 | 3.22 | 41 | 85 | 7 | 36 | 19 |
| Sanilac | 336 | 0.50 | 192 | 0.29 | 57 | 125 | 0.19 | 37 | 65 | .. | 23 | 27 |
| Worth | 600 | 4.13 | 312 | 2.15 | 52 | 254 | 1.75 | 42 | 81 | 5 | 28 | 8 |
| Sanilac County | 2,112 | 2.19 | 1,066 | 1.11 | 50 | 856 | 0.89 | 41 | 80 | 12 | 87 | 54 |
| Huron | 210 | 0.25 | 95 | 0.11 | 45 | 60 | 0.07 | 29 | 63 | 2 | 20 | 5 |

Source: Compiled by author.

with their densities and ratios to total and foreign-born population by township.

The foreign-born distribution in St. Clair County reflects the same pattern as manifested by the total population. The average density of foreign-born was 4.72 per square mile as compared to the 15.68 density for the total population. Figure 13 shows that the same six townships which exceeded the average population density also accounted for greater than average foreign-born densities. Port Huron reported the densest foreign-born population with 22.61 per square mile. Twenty-seven per cent of the foreign-born of the county lived in Port Huron Township while the township accounted for only 21 per cent of the county's total population. The village of Port Huron comprised 19 per cent of the county total and 68 per cent of the township foreign-born. Cottrellville, Ira, St. Clair, Clay, and China respectively, tallied densities above the county average. Examination of the foreign-born to total population ratio indicates that only five townships exceed the 30 per cent recorded for the county. Port Huron Township tallied the largest ratio of 39 per cent, Ira 37 per cent, and Cottrellville contained 32 per cent foreign-born. Burtchville and Clyde, which were more sparsely populated townships, reported 38 and 37 per cent foreign-born respectively.

The distribution of foreign-born paralleled the population distribution in Sanilac County. The foreign-born were more significant here than in St. Clair County. Although the density of foreign-born was only 1.11 per square mile, over one-half of all residents were born outside the United States. Of the 210 total residents in Huron Township, ninety-five were foreign-born. The foreign-born as well as natives resided in scattered and isolated settlements along the coast.




SYMAP

Figure 13.

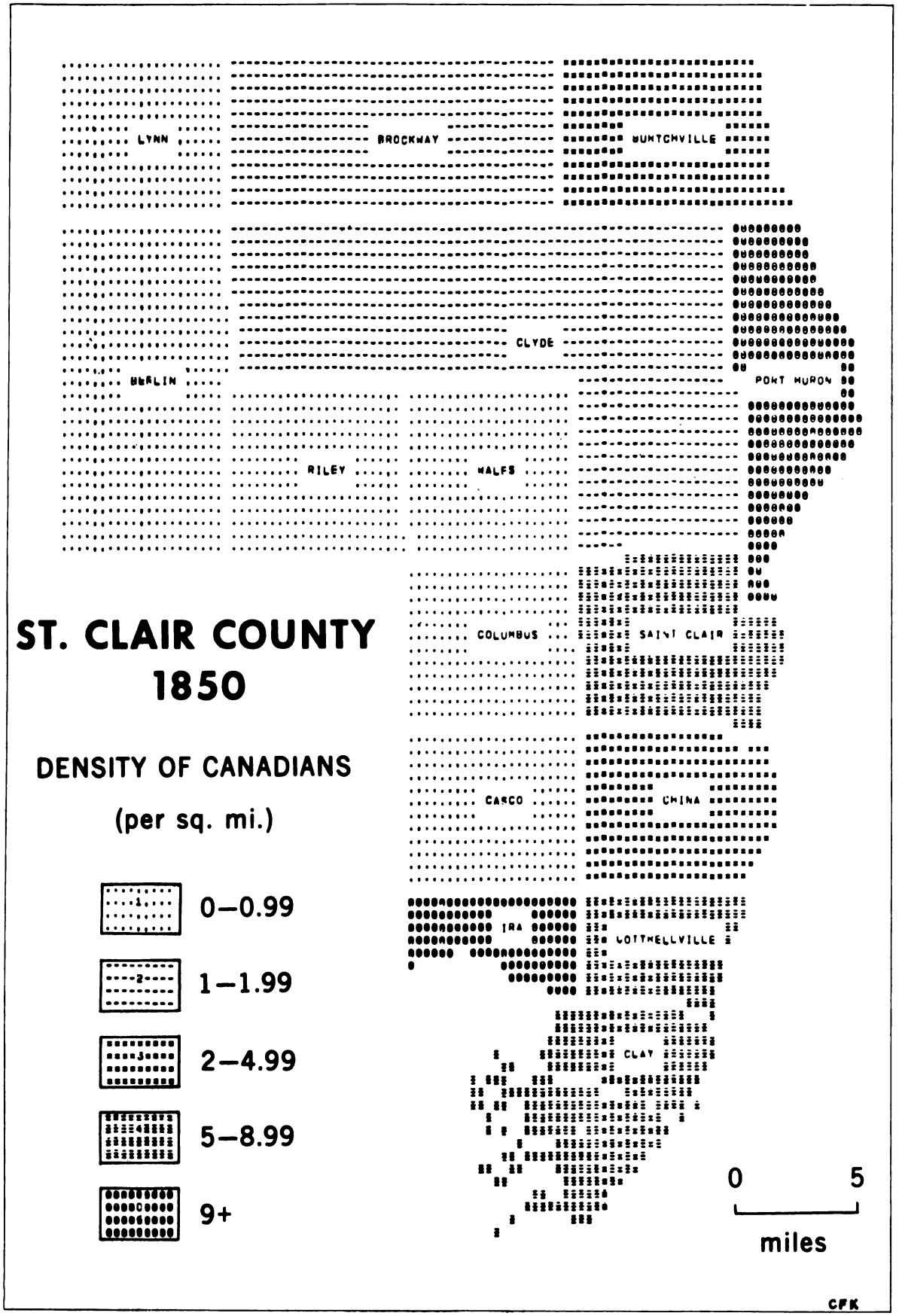
## Distribution of Canadians

The Canadian density pattern in St. Clair County did not wholly conform to that of the total or foreign-born (see Figure 14). The average density of Canadians was 2.81 per square mile. Port Huron contained the highest density with 14.05 per square mile. Ira Township, although ranked fifth in population density, was second to Port Huron with 9.58 per square mile. Cottrellville, Clay, St. Clair, China, and Burtchville townships each supported a density greater than the county average. Ira, Burtchville, Clyde, and Port Huron were the only townships to surpass the average of 18 per cent Canadian ratio to total population. Sixty per cent of the foreign-born in St. Clair County were Canadian and Ira, Casco, Burtchville, Clyde, Lynn, Riley, Clay and Port Huron exceeded the average. Canadians were most dense in Port Huron Township, but also constituted significant proportions of less densely populated areas.

It would appear that Canadians made the greatest contribution to the early settlement of Sanilac County. Although the density of Canadians was only 1.11 per square mile, they constituted 41 per cent of the population and 80 per cent of all foreigners. The distribution of Canadians is difficult to assess, but it is suggested they made up a significant portion of the population near the settlement of Lexington.

## Other Foreign-Born Groups

In fourteen of the fifteen St. Clair County townships, Canadians represented the most densely populated foreign-born groups. Columbus Township, which supported total and foreign-born populations less than the county average, had a slight majority of Irish. The Irish were the second most dense group in the county but only averaged 0.80 per square mile. Following the Irish were the English, Scots, and Germans which, in most




SYMAP

Figure 14.

cases, were most dense in the more populated townships. The Irish were also the second ranking foreign-born group in Sanilac and Huron counties, but their numbers were small.

## Population Distribution 1860

The population of the Thumb region was enumerated at 37,368 in 1860. St. Clair County was the most populous and numbered 26,604 individuals. Sanilac County reported 7,599 persons. Huron County, which was finally organized in 1859, embodied 3,165 inhabitants.

St. Clair County embodied the largest total and was the most densely populated county. Population was concentrated in the townships fronting on the St. Clair River, Lake Huron, and Lake St. Clair. The county averaged 38.27 persons per square mile. There were twenty-one organized townships in 1860 and those situated on the eastern and southern borders of the county were most densely populated (see Figure 15).

Port Huron was the most densely populated of all townships in the Thumb, equalling 150.04 persons per square mile including 22 per cent of all St. Clair County residents. Incorporated as a city in 1857, Port Huron enumerated 4,371 inhabitants in four wards which accounted for 74 per cent of the township and 16 per cent of the county population. St. Clair Township reported 72.39 persons per square mile, and its high density is explained by development at the city of St. Clair which was incorporated in 1858 and made up 47 per cent of the township population. Cottrellville, which included the village of Newport, later incorporated as Marine City, contained 70.16 persons per square mile. East China, Ira, Clay, China, and Burtchville townships respectively, exceeded the average county density. The least populated townships occupied the western and northwestern sections of the county. Lynn Township reported a density of only

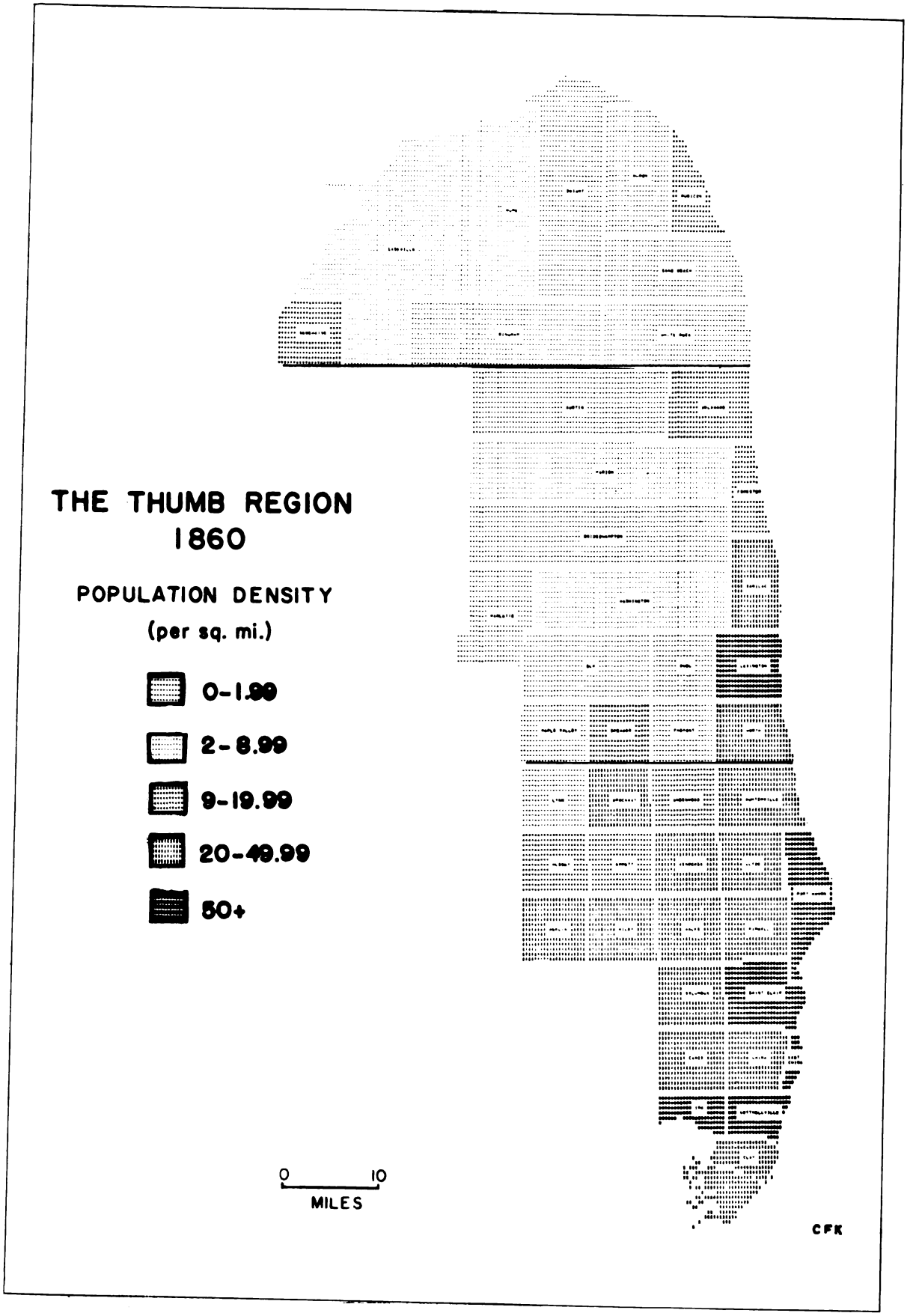

THE THUMB REGION
1860
POPULATION DENSITY
(per sq. mi.)
0-1.99
2-8.99
9-19.99
20-49.99
50+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 15.

6.24 people per square mile.

Sanilac County included fifteen organized townships and averaged 7.90 persons per square mile. Examination of Figure 15, population density of Sanilac County in 1860, reveals that the densest areas were situated along the shoreline of Lake Huron. The large size of Austin, Marion, Bridgehampton, Washington, and Elk townships indicate only slight settlement. Lexington Township was the most densely populated at 53.33 persons per square mile and development at the city of Lexington, incorporated 1855, probably accounted for the high density. Worth and Sanilac were the next in density with 31.82 and 29.80 persons per square mile respectively. Forester, Speaker, and Delaware townships also exceeded the average density.

Huron County was organized into nine townships by 1860 and averaged only 3.78 persons per square mile. Only Sebewaing Township was organized with its contemporary dimensions, Figure 15, and reported 17.05 persons per square mile. The remaining townships were to be reduced in areal extent as population increase warranted. Little settlement took place away from the coast by 1860. Rubicon, Huron, Dwight, and White Rock townships included densities larger than the county average. Dwight reported the greatest number of settlers probably owing to activities focusing on Port Austin and Grindstone City.

## Distribution of Foreign-Born

Enumerated as foreign-born were 18,070 inhabitants of the Thumb, equalling 48 per cent of the total population. St. Clair County tallied 11,737, Sanilac 4,478, and Huron County reported 1,855 foreign-born inhabitants. Foreign-born residents equalled 44 per cent of the population of St. Clair County. Both Sanilac and Huron counties reported more foreigners than natives with 59 per cent of their population consisting of foreign-

TABLE 14.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION BY TOWNSHIP: 1860

| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Berlin | 1,030 | 28.36 | 256 | 7.50 | 25 | 154 | 4.24 | 15 | 60 | 2 | 6 | 31 |
| Brockway | 746 | 21.12 | 377 | 10.67 | 51 | 270 | 7.64 | 36 | 72 | 3 | 32 | 32 |
| Burtchville | 1,800 | 39.56 | 957 | 21.03 | 53 | 706 | 15.52 | 39 | 74 | 2 | 99 | 92 |
| Casco | 1,084 | 30.39 | 613 | 17.18 | 57 | 78 | 2.19 | 7 | 13 | 420 | .. | 13 |
| China | 1,340 | 40.88 | 520 | 15.86 | 39 | 73 | 2.23 | 5 | 14 | 255 | 34 | 55 |
| Clay | 1,037 | 45.88 | 242 | 10.71 | 23 | 149 | 6.59 | 14 | 62 | 3 | 19 | 46 |
| Clyde | 1,128 | 31.33 | 503 | 13.97 | 45 | 353 | 9.81 | 31 | 70 | 31 | 17 | 32 |
| Columbus | 1,032 | 28.98 | 426 | 11.96 | 41 | 216 | 6.07 | 21 | 51 | 18 | 120 | 44 |
| Cottrellville | 1,527 | 70.16 | 505 | 23.20 | 33 | 168 | 7.72 | 11 | 33 | 92 | 97 | 40 |
| East China | 318 | 68.44 | 114 | 24.53 | 36 | 57 | 12.27 | 18 | 50 | 11 | 15 | 7 |
| Emmett | 646 | 18.08 | 428 | 11.98 | 66 | 165 | 4.62 | 26 | 39 | 13 | 216 | 4 |
| Greenwood | 583 | 16.29 | 361 | 10.09 | 62 | 264 | 7.38 | 42 | 73 | 16 | 47 | 16 |
| Ira | 1,130 | 62.58 | 514 | 28.47 | 45 | 214 | 11.85 | 19 | 42 | 93 | 20 | .. |
| Kenockee | 778 | 21.79 | 464 | 13.00 | 60 | 278 | 7.79 | 36 | 60 | 11 | 117 | 29 |
| Kimball | 839 | 23.36 | 381 | 10.61 | 45 | 261 | 7.27 | 31 | 69 | 10 | 61 | 20 |
| Lynn | 225 | 6.24 | 93 | 2.58 | 41 | 49 | 1.36 | 22 | 53 | 5 | 10 | 23 |
| Mussey | 438 | 12.31 | 192 | 5.40 | 44 | 117 | 3.29 | 27 | 61 | 40 | 5 | 13 |
| Port Huron | 5,905 | 150.04 | 2,945 | 74.83 | 50 | 1,563 | 39.71 | 26 | 53 | 348 | 507 | 280 |
| Township | 1,534 | .... | 726 | ... | 47 | 430 | ... | 28 | 59 | 37 | 110 | 66 |
| 1st Ward | 1,157 | .... | 623 | ... | 54 | 301 | ... | 26 | 48 | 64 | 115 | 79 |
| 2nd Ward | 995 | .... | 484 | ... | 49 | 238 | ... | 24 | 49 | 76 | 90 | 41 |
| 3rd Ward | 1,200 | .... | 644 | ... | 54 | 360 | ... | 30 | 56 | 62 | 142 | 40 |
| 4th Ward | 1,019 | .... | 468 | ... | 46 | 234 | ... | 23 | 50 | 109 | 50 | 54 |
| Total City | 4,371 | .... | 2,219 | ... | 51 | 1,133 | ... | 26 | 51 | 311 | 397 | 214 |
| Riley | 938 | 25.08 | 282 | 7.54 | 30 | 210 | 5.62 | 22 | 74 | 9 | 37 | 23 |
| St. Clair | 3,177 | 72.39 | 1,307 | 29.78 | 41 | 557 | 12.69 | 18 | 43 | 324 | 201 | 114 |
| Township | 1,587 | ... | 721 | ... | 43 | 341 | ... | 20 | 47 | 175 | 101 | 36 |
| 1st Ward | 646 | ... | 253 | ... | 39 | 89 | ... | 14 | 35 | 52 | 62 | 39 |

TABLE 14 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2nd Ward | 844 | .. | 333 | .. | 39 | 127 | .. | 15 | 38 | 97 | 38 | 39 |
| Total City | 1,490 | .. | 586 | .. | 39 | 216 | .. | 14 | 37 | 149 | 100 | 78 |
| Wales | 903 | 25.43 | 257 | 7.24 | 28 | 169 | 4.76 | 19 | 66 | 17 | 43 | 8 |
| St.Clair County | 26,604 | 38.27 | 11,737 | 16.88 | 44 | 6,071 | 8.73 | 23 | 52 | 1,722 | 1,703 | 922 |
| Austin | 403 | 2.80 | 240 | 2.24 | 79 | 107 | 0.99 | 35 | 45 | 15 | 63 | 40 |
| Bridgehampton | 334 | 2.32 | 195 | 1.36 | 58 | 143 | 0.99 | 43 | 73 | 4 | 26 | 14 |
| Buel | 172 | 4.56 | 106 | 2.81 | 62 | 70 | 1.86 | 41 | 66 | 7 | 9 | 9 |
| Delaware | 436 | 9.32 | 270 | 5.77 | 62 | 129 | 2.76 | 30 | 48 | 48 | 39 | 40 |
| Elk | 229 | 3.19 | 154 | 2.14 | 67 | 117 | 1.63 | 51 | 76 | .. | 19 | 10 |
| Forester | 375 | 14.94 | 215 | 8.57 | 57 | 148 | 5.90 | 39 | 59 | 4 | 19 | 23 |
| Fremont | 222 | 6.29 | 150 | 4.25 | 68 | 106 | 3.00 | 48 | 71 | .. | 21 | 12 |
| Lexington | 2,064 | 53.33 | 1,123 | 29.02 | 54 | 871 | 22.50 | 42 | 78 | 29 | 92 | 96 |
| Maple Valley | 132 | 3.67 | 107 | 2.98 | 81 | 86 | 2.39 | 65 | 80 | .. | 11 | 2 |
| Marion | 197 | 1.37 | 139 | 0.97 | 71 | 97 | 0.68 | 49 | 70 | 10 | 8 | 17 |
| Marlette | 187 | 3.47 | 141 | 2.61 | 75 | 69 | 1.28 | 37 | 49 | 3 | 30 | 9 |
| Sanilac | 1,205 | 29.80 | 689 | 17.04 | 57 | 388 | 9.59 | 32 | 56 | 120 | 70 | 57 |
| Speaker | 327 | 9.38 | 194 | 5.57 | 59 | 148 | 4.25 | 45 | 76 | .. | 20 | 14 |
| Washington | 173 | 1.61 | 109 | 1.01 | 63 | 53 | 0.49 | 31 | 49 | .. | 26 | 20 |
| Worth | 1,244 | 31.82 | 646 | 16.52 | 52 | 528 | 13.50 | 42 | 82 | 8 | 50 | 32 |
| Sanilac County | 7,599 | 7.90 | 4,478 | 4.65 | 59 | 3,060 | 3.18 | 40 | 68 | 248 | 503 | 395 |
| Bingham | 326 | 3.03 | 255 | 2.37 | 78 | 56 | 0.52 | 17 | 22 | 125 | 11 | 8 |
| Caseville | 191 | 0.89 | 76 | 0.35 | 40 | 50 | 0.19 | 21 | 53 | 9 | 7 | 13 |
| Dwight | 573 | 4.57 | 375 | 2.99 | 65 | 240 | 1.92 | 42 | 64 | 60 | 28 | 23 |
| Hume | 195 | 1.91 | 108 | 1.06 | 55 | 64 | 0.63 | 33 | 59 | 11 | 21 | 7 |
| Huron | 524 | 7.48 | 321 | 4.58 | 61 | 211 | 3.01 | 40 | 66 | 15 | 35 | 34 |
| Rubicon | 283 | 9.33 | 145 | 4.78 | 61 | 91 | 3.00 | 32 | 63 | 10 | 22 | 18 |
| Sand Beach | 176 | 2.36 | 48 | 0.64 | 27 | 25 | 0.34 | 14 | 52 | 7 | 2 | 12 |
| Sebewaing | 555 | 17.05 | 325 | 9.98 | 59 | 13 | 0.40 | 2 | 4 | 309 | 1 | 1 |

TABLE 14 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Den. sity | F.B. Pop. | Den- sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den- sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White Rock | 342 | 4.26 | 202 | 2.51 | 59 | 62 | 0.77 | 18 | 31 | 92 | 17 | 13 |
| Huron County | 3,165 | 3.78 | 1,855 | 2.22 | 59 | 802 | 0.96 | 25 | 43 | 638 | 144 | 129 |

Source: Compiled by author.

born. Table 14 reviews the total, foreign-born, Canadian and selected foreign-born group numbers, densities, and ratios by county and township.

The foreign-born density pattern varies somewhat from that manifested by the total population in St. Clair County (see Figure 16). The average density of foreigners was 16.88 per square mile compared to 38.27 per square mile population density. Only seven townships surpassed the average foreign-born density, while eight exceeded the average population density. Port Huron Township included the largest density of foreign-born with 74.83 per square mile. The city of Port Huron represented 18 per cent of the county foreign-born and 79 per cent of the foreign-born in the township. St. Clair Township reported 29.78 foreign-born per square mile. Ira Township, although ranked fifth in population density, accounted for 28.47 foreign-born per square mile. East China, Cottrellville, Burtchville, and Casco were the remaining townships which reported densities above the county average.

Nine townships exceeded the 44 per cent foreign-born of total population for the county. Six of the nine reported total population densities less than the county average, implying that foreign-born persons accounted for greater percentages of the total in the more recently settled portion of the county. Emmett and Greenwood townships recorded 66 and 62 per cent of their inhabitants as foreigners, respectively. Burtchville and Brockway enumerated more than half of their population as foreign-born. Others exceeding the county average were Port Huron, Ira, Clyde, and Kimball.

The average density of foreign-born in Sanilac County stood at 4.65 per square mile compared to the 7.90 per square mile population density (see Figure 17). The foreign-born were distributed in a pattern similar

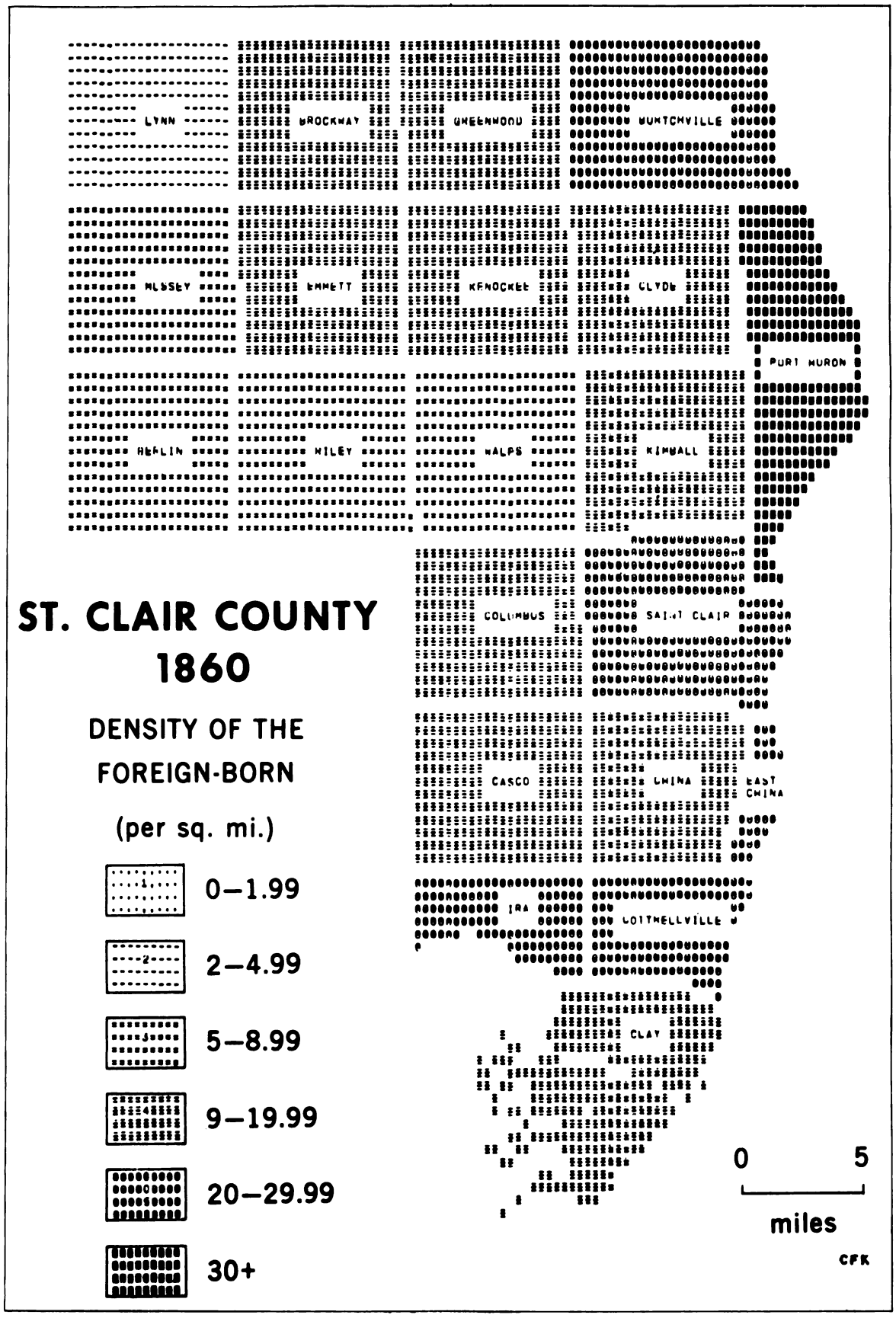

ST. CLAIR COUNTY
1860
DENSITY OF THE
FOREIGN-BORN
(per sq. mi.)
0—1.99
2—4.99
5—8.99
9—19.99
20—29.99
30+
LYNN
BROCKWAY
GREENWOOD
MONTCHVILLE
MASSEY
EMMETT
KENOCKEE
CLYDE
PORT HURON
BERLIN
RILEY
WALPS
KIMBALL
COLUMBUS
SAINT CLAIR
CASCO
CHINA
EAST CHINA
IRA
COTTRELLVILLE
CLAY
0
5
miles
CFK
SYMAP

Figure 16.

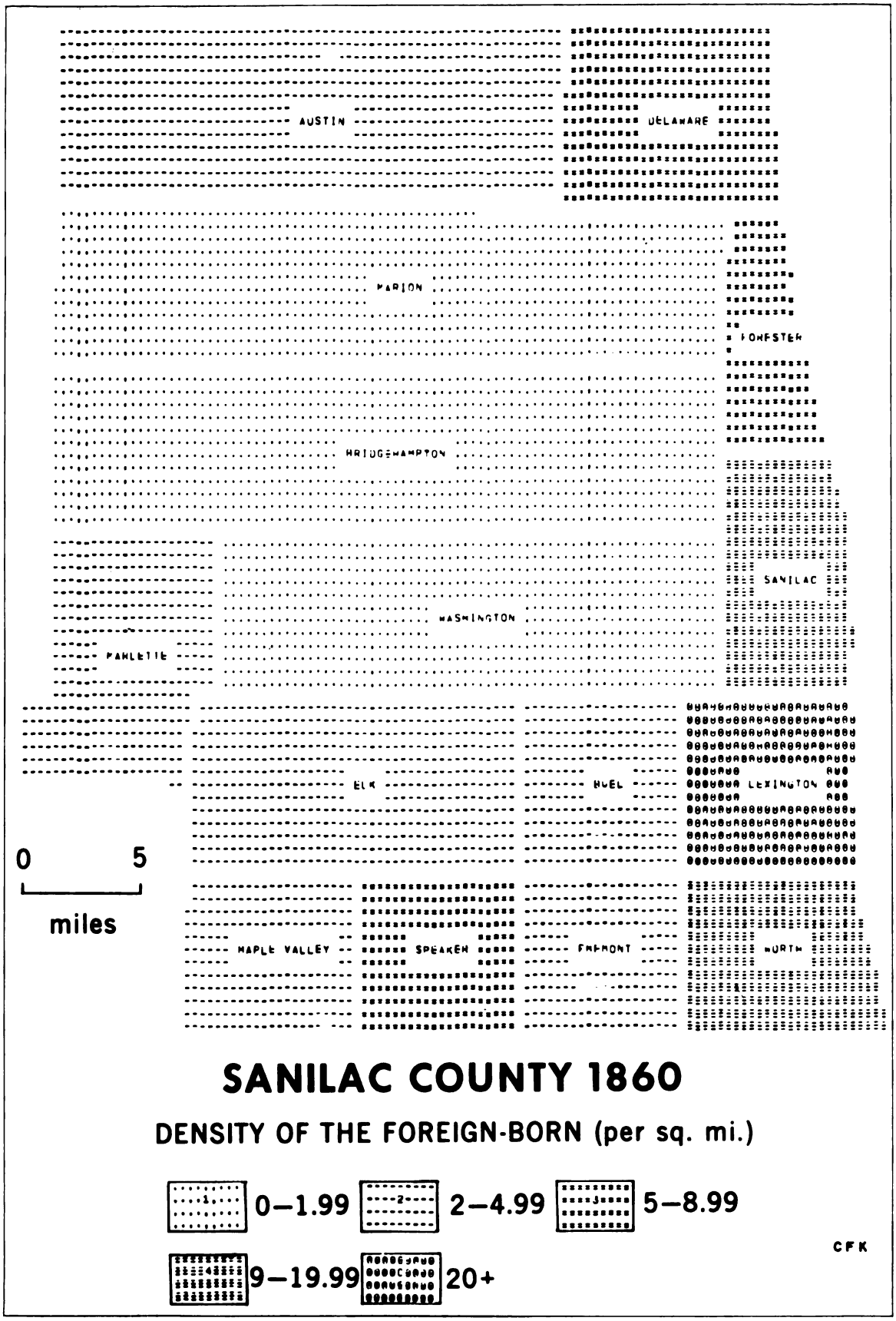

AUSTIN
DELAWARE
MARION
FORESTER
BRIDGEHAMPTON
SANILAC
WASHINGTON
MARLETTE
ELK
HUEL
LEXINGTON
MAPLE VALLEY
SPEAKER
FREMONT
WORTH
0
5
miles
SANILAC COUNTY 1860
DENSITY OF THE FOREIGN-BORN (per sq. mi.)
0–1.99
2–4.99
5–8.99
9–19.99
20+
CFK

Figure 17.

to the total population. Townships situated along the coast accounted for the largest densities, and Lexington Township provided the most dense area of foreign-born. The same size townships that contained population densities greater than the county average also reported more than average foreign-born densities.

Foreign-born persons accounted for 59 per cent of the total population of Sanilac County. Well over one-half the residents were born outside the United States. Each township contained more than one-half of its total as foreign-born and nine exceeded the county average. Of these nine townships, only Delaware was above the county average density for total and foreign-born. Corresponding to, although more dramatic, the pattern in St. Clair County--foreigners made up significantly greater proportions of the settlers in the sparsely and more recently settled townships. At least three of every four residents of Maple Valley, Austin, and Marlette townships were foreign-born. More than two of every three in Marion, Fremont, and Elk were foreigners. Washington, Delaware, and Buel townships reported over 60 per cent foreign-born.

The foreign-born density pattern in Huron County was commensurate to that of the total population but averaged only 2.22 per square mile. Sebewaing reported 9.98 foreign-born per square mile and provided the densest foreign-born area. Foreigners accounted for 59 per cent of the population. Only Sand Beach and Caseville townships reported less than 50 per cent foreigners. Bingham, Dwight, and Huron townships exceeded the county average.

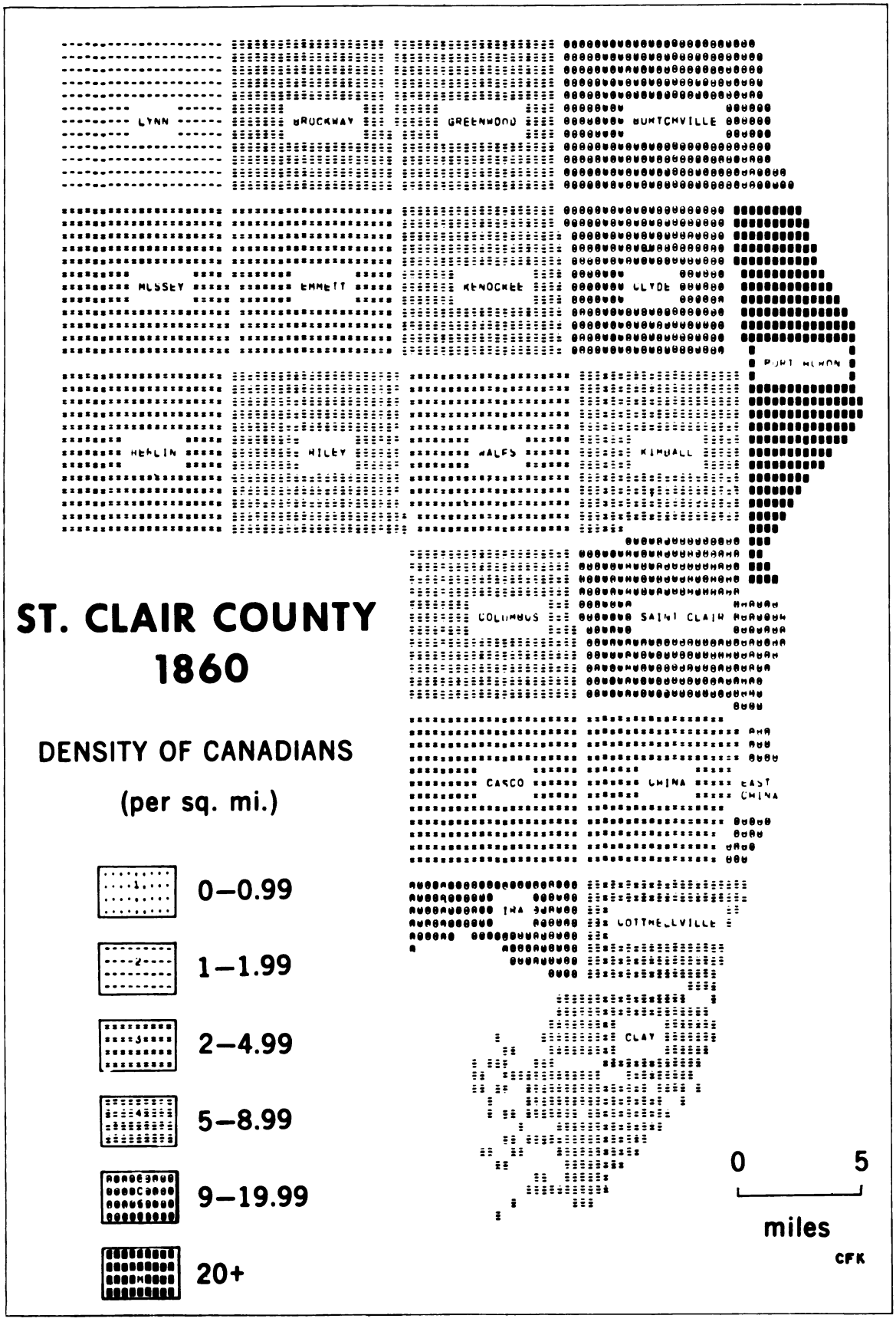
## Distribution of Canadians

Over one-half of all foreign-born persons residing in the Thumb area in 1860 were born in Canada. Canadians numbered 9,933, contributed 26 per cent of the inhabitants, and accounted for 55 per cent of the foreign-born

population. St. Clair County reported 6,071, Sanilac 3,060 and Huron tallied 802 Canadians. Although St. Clair County reported the greatest number of Canadians, its ratio of Canadians to total population was only 23 per cent. Sanilac and Huron reported 40 and 25 per cent respectively. Canadians in Sanilac County accounted for 68 per cent of all foreign-born residents. Canadians in St. Clair accounted for 52 per cent of the foreign-born while 43 per cent of the foreign-born were Canadians in Huron County.

Canadians numbered 8.73 persons per square mile in St. Clair County. The density pattern of Canadians by township is not in complete agreement with that of either the total population or foreign-born (see Figure 18). While eight townships surpassed the average density of population and seven exceeded the average foreign-born density, only six townships reported Canadian densities in excess of the county average. As expected, Port Huron Township recorded the greatest density of Canadians. Burtchville, ranked eighth in total and sixth in foreign-born density, was second to Port Huron Township. East China and Ira townships ranked next in density. Clyde Township, although reporting below average total and foreign-born densities, included 9.81 Canadians per square mile.

Nine of the twenty-one townships reported greater than average Canadian ratios to total population. More than one-third of the residents in Greenwood, Burtchville, Kenockee, and Brockway townships and over one-fourth of Clyde, Kimball, Mussey, Port Huron, and Emmett townships were born in Canada. All nine townships are situated in the northern portion of the county and seven are in the interior. There were fourteen townships which reported more than the county average Canadian per cent of foreign-born. In Burtchville, Riley, Greenwood, Brockway, Clyde, Kimball, and Wales townships more than two of every three foreigners were Canadians. It would appear that Canadians made up greater proportions of the population in the




SYMAP

Figure 18.

less densely populated townships. Canadians, in most cases, far outnumbered other foreign-born groups in the less densely settled townships--particularly those in the interior. However, no township reported more Canadian than native-born inhabitants.

In 1860, Sanilac County numbered 3.18 Canadians per square mile. The distribution of the density of Canadians by township corresponds to the patterns manifested by both the total and foreign-born populations (see Figure 19). However, only five townships exhibited Canadian densities greater than the county average while six exceeded the total and foreign-born averages. Lexington, Worth, Sanilac, Forester, and Speaker townships recorded more than the average density.

Nine of the fifteen townships exceeded the 40 per cent Canadian to total population ratio of the county. Maple Valley and Elk townships actually numbered more Canadians than natives and reported 65 and 50 per cent respectively. Marion, Speaker, Bridgehampton, Delaware, Lexington, Worth and Buel exceeded the county average. Canadians accounted for 68 per cent of all foreign-born in the county and nine townships surpassed the mean. More than three of every four foreigners were Canadian in Worth, Maple Valley, Lexington, Speaker, and Elk townships. At least two of every three foreigners were Canadian in Bridgehampton, Fremont, Marion, and Forester townships. The lowest ratio of Canadians to foreign-born was 45 per cent in Austin Township. Canadians were the dominant group and were a significant factor in the population of each township. Canadians outnumbered natives in two sparsely populated townships, but the more densely populated townships, as well, reported significant numbers of Canadians. Canadians dominated other foreign-born groups in the interior areas of Sanilac County as well as along the coast.

Huron County was still in its first stages of occupance in 1860, and

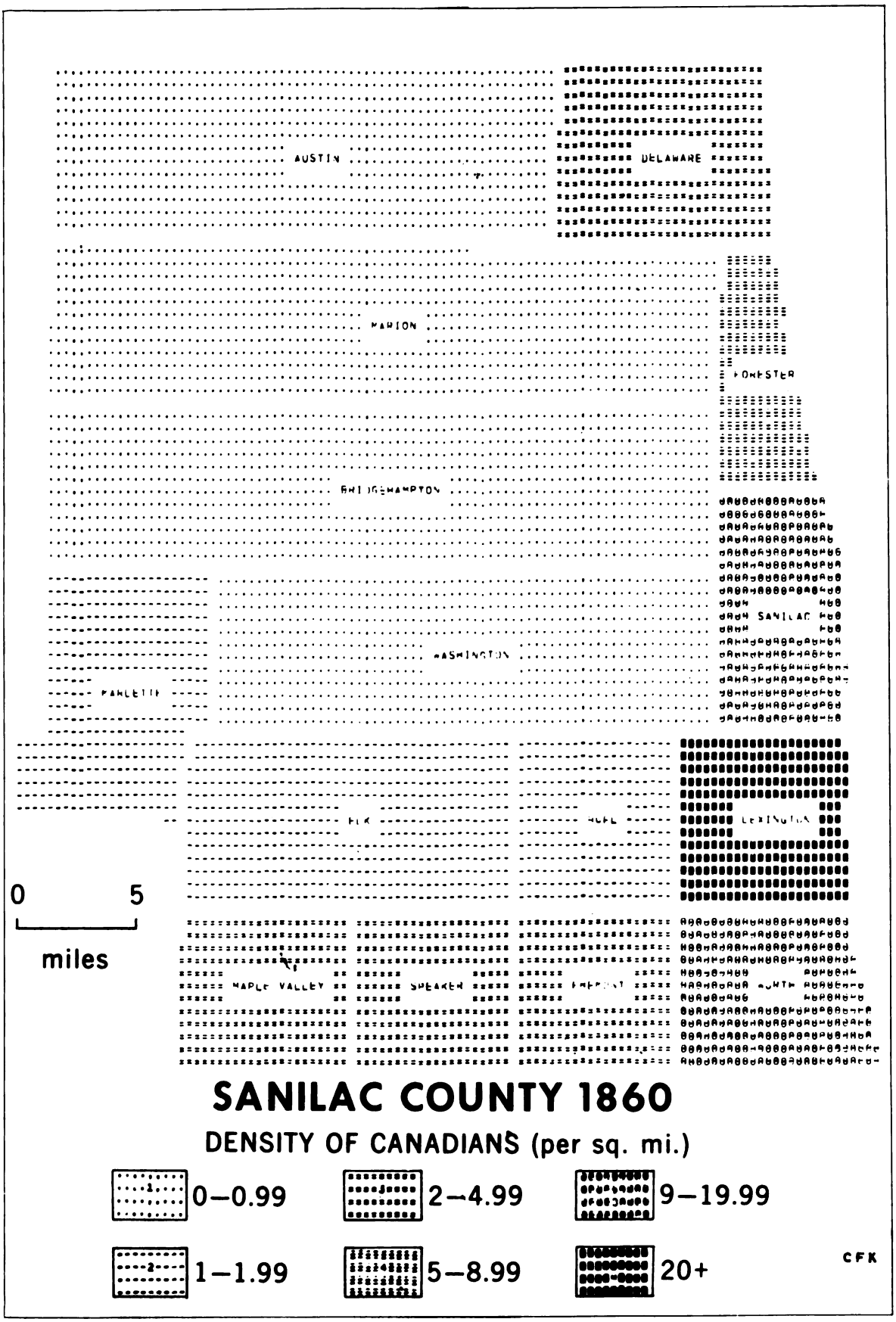

AUSTIN
DELAWARE
MARION
FORESTER
BRIDGEHAMPTON
SANILAC
WASHINGTON
PARLETTE
ELK
HOPE
LEXINGTON
MAPLE VALLEY
SPEAKER
0
5
miles
SANILAC COUNTY 1860
DENSITY OF CANADIANS (per sq. mi.)
0—0.99
2—4.99
9—19.99
1—1.99
5—8.99
20+
CFK

Figure 19.

the Canadian density per square mile was only 0.96. Five of the nine townships surpassed the average county population density and six exceeded the average foreign-born, but only three townships accounted for a greater Canadian density than average. Huron, Rubicon, and Dwight townships, comprising the northeastern quarter of the county, reported the densest Canadian populations. One of every four residents of the county was born in Canada and Dwight, Huron, Hume, and Rubicon exceeded the average. No township reported more Canadians than natives. Canadians accounted for 43 per cent of all foreign-born and six townships numbered more than the mean. Canadians were most dominant in Huron, Rubicon, and Dwight townships including over 60 per cent of the foreigners respectively. Canadians accounted for more than 50 per cent of the foreign-born in Hume, Caseville, and Sand Beach.

## Other Foreign-Born Groups

Only three of the twenty-one townships of St. Clair County reported a greater number of foreign-born other than Canadian. Germans averaged 2.48 per square mile and accounted for 6 per cent of the population and 15 per cent of all foreigners. The Irish maintained a density of 2.45 per square mile including 6 per cent of the total and 15 per cent of the foreign-born populations. The English numbered 1.33 persons per square mile, 3 per cent of the population, and 8 per cent of the foreign-born. Germans in Casco Township accounted for 39 per cent of its population, 60 per cent of its foreign-born, and numbered 11.77 per square mile providing the greatest concentration of Germans in the Thumb region. China Township also reported more Germans than any other foreign nativity. The most numerous foreign-born group in Emmett Township were the Irish who equalled 6.04 persons per square mile, 33 per cent of the population, and 50 per cent of all foreign-

ers constituting the densest area of Irish in the Thumb region in 1860.

No foreign-born group outnumbered Canadians in any of the fifteen townships of Sanilac County. The Irish were the second largest group consisting of 7 per cent of the total and 11 per cent of the foreign-born population and maintained a density of only 0.52 per square mile. The English of Sanilac County included 5 per cent of the population and Germans equalled only 3 per cent.

Canadians tallied more foreign-born than any other group in six of Huron County's nine townships. Germans, Irish, and English ranked below the Canadian total. The densities of these three groups were slight, and the Germans numbered only 0.76 per square mile. However, Germans accounted for 20 per cent of the total and 34 per cent of the foreign-born. Corresponding ratios for the Irish were 5 and 8 per cent and for the English 4 and 7 per cent. Persons born in Germany equalled the largest foreign-born group in Sebewaing, Bingham, and White Rock townships. Germans actually outnumbered natives in Sebewaing embracing 56 per cent of its population, 95 per cent of all foreigners, and provided a density of 9.49 per square mile. Germans in Bingham Township mustered 38 per cent of its population, 49 per cent of its foreign-born, and numbered 1.16 per square mile. Germans in White Rock Township contributed 27 per cent of its population, 46 per cent of all foreigners, and provided a density of 1.15 per square mile. Other than Canadians and Germans, no foreign-born group could assemble more than one person per square mile in any township.

## Population Distribution 1870

The Thumb region contained 60,272 inhabitants in 1870. The population increased substantially from 1860, and the southern portion of the Thumb remained the most densely populated. St. Clair County reported 36,661 inhabi-

tants, Sanilac 14,562, and Huron County tallied 9,040 persons.

St. Clair County remained the most populous and reported the highest population density at 60.15 per square mile. Townships fronting on the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair recorded the highest concentrations. Townships situated in the interior of southernmost St. Clair County also reported dense populations (see Figure 20). All twenty-three contemporary townships of the county were organized by 1870.

Owing to the rapid development of the city of Port Huron, Port Huron Township reported a density of 367.12 persons per square mile and included 19 per cent of all county residents. The city of Port Huron was divided into four wards which totaled 5,973 persons, 88 per cent of the township, and 16 per cent of the county population. Cottrellville, spurred by development at Marine City, reported 108.98 persons per square mile. Ira Township, due to its limited areal extent, numbered 87.50 persons per square mile. Activity at the city of St. Clair raised the population density of St. Clair Township to 86.41 per square mile. Clay, East China, and Casco townships also exceeded the county average density. Townships including cities and those situated along the southwestern border of the county reported the highest densities. Casco Township was the only interior township to exceed the mean density. The least densely populated areas occupied the northwestern portion of the county with Lynn reporting the lowest density.

Sanilac County included twenty-two organized townships and averaged 15.13 persons per square mile in 1870. The densest area of population was situated along the coast of Lake Huron in southeastern Sanilac County (see Figure 20). Lexington Township was the most densely settled area reporting 62.86 per square mile. Totals for the city of Lexington could not be accurately extracted from the manuscript census records, but the city probably accounted for much of the population. Sanilac and Worth were next in dens-

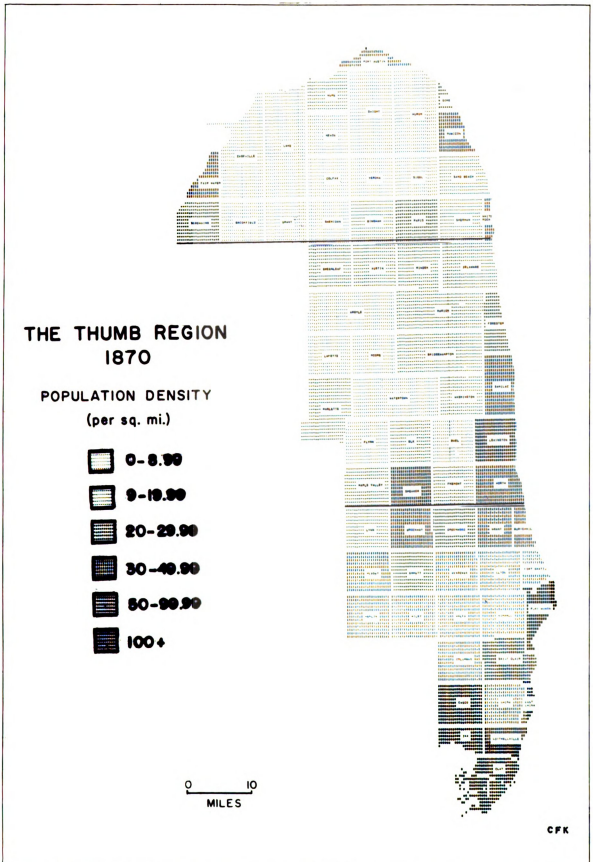

THE THUMB REGION
1870
POPULATION DENSITY
(per sq. mi.)
0-8.99
9-19.99
20-29.99
30-49.99
50-99.99
100+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 20.

ity reporting 49.16 and 36.68 per square mile respectively. Speaker, Forester, Fremont, Elk, and Delaware townships also surpassed the mean county density. Settlement was most concentrated along the coast, but three of the eight townships exceeding the county mean were situated in the interior of southern Sanilac County. The least settled area was in the western portion of the county encompassing Argyle, Lamotte, Moore, and Watertown townships.

Huron County was organized into twenty-two townships by 1870 and averaged 10.81 persons per square mile. Settlement remained focused on the coasts of Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay (see Figure 20). Eight of the eleven townships fronting on the coast reported densities exceeding the county mean. Port Austin reported the largest density at 44.39 per square mile. Data for villages were not clearly separated from the township, and therefore only township statistics could be extracted from the manuscript census records. Undoubtedly, activity at the village of Port Austin and Grindstone City accounted for the high density in Port Austin Township. White Rock, Rubicon, and Fair Haven contributed over 30 persons per square mile. Sebewaing, Gore, Paris, Sand Beach, Hume, and Bingham townships also exceeded the county mean. Only Paris and Bingham are situated away from the coast and are located in southern Huron County. Much of the interior was occupied by fewer than 5 persons per square mile.

## Distribution of Foreign-Born

There were 27,330 foreign-born persons in the Thumb region in 1870 accounting for 45 per cent of the population. St. Clair contained 14,859 foreign-born which comprised 41 per cent of its population. Sanilac County included 7,700 and Huron County 4,771 foreign-born inhabitants. Both Sanilac and Huron Counties numbered more foreigners than natives, and the foreign-

born accounted for 53 per cent of each county's population. Table 15 includes the total, foreign-born, Canadian, and other selected foreign-born groups along with densities and ratios for each township.

The mean density of foreign-born for St. Clair County was 20.41 per square mile compared to the 50.16 mean of the total population. The foreign-born density pattern, Figure 21, varies from that manifested by the total population. Port Huron, Cottrellville, Ira, and St. Clair townships contained the largest densities of foreign-born paralleling their positions with respect to total population. While the city of Port Huron included 16 per cent of the county population, 19 per cent of the county's foreign-born resided in the city. Casco, Fort Gratiot, and Burtchville were the remaining townships which exceeded the foreign-born mean. Casco ranked seventh in total population density but was fifth in foreign-born density. Fort Gratiot and Burtchville did not exceed the mean population density but ranked sixth and seventh in foreign-born density.

Twelve townships reported a greater ratio of foreign-born to total population than the county average of 41 per cent. Ten of the twelve included less than average population densities and all ten were situated in the three northern-most tiers of townships. Foreign-born settlers clearly embraced greater proportions of the population in the more sparsely populated and more recently settled northern portion of the county. In fact--Greenwood, Burtchville, and Lynn townships included more foreigners than natives.

The foreign-born density pattern in Sanilac County reflects the identical pattern displayed by the density of the total population (see Figure 21). The average density of foreign-born was 8.00 per square mile compared to the 15.13 mean population density. Foreigners were concentrated along the coast and reached into the interior in the extreme southern tiers of

TABLE 15.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION BY TOWNSHIP: 1870

| Township | Total Pop. | Density | F.B. Pop. | Density | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Density | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Berlin | 1,231 | 33.90 | 339 | 9.33 | 38 | 257 | 7.08 | 21 | 76 | 12 | 8 | 31 |
| Brockway | 1,330 | 37.65 | 622 | 17.61 | 47 | 471 | 13.33 | 35 | 76 | 5 | 49 | 40 |
| Burtchville | 726 | 46.14 | 367 | 23.32 | 51 | 258 | 16.40 | 36 | 70 | 12 | 52 | 26 |
| Casco | 1,991 | 55.81 | 876 | 24.55 | 44 | 81 | 2.27 | 4 | 9 | 716 | 6 | 5 |
| China | 1,637 | 49.94 | 541 | 16.50 | 33 | 58 | 1.77 | 4 | 11 | 360 | 23 | 28 |
| Clay | 1,475 | 65.26 | 367 | 16.24 | 25 | 237 | 10.49 | 16 | 65 | 18 | 17 | 68 |
| Township | 721 | ... | 173 | ... | 24 | 103 | ... | 14 | 60 | 13 | 6 | 38 |
| Algonac | 754 | ... | 194 | ... | 26 | 134 | ... | 18 | 69 | 5 | 11 | 30 |
| Clyde | 1,176 | 32.67 | 480 | 13.33 | 41 | 356 | 9.89 | 30 | 74 | 22 | 26 | 29 |
| Columbus | 1,218 | 34.21 | 418 | 11.74 | 34 | 238 | 6.68 | 20 | 57 | 40 | 95 | 39 |
| Cottrellville | 2,372 | 108.98 | 714 | 32.81 | 30 | 330 | 15.16 | 14 | 46 | 215 | 90 | 40 |
| Township | 1,132 | ... | 357 | ... | 32 | 159 | ... | 14 | 45 | 105 | 64 | 13 |
| Marine City | 1,240 | ... | 357 | ... | 29 | 171 | ... | 14 | 48 | 110 | 26 | 27 |
| East China | 297 | 63.92 | 74 | 15.93 | 25 | 41 | 8.82 | 14 | 55 | 4 | 9 | 9 |
| Emmett | 960 | 26.86 | 448 | 12.54 | 47 | 142 | 3.97 | 15 | 32 | 18 | 269 | 7 |
| Fort Gratiot | 1,032 | 49.57 | 508 | 24.40 | 49 | 329 | 15.80 | 32 | 65 | 24 | 47 | 52 |
| Grant | 1,143 | 38.40 | 532 | 17.87 | 47 | 420 | 14.11 | 37 | 79 | 5 | 45 | 39 |
| Greenwood | 898 | 25.10 | 538 | 15.04 | 60 | 363 | 10.15 | 40 | 67 | 73 | 56 | 31 |
| Ira | 1,580 | 87.50 | 590 | 32.68 | 37 | 219 | 12.13 | 14 | 37 | 254 | 3 | .. |
| Kenockee | 1,229 | 34.43 | 583 | 16.33 | 47 | 348 | 9.75 | 28 | 60 | 17 | 163 | 28 |
| Kimball | 1,091 | 30.38 | 466 | 12.98 | 43 | 349 | 9.72 | 32 | 75 | 18 | 61 | 19 |
| Lynn | 539 | 14.95 | 273 | 7.57 | 51 | 208 | 5.77 | 39 | 76 | 7 | 14 | 30 |
| Mussey | 1,117 | 31.39 | 545 | 15.31 | 49 | 292 | 8.20 | 26 | 54 | 180 | 25 | 26 |
| Port Huron | 6,805 | 367.12 | 3,222 | 173.82 | 47 | 1,741 | 93.92 | 26 | 54 | 518 | 438 | 312 |
| Township | 832 | ... | 380 | ... | 46 | 238 | ... | 29 | 63 | 23 | 63 | 43 |
| 1st Ward | 1,360 | ... | 701 | .... | 52 | 406 | ... | 30 | 58 | 70 | 91 | 78 |
| 2nd Ward | 1,235 | ... | 530 | ... | 43 | 296 | ... | 24 | 56 | 69 | 80 | 50 |
| 3rd Ward | 1,444 | ... | 712 | ... | 49 | 385 | ... | 27 | 54 | 71 | 139 | 54 |

TABLE 15 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4th Ward | 1,934 | ... | 899 | .. | 46 | 416 | .. | 22 | 46 | 285 | 65 | 87 |
| Total City | 5,973 | ... | 2,842 | .. | 48 | 1,503 | .. | 25 | 53 | 495 | 375 | 269 |
| Riley | 1,664 | 44.50 | 570 | 15.24 | 34 | 456 | 12.20 | 27 | 80 | 14 | 61 | 29 |
| St.Clair | 3,792 | 86.41 | 1,341 | 30.56 | 35 | 588 | 13.40 | 16 | 44 | 427 | 172 | 117 |
| Township | 2,002 | ... | 673 | .. | 34 | 296 | ... | 13 | 40 | 224 | 93 | 51 |
| 1st Ward | 882 | ... | 294 | .. | 33 | 134 | ... | 15 | 46 | 68 | 38 | 43 |
| 2nd Ward | 908 | ... | 374 | .. | 41 | 158 | ... | 17 | 42 | 135 | 41 | 23 |
| Total City | 1,790 | ... | 668 | .. | 37 | 292 | ... | 16 | 44 | 203 | 79 | 66 |
| Wales | 1,358 | 38.25 | 445 | 12.53 | 33 | 304 | 8.56 | 22 | 68 | 42 | 58 | 21 |
| St.Clair County | 36,661 | 50.16 | 14,869 | 20.41 | 41 | 8,056 | 11.17 | 22 | 54 | 3,001 | 1,787 | 1,026 |
| Argyle | 151 | 2.12 | 109 | 1.53 | 72 | 66 | 0.93 | 44 | 61 | 15 | 7 | 1 |
| Austin | 349 | 9.69 | 230 | 6,38 | 66 | 127 | 3.53 | 36 | 55 | 10 | 37 | 27 |
| Bridgehampton | 936 | 12.97 | 498 | 6.90 | 53 | 366 | 5.07 | 39 | 73 | 13 | 66 | 30 |
| Buel | 216 | 5.72 | 112 | 2.97 | 52 | 79 | 2.09 | 37 | 71 | 5 | 14 | 6 |
| Delaware | 741 | 15.84 | 396 | 8.47 | 53 | 228 | 4.87 | 31 | 58 | 62 | 34 | 48 |
| Township | 621 | ... | 319 | .. | 51 | 181 | .. | 29 | 57 | 55 | 30 | 36 |
| Forestville | 121 | ... | 77 | .. | 64 | 47 | .. | 39 | 61 | 7 | 4 | 12 |
| Elk | 633 | 17.67 | 306 | 8.54 | 48 | 241 | 6.73 | 38 | 79 | 4 | 28 | 14 |
| Flynn | 131 | 3.63 | 73 | 2.03 | 56 | 57 | 1.58 | 44 | 78 | 1 | 10 | 4 |
| Forester | 670 | 26.70 | 343 | 13.67 | 51 | 255 | 10.16 | 38 | 74 | 7 | 32 | 36 |
| Township | 354 | ... | 181 | ... | 51 | 142 | ... | 40 | 78 | .. | 20 | 17 |
| Forester | 233 | ... | 123 | ... | 53 | 88 | ... | 38 | 72 | 4 | 10 | 15 |
| Richmondville | 83 | ... | 39 | ... | 47 | 25 | ... | 30 | 64 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Fremont | 640 | 18.14 | 377 | 10.68 | 59 | 295 | 8.36 | 46 | 78 | .. | 35 | 27 |
| Greenleaf | 336 | 9.37 | 169 | 4.71 | 50 | 103 | 2.87 | 31 | 61 | 2 | 21 | 23 |
| Lamotte | 94 | 2.64 | 49 | 1.38 | 52 | 42 | 1.18 | 45 | 86 | .. | 3 | 4 |
| Lexington | 2,433 | 62.86 | 1,118 | 28.89 | 46 | 843 | 21.78 | 35 | 75 | 69 | 59 | 110 |
| Maple Valley | 335 | 9.32 | 208 | 5.79 | 62 | 183 | 5.09 | 55 | 88 | 4 | 7 | 7 |

TABLE 15 (cont'd.)

| | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marion | 665 | 9.22 | 297 | 5.50 | 60 | 300 | 4.15 | 45 | 76 | 18 | 32 | 32 |
| Marlette | 705 | 13.07 | 414 | 7.68 | 59 | 281 | 5.21 | 40 | 68 | 25 | 44 | 21 |
| Minden | 456 | 12.69 | 281 | 7.82 | 62 | 128 | 3.56 | 28 | 46 | 24 | 54 | 17 |
| Moore | 112 | 3.10 | 74 | 2.05 | 66 | 59 | 1.63 | 53 | 80 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| Sanilac | 1,988 | 49.16 | 1,030 | 25.47 | 52 | 644 | 15.93 | 32 | 63 | 167 | 93 | 73 |
| Speaker | 1,118 | 32.09 | 610 | 17.51 | 55 | 498 | 14.29 | 45 | 82 | 3 | 56 | 30 |
| Washington | 370 | 10.35 | 183 | 5.12 | 49 | 135 | 3.77 | 36 | 74 | .. | 31 | 10 |
| Watertown | 49 | 0.68 | 17 | 0.24 | 35 | 11 | 0.15 | 22 | 65 | .. | 4 | 1 |
| Worth | 1,434 | 36.68 | 706 | 18.06 | 49 | 578 | 14.78 | 40 | 82 | 5 | 47 | 43 |
| Sanilac County | 14,562 | 15.13 | 7,700 | 8.00 | 53 | 5,519 | 5.73 | 38 | 72 | 441 | 715 | 569 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bingham | 441 | 12.30 | 371 | 7.56 | 61 | 174 | 4.85 | 39 | 64 | 39 | 14 | 30 |
| Brookfield | 116 | 3.25 | 57 | 1.60 | 49 | 34 | 0.95 | 29 | 60 | 20 | 1 | 2 |
| Caseville | 382 | 5.36 | 173 | 2.43 | 45 | 101 | 1.42 | 26 | 58 | 35 | 6 | 15 |
| Colfax | 91 | 2.54 | 51 | 1.42 | 56 | 36 | 1.00 | 40 | 71 | .. | 5 | 3 |
| Dwight | 335 | 4.64 | 181 | 2.51 | 54 | 140 | 1.94 | 42 | 77 | 7 | 15 | 9 |
| Fair Haven | 528 | 30.20 | 258 | 14.76 | 49 | 90 | 5.15 | 17 | 35 | 140 | 8 | 9 |
| Gore | 173 | 26.08 | 84 | 12.66 | 49 | 42 | 6.33 | 24 | 50 | 23 | 8 | 8 |
| Grant | 309 | 8.67 | 137 | 3.85 | 44 | 101 | 2.83 | 33 | 74 | 5 | 4 | 18 |
| Hume | 475 | 15.80 | 266 | 8.85 | 56 | 167 | 5.56 | 35 | 63 | 33 | 35 | 20 |
| Huron | 403 | 5.75 | 227 | 3.24 | 56 | 151 | 2.16 | 37 | 67 | 4 | 21 | 29 |
| Lake | 325 | 3.60 | 168 | 1.86 | 52 | 112 | 1.24 | 34 | 67 | 5 | 22 | 23 |
| Meade | 213 | 5.90 | 135 | 3.74 | 63 | 118 | 3.27 | 55 | 87 | 1 | .. | .. |
| Paris | 891 | 24.69 | 528 | 14.63 | 59 | 80 | 2.22 | 9 | 15 | 80 | 4 | 7 |
| Port Austin | 778 | 44.39 | 429 | 24.48 | 55 | 282 | 16.09 | 36 | 66 | 20 | 70 | 19 |
| Rubicon | 746 | 31.49 | 398 | 16.80 | 53 | 212 | 8.95 | 28 | 53 | 65 | 53 | 40 |
| Sand Beach | 666 | 17.34 | 318 | 8.28 | 48 | 211 | 5.49 | 32 | 66 | 32 | 27 | 29 |
| Sheridan | 158 | 4.38 | 121 | 3.36 | 77 | 70 | 1.94 | 44 | 58 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Sherman | 385 | 10.77 | 211 | 5.90 | 55 | 51 | 1.43 | 13 | 24 | 110 | 18 | 5 |

TABLE 15 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Density | F.B. Pop. | Density | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Density | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sebewaing | 907 | 27.86 | 384 | 11.79 | 42 | 50 | 1.54 | 6 | 17 | 317 | 1 | 2 |
| Sigel | 181 | 5.00 | 90 | 2.49 | 50 | 26 | 0.72 | 14 | 29 | 34 | 2 | 8 |
| Verona | 276 | 7.76 | 169 | 4.75 | 61 | 108 | 3.04 | 39 | 64 | 2 | 14 | 16 |
| White Rock | 270 | 31.65 | 115 | 13.48 | 43 | 77 | 9.03 | 29 | 67 | 13 | 12 | 11 |
| Huron County | 9,049 | 10.81 | 4,771 | 5.70 | 53 | 2,433 | 2.91 | 27 | 51 | 988 | 341 | 305 |

Source: Compiled by author.

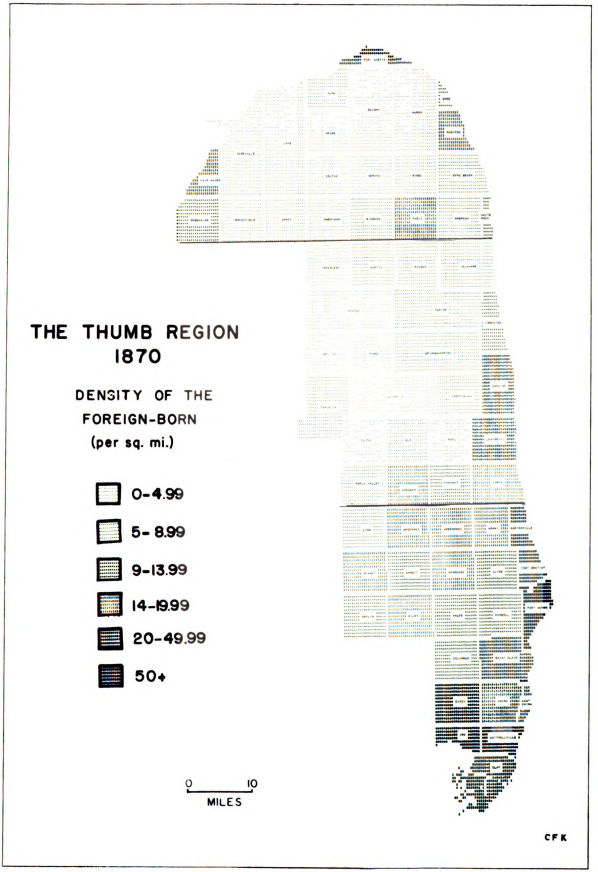

THE THUMB REGION
1870
DENSITY OF THE
FOREIGN-BORN
(per sq. mi.)
0-4.99
5-8.99
9-13.99
14-19.99
20-49.99
50+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 21.

townships. The same seven townships, in the same order, exceeded the mean foreign-born as well as the mean population density for the county.

Foreigners outnumbered natives in Sanilac County and seventeen of its twenty-two townships reported more foreign-born than native inhabitants. Ten townships surpassed the 53 per cent foreign-born ratio to total population calculated for the county. Argyle reported 76 per cent of its inhabitants as foreign-born, Austin and Moore reported 66 per cent. Most of the townships which exceeded the mean were situated in the northern and western portions of the county. Only Fremont and Speaker contained population densities greater than the county average. Foreigners accounted for greater proportions of the interior residents and appear to have been more apt to settle in the newly opened areas of Sanilac County than native-born settlers.

The pattern of foreign-born density by township in Huron County, Figure 21, reveals some correspondence to that manifested by the total population. The mean density of foreign-born was 5.70 per square mile compared to the 10.81 population density. Foreign-born settlement, with one significant exception, focused on the coastal townships. Eleven townships exceeded the county mean density. Port Austin contained the densest concentration of foreign-born numbering 24.48 per square mile. Rubicon and Fair Haven townships ranked second and third. Paris Township, although ranked seventh in population density, ranked fourth in foreign-born density. Paris was one of three townships situated in the interior which exceeded the mean density of foreign-born. Bingham and Sherman ranked tenth and eleventh.

Huron County included more foreigners than natives, and thirteen of its twenty-two townships embodied more foreign-born than natives. Eleven townships exceeded the mean of 53 per cent foreign-born of total popula-

tion enumerated for the county. Sheridan Township reported 77 per cent foreign-born. Foreigners accounted for greater proportions of the population in the central and northern portions of the county while natives outnumbered foreigners in both the southwestern and southeastern corners --particularly along the coast.

## Distribution of Canadians

There were 16,008 Canadians residing in the Thumb region in 1870 who accounted for 27 per cent of the population. Fifty-nine per cent of all foreign-born residents were born in Canada. St. Clair County enumerated 8,056 Canadians equalling 22 per cent of its population. Thirty-eight per cent of all inhabitants of Sanilac were Canadians who numbered 5,519 persons. Huron County tallied 2,443 Canadians who comprised 27 per cent of its population. Canadians outnumbered every other foreign-born group in the Thumb constituting 51 per cent of all foreigners in Huron County, 54 per cent in St. Clair County, and 72 per cent of Sanilac County's foreign-born.

St. Clair County reported a Canadian density of 11.17 per square mile. The density pattern of Canadians by township is both similar and dissimilar with respect to the patterns manifested by the population for foreign-born density patterns (see Figure 22). While only seven townships exceeded the mean total foreign-born densities, nine surpassed the mean Canadian density for the county. Port Huron Township reported the greatest density of Canadians. Burtchville and Fort Gratiot townships, both below the mean population density, ranked second and third respectively. Grant, Brockway and Riley townships were fifth, seventh and eighth in Canadian density but all three were below the mean densities of the population and the foreign-born. Cottrellville, St. Clair, and Ira townships also reported Canadian

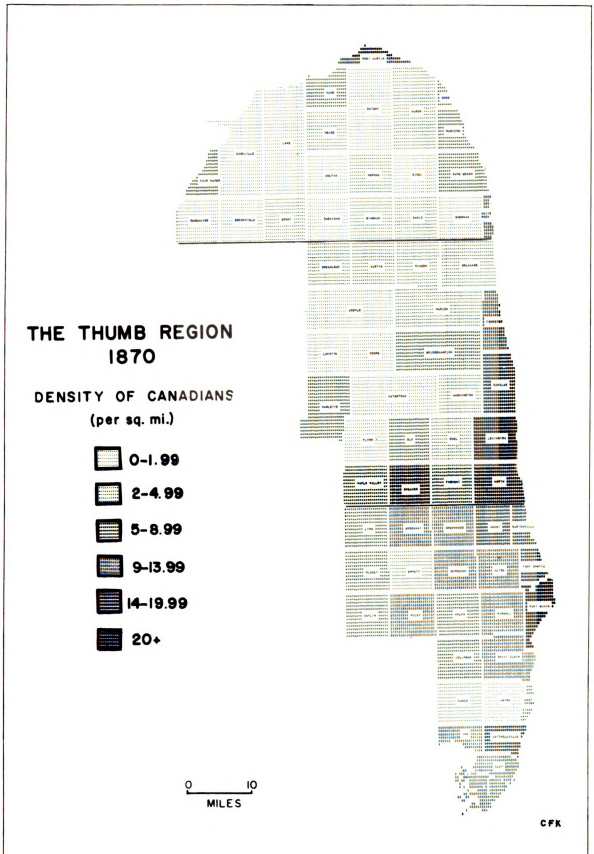

THE THUMB REGION
1870
DENSITY OF CANADIANS
(per sq. mi.)
0-1.99
2-4.99
5-8.99
9-13.99
14-19.99
20+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 22.

densities greater than the county mean. Canadians attained above average densities in the more densely populated townships as well as the less dense. The pattern displayed by townships exceeding the mean Canadian density was dispersed which implies that Canadians settled all sections of the county. However, there was an area of concentration in the northeastern corner of the county.

Twelve of the twenty-three townships of St. Clair County exceeded the 22 per cent ratio of Canadians to total population reported for the county. No township reported more Canadians than natives, but Greenwood reported 40 per cent of its population as Canadian. All twelve townships were situated in the northern three tiers of townships. Fifteen townships counted more than the 54 per cent Canadian ratio to foreign-born population reported for the county. More than three of every four foreigners were Canadian in Riley, Grant, Brockway, Berlin, Lynn, and Kimball townships. Out of the fifteen townships which exceeded the ratio, only three were situated in the southern portion of the county. Although Canadians accounted for greater than average densities in various sections of the county, Canadians comprised greater proportions of the total and foreign-born populations in the less densely populated northern tiers of townships.

Sanilac County averaged 5.73 Canadians per square mile in 1870. The distribution of the density of Canadians by township, Figure 22, corresponds to the patterns manifested by both the total and foreign-born populations. Seven townships exceeded the mean Canadian density for the county. Lexington Township reported 21.78 Canadians per square mile. Canadians were most dense along the coast and in the southern portion of the county.

Eleven of Sanilac County's twenty-two townships surpassed the 38 per cent Canadian to total population ratio compiled for the county. Maple Valley and Moore townships included more Canadians than natives. Of the

eleven townships only Worth was situated adjacent to the coast. Canadians accounted for greater than average proportions of the total population in the southern and western reaches of the county. Canadians embraced 72 per cent of all foreign-born in the county and thirteen townships exceeded the mean. Ten of the thirteen reported more than three-fourths of their foreigners as Canadians. Canadians dominated all other foreign-born groups in both densely and sparsely populated townships, along the coast as well as in the interior.

Canadians accounted for a density of 2.91 per square mile in Huron County. Ten townships reported a density surpassing the county mean. The seven densest Canadian townships occupied coastal locations followed by three interior situated townships (see Figure 22). Port Austin recorded 16.89 Canadians per square mile and offered the greatest concentration of Canadian settlers. Six of the seven most dense townships occupied eastern and northern coastal locations while Fair Haven Township embodied the only above average density in the western portion of the county. Bingham, Meade, and Verona townships were inland townships which displayed dense Canadian populations.

Canadians amounted to 27 per cent of the population of Huron County. Only Meade Township reported more Canadians than native-born inhabitants. Fifteen of Huron County's twenty-two townships compiled greater proportions of Canadians to total population than the county. The six leading townships were situated in the less densely populated interior. Canadians included 51 per cent of all foreigners residing in the county. Meade Township reported 87 per cent of its foreign-born as Canadian, and Dwight tallied 77 per cent. Grant, Colfax, White Rock, Huron, and Lake townships each reported more than two-thirds of their foreign-born as Canadian. Canadians consisted of more than one-half of all foreign-born in sixteen of

the twenty-two townships.

## Other Foreign-born Groups

Germans, Irish, English, and Scots composed the remaining significant foreign-born groups in the Thumb region. However, their combined total fell far below the total number of Canadians. The Irish, English, and Scots were fairly evenly distributed throughout the region. Germans, however, tended to cluster in settlements particularly in more rural areas. Seven townships, not including Port Huron, maintained 43 per cent of all German residents in the Thumb. Fifty-eight of the Thumb's sixty-seven townships reported Canadians as their most populous foreign-born group allowing only nine townships to other foreign-born groups.

Germans in St. Clair County averaged 4.32 per square mile, 8 per cent of the population, and 20 per cent of the foreign-born. The Irish accounted for 5 per cent of the population, 12 per cent of all foreigners, and numbered 2.57 per square mile. The English constituted only 3 per cent of the population. Port Huron Township notwithstanding, the greatest density of Germans in the Thumb was recorded in Casco Township at 20.07 per square mile including 36 per cent of its total and 82 per cent of its foreign-born populations. Ira and China townships also reported more Germans than any other foreign nativity with densities of 14.07 and 10.98 per square mile. The Irish were the largest foreign group in Emmett Township equalling 7.53 per square mile, 28 per cent of the total, and 60 per cent of the foreign-born populations.

No foreign-born group outnumbered Canadians in any of the twenty-two townships of Sanilac County. The Irish were the second largest group but could muster only 5 per cent of the total and 9 per cent of the foreign-born populations. The English and Germans included only 4 and 3 per cent

of the population respectively. The Irish reported the greatest county density with only 0.74 per square mile.

Germans outnumbered all other foreign-born groups in four Huron County townships and averaged 1.18 per square mile, 11 per cent of the total, and 21 per cent of the foreign-born. Sebewaing, Fair Haven, Sherman, and Sigel townships reported German majorities. Germans in Sebewaing Township numbered 9.74 per square mile, 35 per cent of its population, and 83 per cent of its foreigners. Fair Haven equalled 8.01 Germans per square mile. Sherman and Sigel townships tallied 3.08 and 0.94 Germans per square mile respectively. Poles were the third largest foreign-born group in the county but only averaged 0.44 per square mile and 4 per cent of the county population. Eighty-four per cent of all Poles in Huron County and 81 per cent of all Poles in the Thumb resided in Paris Township. Poles in Paris Township numbered 8.65 per square mile, 35 per cent of its population, and 59 per cent of its foreign-born. The Irish in Huron County accounted for only 4 per cent of its population.

## Population Distribution 1880

The population of the Thumb region increased to 90,993 inhabitants by 1880 and settlement continued to be most dense in the southern and coastal areas. St. Clair County enumerated the largest population at 46,197 persons. Sanilac and Huron Counties tallied 26,341 and 20,089 inhabitants respectively.

St. Clair County averaged 66.45 persons per square mile (see Figure 23). Port Huron Township reported the greatest density in the Thumb with 533.71 per square mile. Eighty-nine per cent of the township's population resided in the city of Port Huron. The city of Port Huron grew more rapidly than the county and included 19 per cent of its population. The

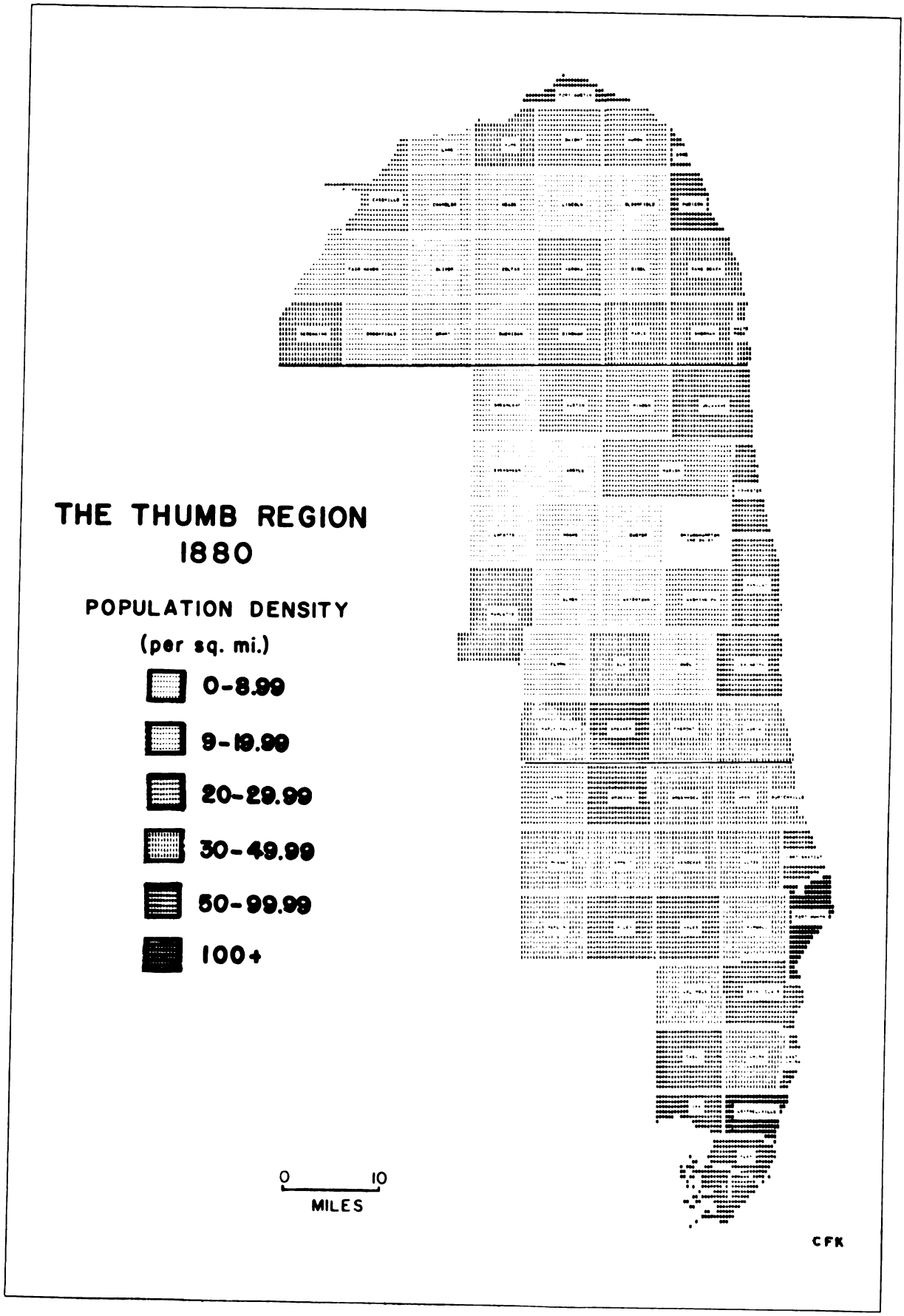

THE THUMB REGION
1880
POPULATION DENSITY
(per sq. mi.)
0-8.99
9-19.99
20-29.99
30-49.99
50-99.99
100+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 23.

city was divided into six wards in 1880. Six other townships reported densities above the county mean. Cottrellville, with continued development at Marine City, numbered 113.43 per square mile. Fort Gratiot, Ira, St. Clair, East China, and Clay townships also exceeded the county mean density. The densest concentrations were situated along the eastern and southern boundaries of the county. However, dense populations were also reported in the interior townships of Casco, Riley, Brockway, and Wales--each reported a density over 50 persons per square mile. Lynn Township, in the extreme northwest, was the least densely populated with 21.86 per square mile.

Ten of Sanilac County's twenty-five townships exceeded the 27.37 mean population density. The density pattern reveals that five of the ten townships occupy coastal locations (see Figure 23). Lexington Township reported the greatest concentration at 77.33 per square mile. Sanilac and Delaware numbered 60.76 and 45.56 per square mile respectively. Settlement was beginning to become dense in the interior with Bridgehampton, Speaker, Elk, Fremont, and Marlette townships reporting densities in excess of the county mean. Evergreen, Elmer, Custer, and Lamotte townships provided the least densely populated areas of the county.

Huron County consisted of twenty-six townships in 1880 and averaged 23.99 persons per square mile. Settlement persisted to be more dense along the coast (see Figure 23). Eight of the twelve townships reporting densities greater than the mean occupied coastal locations. Port Austin Township reported the densest population with 77.38 per square mile. Rubicon and Gore also reported densities of more than 50 per square mile. Most of the communities of the county were situated on the coast. Paris, Sherman, Bingham, and Dwight were the only interior townships to report greater than average densities. Townships situated in the western and

central portion of the interior provided the lowest population densities.

## Distribution of Foreign-Born

Foreign-born inhabitants contributed 43 per cent of the Thumb region's population in 1880 and numbered 39,044 persons. St. Clair contained 17,214 foreigners who amounted to 37 per cent of its population. Sanilac and Huron counties enumerated 12,864 and 9,748 foreign-born respectively and made up 49 per cent of the population in each county. Table 16 provides the numbers of total, foreign-born, and selected nativities plus densities and ratios by township.

The mean density of foreign-born in St. Clair County was 24.76 per square mile compared to the 66.45 population density. The foreign-born density pattern varies only slightly from that manifested by the total population (see Figure 24). Port Huron Township and particularly the city of Port Huron dominated in foreign-born density. Twenty-two per cent of the county's foreigners lived in the city of Port Huron, and the township reported a density of 228.85 foreign-born per square mile. Fort Gratiot, Cottrellville, St. Clair, and Ira were the only other townships to exceed the county mean. Brockway, Casco, East China, and Greenwood townships reported over 20 foreigners per square mile.

Eleven townships reported a larger foreign-born to total population ratio than the 41 per cent county mean. No township included more foreigners than natives. Fort Gratiot and Greenwood both reported 48 per cent. All ten townships occupying the northern two tiers of townships plus Port Huron exceeded the county mean foreign-born ratio. Natives predominated in the southern townships.

The foreign-born density pattern in Sanilac County differs only slightly from that manifested by the total population (see Figure 24).

TABLE 16.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION OF THE THUMB REGION BY TOWNSHIP: 1880

| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Berlin | 1,283 | 35.33 | 301 | 8.29 | 23 | 228 | 6.28 | 18 | 76 | 9 | 12 | 25 |
| Brockway | 1,839 | 52.06 | 852 | 24.12 | 46 | 678 | 19.19 | 37 | 80 | 10 | 65 | 51 |
| Township | 1,363 | ... | 639 | ... | 47 | 492 | ... | 36 | 77 | 10 | 54 | 40 |
| Brockway | 125 | ... | 50 | ... | 40 | 41 | ... | 33 | 82 | .. | 8 | 1 |
| Brockway Center | 351 | ... | 163 | ... | 46 | 145 | ... | 41 | 89 | .. | 3 | 10 |
| Burtchville | 752 | 47.79 | 314 | 19.95 | 42 | 216 | 13.73 | 29 | 69 | 10 | 38 | 31 |
| Township | 605 | ... | 243 | ... | 40 | 167 | ... | 28 | 69 | 9 | 27 | 23 |
| Lakeport | 147 | ... | 71 | .... | 48 | 49 | ... | 33 | 69 | 1 | 11 | 8 |
| Casco | 2,212 | 62.00 | 828 | 23.21 | 37 | 53 | 1.49 | 2 | 6 | 720 | 8 | 5 |
| China | 1,628 | 49.66 | 441 | 13.45 | 27 | 56 | 1.71 | 3 | 13 | 302 | 23 | 22 |
| East China | 337 | 72.53 | 101 | 21.74 | 30 | 54 | 11.62 | 16 | 53 | 4 | 4 | 11 |
| Clay | 1,523 | 67.38 | 382 | 16.90 | 25 | 231 | 10.22 | 15 | 60 | 39 | 22 | 65 |
| Township | 811 | ... | 217 | ... | 27 | 121 | ... | 15 | 56 | 36 | 6 | 40 |
| Algonac | 712 | ... | 165 | ... | 23 | 110 | ... | 15 | 67 | 3 | 16 | 25 |
| Clyde | 1,252 | 34.78 | 525 | 14.59 | 42 | 372 | 10.33 | 30 | 71 | 50 | 33 | 29 |
| Columbus | 1,327 | 37.27 | 404 | 11.35 | 30 | 216 | 6.07 | 16 | 53 | 50 | 88 | 42 |
| Cottrellville | 2,904 | 133.43 | 798 | 36.66 | 27 | 391 | 17.97 | 13 | 49 | 254 | 82 | 31 |
| Township | 1.231 | ... | 342 | ... | 28 | 155 | ... | 13 | 45 | 117 | 51 | 6 |
| Marine City | 1,673 | ... | 456 | ... | 27 | 236 | ... | 14 | 52 | 137 | 31 | 25 |
| Emmett | 1,480 | 41.41 | 641 | 17.94 | 43 | 212 | 5.93 | 14 | 33 | 58 | 331 | 19 |
| Fort Gratiot | 1,902 | 91.36 | 915 | 43.95 | 48 | 641 | 30.79 | 34 | 70 | 27 | 73 | 102 |
| Township | 622 | ... | 212 | ... | 34 | 150 | ... | 24 | 71 | 11 | 15 | 20 |
| Fort Gratiot | 1,280 | ... | 703 | ... | 55 | 491 | ... | 38 | 70 | 16 | 58 | 82 |
| Grant | 1,357 | 45.59 | 571 | 19.18 | 42 | 461 | 15.49 | 34 | 81 | 9 | 41 | 32 |
| Greenwood | 1,568 | 43.82 | 750 | 20.96 | 48 | 547 | 15.29 | 35 | 72 | 93 | 44 | 37 |
| Ira | 1,645 | 91.10 | 488 | 27.03 | 30 | 124 | 6.87 | 8 | 25 | 260 | 5 | .. |
| Township | 1,390 | ... | 418 | ... | 30 | 96 | ... | 7 | 23 | 236 | 2 | .. |
| Fair Haven | 255 | ... | 70 | ... | 27 | 28 | ... | 11 | 40 | 24 | 3 | .. |

TABLE 16 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Den-sity | F.B. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Den-sity | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenockee | 1,591 | 44.57 | 689 | 19.30 | 43 | 429 | 12.02 | 27 | 62 | 33 | 161 | 31 |
| Kimball | 1,429 | 39.79 | 503 | 14.01 | 35 | 340 | 9.47 | 24 | 68 | 78 | 43 | 23 |
| Township | 1,285 | ... | 451 | ... | 35 | 296 | ... | 23 | 66 | 78 | 39 | 22 |
| Smithville | 144 | ... | 52 | ... | 36 | 44 | ... | 31 | 85 | .. | 4 | 1 |
| Lynn | 788 | 21.86 | 336 | 9.32 | 43 | 255 | 7.07 | 32 | 76 | 11 | 19 | 37 |
| Mussey | 1, 46 | 49.06 | 703 | 19.75 | 40 | 315 | 8.85 | 18 | 45 | 304 | 13 | 41 |
| Township | 1,202 | ... | 526 | ... | 44 | 185 | ... | 15 | 35 | 282 | 9 | 28 |
| Capac | 544 | ... | 177 | ... | 33 | 130 | ... | 24 | 73 | 22 | 4 | 13 |
| Port Huron | 9,893 | 533.71 | 4,242 | 228.85 | 43 | 2,527 | 136.33 | 26 | 60 | 531 | 449 | 460 |
| Township | 1,010 | ... | 377 | ... | 37 | 209 | ... | 21 | 55 | 42 | 36 | 57 |
| 1st Ward | 1,635 | ... | 854 | ... | 52 | 578 | ... | 35 | 68 | 53 | 81 | 73 |
| 2nd Ward | 1,242 | ... | 422 | ... | 34 | 255 | ... | 21 | 60 | 59 | 49 | 37 |
| 3rd Ward | 1,332 | ... | 564 | ... | 42 | 381 | ... | 29 | 68 | 44 | 66 | 41 |
| 4th Ward | 1,735 | ... | 611 | ... | 35 | 373 | ... | 21 | 61 | 77 | 58 | 71 |
| 5th Ward | 1,388 | ... | 717 | ... | 52 | 443 | ... | 32 | 62 | 21 | 101 | 114 |
| 6th Ward | 1,551 | ... | 697 | ... | 45 | 288 | ... | 19 | 41 | 235 | 58 | 67 |
| Total City | 8,883 | ... | 3,865 | ... | 44 | 2,318 | ... | 26 | 60 | 489 | 413 | 403 |
| Riley | 2,002 | 53.54 | 640 | 17.12 | 32 | 509 | 13.61 | 25 | 80 | 10 | 67 | 37 |
| Township | 1,790 | ... | 583 | ... | 33 | 469 | ... | 26 | 80 | 5 | 63 | 31 |
| Memphis | 212 | ... | 57 | ... | 27 | 40 | ... | 19 | 70 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| St. Clair | 3,919 | 89.30 | 1,193 | 27.18 | 30 | 576 | 13.13 | 15 | 48 | 337 | 123 | 91 |
| Township | 1,996 | ... | 529 | ... | 27 | 194 | ... | 10 | 37 | 189 | 79 | 34 |
| 1st Ward | 945 | ... | 322 | ... | 34 | 191 | ... | 20 | 59 | 51 | 23 | 42 |
| 2nd Ward | 978 | ... | 342 | ... | 35 | 191 | ... | 20 | 56 | 97 | 21 | 15 |
| Total City | 1,923 | ... | 664 | ... | 35 | 382 | ... | 20 | 58 | 148 | 44 | 57 |
| Wales | 1,820 | 51.26 | 597 | 16.81 | 33 | 411 | 11.58 | 23 | 69 | 40 | 69 | 46 |
| St.Clair County | 46,197 | 66.45 | 17,214 | 24.76 | 37 | 9,842 | 14.16 | 21 | 57 | 3,239 | 1,813 | 1,268 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Argyle | 341 | 9.45 | 170 | 4.71 | 50 | 133 | 3.69 | 39 | 78 | 20 | 3 | 4 |
| Austin | 691 | 19.18 | 382 | 10.60 | 55 | 258 | 7.16 | 37 | 68 | 18 | 42 | 35 |

TABLE 16 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Density | F.B. Pop. | Density | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Density | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bridghampton | 1,634 | 45.28 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Buel | 693 | 18.36 | 324 | 8.58 | 47 | 244 | 6.47 | 35 | 75 | 7 | 33 | 23 |
| Custer | 262 | 7.27 | 136 | 3.77 | 52 | 113 | 3.13 | 43 | 83 | 8 | 6 | . |
| Delaware | 1,131 | 45.56 | 1,230 | 26.30 | 58 | 394 | 8.42 | 18 | 32 | 661 | 36 | 67 |
| Township | 1,890 | ... | 1,131 | ... | 60 | 335 | ... | 18 | 30 | 642 | 35 | 52 |
| Forestville | 241 | ... | 99 | ... | 41 | 59 | ... | 24 | 60 | 19 | 1 | 15 |
| Elk | 1,332 | 37.19 | 615 | 17.17 | 46 | 491 | 13.71 | 37 | 80 | 13 | 45 | 33 |
| Elmer | 259 | 7.21 | 187 | 5.21 | 72 | 136 | 3.79 | 53 | 73 | 30 | 2 | 12 |
| Evergreen | 215 | 6.10 | 109 | 3.09 | 51 | 63 | 1.79 | 29 | 58 | 14 | 14 | 8 |
| Flynn | 526 | 14.59 | 320 | 8.88 | 61 | 255 | 7.07 | 48 | 80 | 10 | 19 | 18 |
| Forester | 940 | 37.46 | 518 | 20.64 | 55 | 419 | 16.70 | 45 | 81 | 8 | 49 | 28 |
| Fremont | 1,188 | 33.66 | 552 | 15.64 | 46 | 428 | 12.13 | 36 | 78 | 7 | 45 | 41 |
| Greenleaf | 612 | 17.07 | 307 | 8.56 | 50 | 225 | 6.28 | 37 | 73 | 4 | 13 | 26 |
| Lamotte | 301 | 8.46 | 123 | 3.46 | 41 | 108 | 3.04 | 36 | 88 | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| Lexington | 2,993 | 77.33 | 1,227 | 31.70 | 41 | 945 | 24.41 | 32 | 77 | 71 | 67 | 110 |
| Township | 1,561 | ... | 655 | ... | 42 | 523 | ... | 34 | 80 | 18 | 37 | 59 |
| Lexington | 955 | ... | 347 | ... | 36 | 241 | ... | 25 | 69 | 43 | 18 | 33 |
| Croswell | 477 | ... | 225 | ... | 47 | 181 | ... | 38 | 80 | 10 | 12 | 18 |
| Maple Valley | 939 | 26.12 | 527 | 14.60 | 56 | 451 | 12.54 | 48 | 86 | 5 | 41 | 18 |
| Marion | 1,418 | 19.65 | 751 | 10.41 | 53 | 617 | 8.55 | 44 | 82 | 26 | 46 | 38 |
| Township | 1,318 | ... | 712 | ... | 54 | 587 | ... | 45 | 82 | 26 | 45 | 31 |
| Deckerville | 100 | ... | 39 | ... | 39 | 30 | ... | 30 | 77 | .. | 1 | 7 |
| Marlette | 1,700 | 31.52 | 816 | 15.13 | 48 | 605 | 11.22 | 36 | 74 | 47 | 57 | 27 |
| Township | 1,242 | ... | 634 | ... | 51 | 458 | ... | 37 | 72 | 43 | 53 | 17 |
| Marlette | 458 | ... | 182 | ... | 40 | 147 | ... | 32 | 81 | 4 | 4 | 10 |
| Minden | 871 | 24.24 | 475 | 13.22 | 55 | 209 | 5.82 | 24 | 44 | 34 | 99 | 39 |
| Township | 680 | ... | 382 | ... | 56 | 145 | ... | 21 | 38 | 24 | 90 | 33 |
| Minden | 191 | ... | 93 | ... | 49 | 64 | ... | 34 | 69 | 10 | 9 | 6 |
| Moore | 359 | 9.92 | 203 | 5.61 | 57 | 143 | 3.95 | 40 | 70 | 42 | 4 | 12 |

TABLE 16 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Density | F.B. Pop. | Density | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Density | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sanilac | 2,457 | 60.76 | 1,013 | 25.05 | 41 | 609 | 15.09 | 25 | 60 | 192 | 82 | 70 |
| Township | 1,862 | ... | 783 | ... | 42 | 464 | ... | 25 | 59 | 176 | 56 | 45 |
| Port Sanilac | 585 | ... | 230 | ... | 39 | 145 | ... | 24 | 63 | 16 | 26 | 25 |
| Speaker | 1,473 | 42.27 | 721 | 20.69 | 49 | 587 | 16.85 | 40 | 81 | .. | 61 | 47 |
| Washington | 952 | 26.62 | 432 | 12.08 | 43 | 348 | 9.73 | 37 | 81 | 4 | 26 | 37 |
| Watertown | 500 | 13.93 | 256 | 7.13 | 51 | 225 | 6.27 | 45 | 88 | 15 | 10 | 4 |
| Worth | 1,554 | 39.75 | 688 | 17.60 | 44 | 562 | 14.37 | 36 | 82 | 6 | 32 | 56 |
| Sanilac County | 24,707 | 27.37 | 12,082 | 12.55 | 49 | 8,568 | 8.90 | 35 | 71 | 1,243 | 835 | 763 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bingham | 969 | 27.03 | 523 | 14.59 | 54 | 347 | 9.68 | 36 | 66 | 73 | 36 | 41 |
| Bloomfield | 311 | 8.57 | 179 | 4.94 | 58 | 110 | 3.03 | 35 | 61 | 40 | 8 | 9 |
| Brookfield | 432 | 12.09 | 265 | 7.41 | 61 | 192 | 5.37 | 44 | 72 | 45 | 12 | 4 |
| Caseville | 1,058 | 29.87 | 414 | 11.69 | 39 | 213 | 6.01 | 20 | 51 | 105 | 35 | 25 |
| Township | 424 | ... | 194 | ... | 46 | 96 | ... | 23 | 49 | 47 | 12 | 15 |
| Caseville | 634 | ... | 220 | ... | 35 | 117 | ... | 18 | 53 | 58 | 23 | 11 |
| Chandler | 549 | 15.34 | 290 | 8.10 | 53 | 220 | 6.15 | 40 | 76 | 25 | 22 | 12 |
| Colfax | 418 | 11.65 | 216 | 6.02 | 52 | 169 | 4.71 | 40 | 78 | 3 | 13 | 18 |
| Dwight | 933 | 25.76 | 470 | 12.97 | 50 | 244 | 6.74 | 26 | 52 | 77 | 48 | 16 |
| Fair Haven | 974 | 18.28 | 466 | 8.75 | 48 | 211 | 3.96 | 22 | 45 | 216 | 12 | 20 |
| Gore | 374 | 56.38 | 163 | 24.57 | 44 | 79 | 11.91 | 21 | 48 | 58 | 9 | 4 |
| Grant | 622 | 17.46 | 273 | 7.66 | 44 | 219 | 6.15 | 35 | 80 | 7 | 9 | 21 |
| Hume | 938 | 31.21 | 477 | 15.87 | 51 | 333 | 11.08 | 36 | 70 | 61 | 48 | 18 |
| Township | 670 | ... | 342 | ... | 51 | 224 | ... | 33 | 65 | 45 | 44 | 17 |
| Port Crescent | 268 | ... | 135 | ... | 50 | 109 | ... | 41 | 81 | 16 | 4 | 1 |
| Huron | 768 | 22.73 | 329 | 9.74 | 43 | 199 | 5.89 | 26 | 60 | 31 | 42 | 29 |
| Township | 598 | ... | 269 | ... | 45 | 167 | ... | 28 | 62 | 31 | 26 | 19 |
| Huron City | 72 | ... | 31 | ... | 43 | 18 | ... | 25 | 58 | .. | 4 | 7 |
| New River | 98 | ... | 29 | ... | 30 | 14 | ... | 14 | 48 | .. | 12 | 3 |
| Lake | 275 | 14.61 | 111 | 5.90 | 40 | 83 | 4.41 | 30 | 75 | .. | 10 | 11 |
| Lincoln | 248 | 6.89 | 160 | 4.45 | 65 | 131 | 3.64 | 53 | 82 | 6 | 11 | 9 |

TABLE 16 (cont'd.)

| Township | Total Pop. | Density | F.B. Pop. | Density | % of Total | Can. Pop. | Density | % of Total | % of F.B. | Ger. Pop. | Irish Pop. | Eng. Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Meade | 670 | 18.55 | 357 | 9.89 | 53 | 280 | 7.75 | 42 | 78 | 22 | 15 | 6 |
| Oliver | 194 | 5.45 | 81 | 2.28 | 42 | 39 | 1.10 | 20 | 48 | 28 | 2 | 3 |
| Paris | 1,497 | 41.48 | 696 | 19.29 | 46 | 86 | 2.38 | 6 | 12 | 37 | 5 | 7 |
| Port Austin | 1,356 | 77.38 | 617 | 35.21 | 46 | 400 | 22.83 | 29 | 65 | 67 | 59 | 51 |
| Township | 300 | ... | 134 | ... | 45 | 59 | ... | 20 | 44 | 39 | 17 | 9 |
| Port Austin | 757 | ... | 311 | ... | 41 | 202 | ... | 27 | 65 | 28 | 20 | 35 |
| Grindstone City | 299 | ... | 172 | ... | 58 | 139 | ... | 46 | 81 | .. | 22 | 7 |
| Rubicon | 1,229 | 51.87 | 556 | 23.47 | 45 | 258 | 10.89 | 21 | 46 | 195 | 48 | 36 |
| Sand Beach | 1,515 | 39.45 | 700 | 18.23 | 46 | 468 | 12.19 | 31 | 67 | 120 | 40 | 45 |
| Township | 981 | ... | 488 | ... | 50 | 304 | ... | 31 | 62 | 105 | 31 | 31 |
| Sand Beach | 534 | ... | 212 | ... | 40 | 164 | ... | 31 | 77 | 15 | 9 | 14 |
| Sebewaing | 1,489 | 45.73 | 540 | 16.58 | 36 | 94 | 2.89 | 6 | 17 | 416 | 2 | 9 |
| Township | 936 | ... | 327 | ... | 35 | 35 | ... | 4 | 11 | 288 | .. | .. |
| Sebewaing | 553 | ... | 213 | ... | 39 | 59 | ... | 11 | 28 | 128 | 2 | 9 |
| Sheridan | 540 | 14.98 | 404 | 11.21 | 75 | 279 | 7.74 | 52 | 69 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| Sherman | 1,094 | 30.61 | 583 | 16.31 | 53 | 217 | 6.07 | 20 | 37 | 232 | 40 | 19 |
| Sigel | 521 | 14.40 | 302 | 8.35 | 58 | 102 | 2.82 | 20 | 34 | 148 | 7 | 29 |
| Verona | 740 | 20.82 | 424 | 11.93 | 57 | 338 | 9.51 | 46 | 80 | 15 | 24 | 30 |
| Township | 550 | ... | 325 | ... | 59 | 256 | ... | 47 | 79 | 11 | 21 | 22 |
| Bad Axe | 190 | ... | 99 | ... | 52 | 82 | ... | 43 | 83 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| White Rock | 375 | 43.96 | 152 | 17.82 | 41 | 90 | 10.55 | 24 | 59 | 22 | 15 | 13 |
| Township | 143 | ... | 68 | ... | 48 | 38 | ... | 27 | 56 | 9 | 11 | 5 |
| White Rock | 232 | ... | 84 | ... | 36 | 52 | ... | 22 | 62 | 13 | 4 | 8 |
| Huron County | 20,089 | 23.99 | 9,748 | 11.64 | 49 | 5,401 | 6.45 | 27 | 55 | 2,057 | 582 | 496 |

Source: Compiled by author.

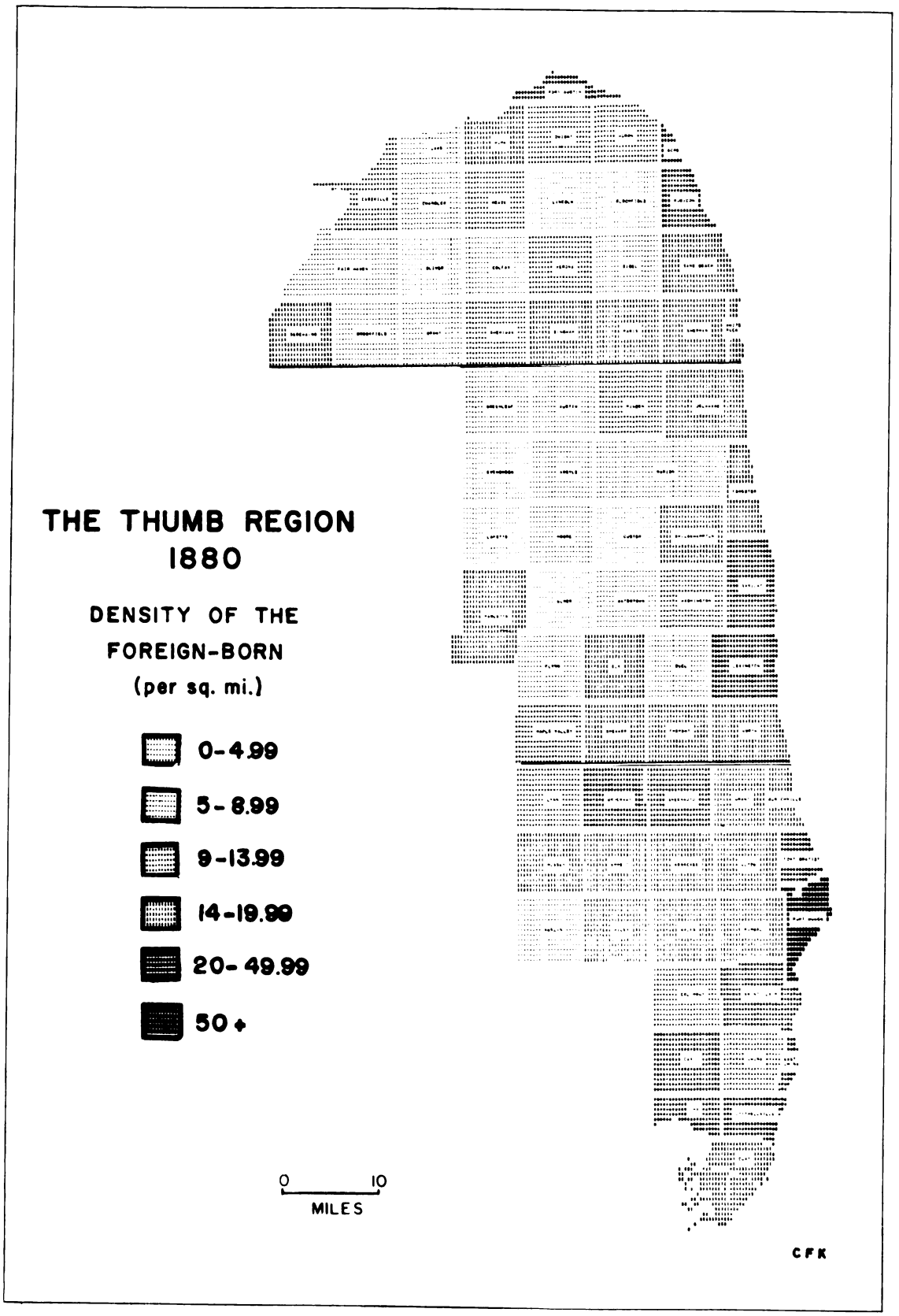

THE THUMB REGION
1880
DENSITY OF THE
FOREIGN-BORN
(per sq. mi.)
0-4.99
5-8.99
9-13.99
14-19.99
20-49.99
50+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 24.

The average density of foreigners was 12.55 per square mile compared to the 27.37 mean population density. Eleven townships exceeded the mean foreign-born density, and five of the first six were situated along the coast implying the foreign-born were more densely populated along the coast. Six interior townships reported densities above the county mean. Lexington Township reported the densest foreign-born population with 31.70 per square mile.

Natives, for the first time, outnumbered foreigners when Sanilac County recorded 49 per cent of its population as foreign-born in 1880. However, seventeen of its twenty-five townships included more foreign-born than natives. Elmer reported 72 per cent of its population as foreign-born marking the greatest ratio. Only two of the seventeen townships were situated along the coast and only Delaware and Forester exceeded the mean population density. Foreigners continued to account for greater proportions of the population in the less densely populated areas of Sanilac County.

The foreign-born were distributed in much the same pattern as the total population in Huron County (see Figure 24). The northern and eastern coastal townships provided the densest foreign-born populations. The mean density was 11.64 per square mile. Thirteen townships exceeded the mean with Port Austin reporting 35.21 foreign-born per square mile. Paris Township was the only inland township of the leading six to exceed the county mean.

Foreign-born in Huron County accounted for 49 per cent of the population and thirteen townships exceeded the mean ratio. Sheridan Township reported 75 per cent of its population as foreign-born. None of the townships which reported more foreigners than natives were situated along the coast and only two, Sherman and Dwight, exceeded the county mean density.

Foreigners here, as elsewhere in the Thumb, accounted for greater proportions of the residents in townships which were sparsely populated and more recently settled.

## Distribution of Canadians

Canadians numbered 23,811 inhabitants and included 26 per cent of the Thumb's population in 1880. Sixty-one per cent of all foreigners were Canadians. St. Clair County enumerated 9,842 Canadians who equalled 21 per cent of its population. The Canadian population of Sanilac County increased to 8,563[3] and included 35 per cent of its population. Huron County contained 5,401 Canadians who comprised 27 per cent of its population. Canadians dominated all other foreign-born groups comprising 57 per cent of all foreigners in St. Clair, 71 per cent in Sanilac and 55 per cent of the foreign-born residing in Huron County.

Canadians equalled 14.16 per square mile in St. Clair County. The density pattern of Canadians by township varies from the total and foreign-born distributions (see Figure 25). Six townships reported densities greater than the mean for the county. Only Port Huron, Fort Gratiot, and Cottrellville exceeded both the Canadian and total population mean densities. Port Huron Township reported 136.33 Canadians per square mile, and the city of Port Huron contained 24 per cent of the county's Canadians. Brockway, Grant, and Greenwood townships exceeded the mean Canadian density but ranked below the average total and foreign-born densities. Casco and China townships reported less than two Canadian per square mile.

Twenty-one per cent of the population of St. Clair County were Canadians, and twelve townships exceeded the mean. No township reported more

---

[3]The total number of Canadians reported in the census for Sanilac County was 9,170 in 1870. The author tallied only 8,568 from the manuscript census. This difference is accounted for by the absence of Bridgehampton Township for the manuscript census record.

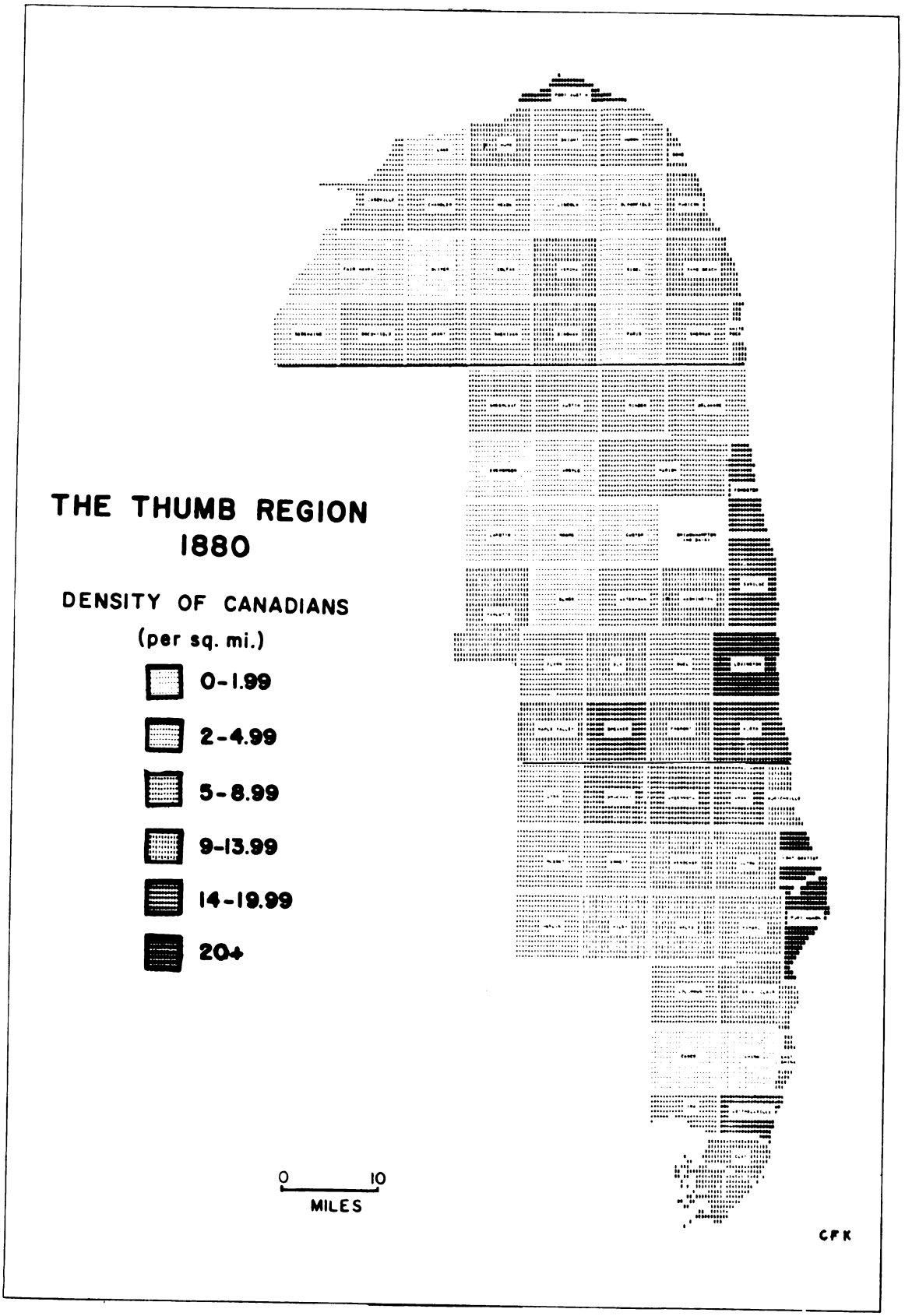

THE THUMB REGION
1880
DENSITY OF CANADIANS
(per sq. mi.)
0-1.99
2-4.99
5-8.99
9-13.99
14-19.99
20+
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 25.

Canadians than natives, and Brockway reported the largest ratio with 37 per cent. Canadians continued to maintain greater percentages of the population in the northern three tiers of townships. Canadians accounted for 57 per cent of all foreign-born in St. Clair County. Fourteen townships exceeded the mean and Grant, Brockway, Riley, Lynn, and Berlin townships reported more than three-fourths of their foreign-born as Canadians. Clay was the only southern township to exceed the mean Canadian to foreign-born ratio.

In 1880 Sanilac County counted 8.90 Canadians per square mile. The distribution of Canadian density, illustrated in Figure 25, is similar to that of both the total and foreign-born populations. Nine townships exceeded the mean and all, except Maple Valley, were among the most densely populated with respect to both the total and foreign-born. Lexington Township reported 24.41 Canadians per square mile.

Eighteen of Sanilac County's twenty-five townships compiled a Canadian ratio to total population greater than the county mean of 35 per cent. Elmer was the only township to include more Canadians than natives. Eight townships which exceeded the mean Canadian proportion of the population also exceeded the average population density whereas ten were below the average population density. By 1880, Canadians accounted for greater than average proportions of the population in the dense as well as sparsely populated township of Sanilac County. Canadians included 71 per cent of all foreign-born residents. Eighteen townships exceeded the mean and fifteen reported that Canadians constituted at least three-fourths of all foreign-born. Canadians dominated all other foreigners in both heavily and slightly populated areas, along the coast as well as inland.

The density of Canadians jumped to 6.45 per square mile in Huron County. Eleven townships exceeded the county mean density, and the six leading

townships occupied coastal locations. Port Austin Township reported 22.83 Canadians per square mile. Figure 25 reveals that the entire western one-third of the county offered the least dense area of Canadian settlement.

Canadians comprised 27 per cent of Huron County's population. Lincoln and Sheridan townships reported more Canadians than natives. Twelve other townships provided greater than average Canadian proportions of the population. Except for Port Austin and Sand Beach townships, Canadians accounted for greater percentages of the population in the central portion of the county. Canadians equalled 55 per cent of all foreign-born. Sixteen townships exceeded the county mean, six reported more than 75 per cent, ten more than two-thirds, and twenty-one townships reported more Canadians than any other foreign-born group. Canadians dominated the foreign-born population in most areas of the county.

## Other Foreign-Born Groups

German residents of the Thumb numbered 6,539, Irish 3,230, English 2,527, and the Scots accounted for 1,410 inhabitants. Canadians provided 26 per cent of the total and 61 per cent of the foreign-born population, while the next four most numerous groups combined equalled only 14 per cent of the total and 34 per cent of the foreign-born. The Irish, English, and Scots were evenly distributed throughout most of the region with Port Huron Township reporting the greatest density for each group. Germans manifested a tendency to cluster in the city of Port Huron and in rural townships. Eight of the Thumb's seventy-four townships, Port Huron notwithstanding, included 47 per cent of the German population and 53 per cent of all Germans lived in nine townships if Port Huron is considered. Sixty-four townships included more Canadians than any other foreign-born group.

Germans in St. Clair County accounted for 7 per cent of the population, 19 per cent of all foreign-born, and numbered 4.66 per square mile. The Irish equalled 2.61 per square mile, 4 per cent of the total, and 11 per cent of all foreigners. The English maintained only 3 per cent of the population. Port Huron Township reported the largest density of Germans in the Thumb with 24.22 per square mile but only 5 per cent of its population were of German origin. Germans outnumbered all other foreigners in Casco Township equalling 20.18 per square mile, one-third of its total, and 87 per cent of its foreign-born population. Germans provided the largest foreign-born in Ira and China townships reporting 14.40 and 9.21 per square mile respectively. Emmett supplied the only township in the Thumb where the Irish outnumbered all other foreign-born equalling 9.26 per square mile and 22 per cent of the population. Figure 26 shows that Canadians were the most populous foreign-born group in nineteen townships, Germans in three, and Irish in one.

Germans included only 1.29 per square mile in Sanilac County and accounted for 5 per cent of the county population. The Irish and English each constituted only 3 per cent of the county population and both numbered less than one person per square mile. A substantial group of Germans arrived in Delaware Township between 1870 and 1880 and outnumbered all other foreigners in the township. All other townships reported Canadian majorities as illustrated in Figure 26. Delaware Township offered a significant concentration of Germans equalling 14.13 per square mile and accounted for 44 per cent of all the Germans in Sanilac County.

Germans were the second largest foreign-born group in Huron County averaging 2.46 per square mile, 10 per cent of the total, and 21 per cent of the foreign-born population. Germans predominated in four townships (see Figure 26). Sebewaing Township numbered 12.78 Germans per square

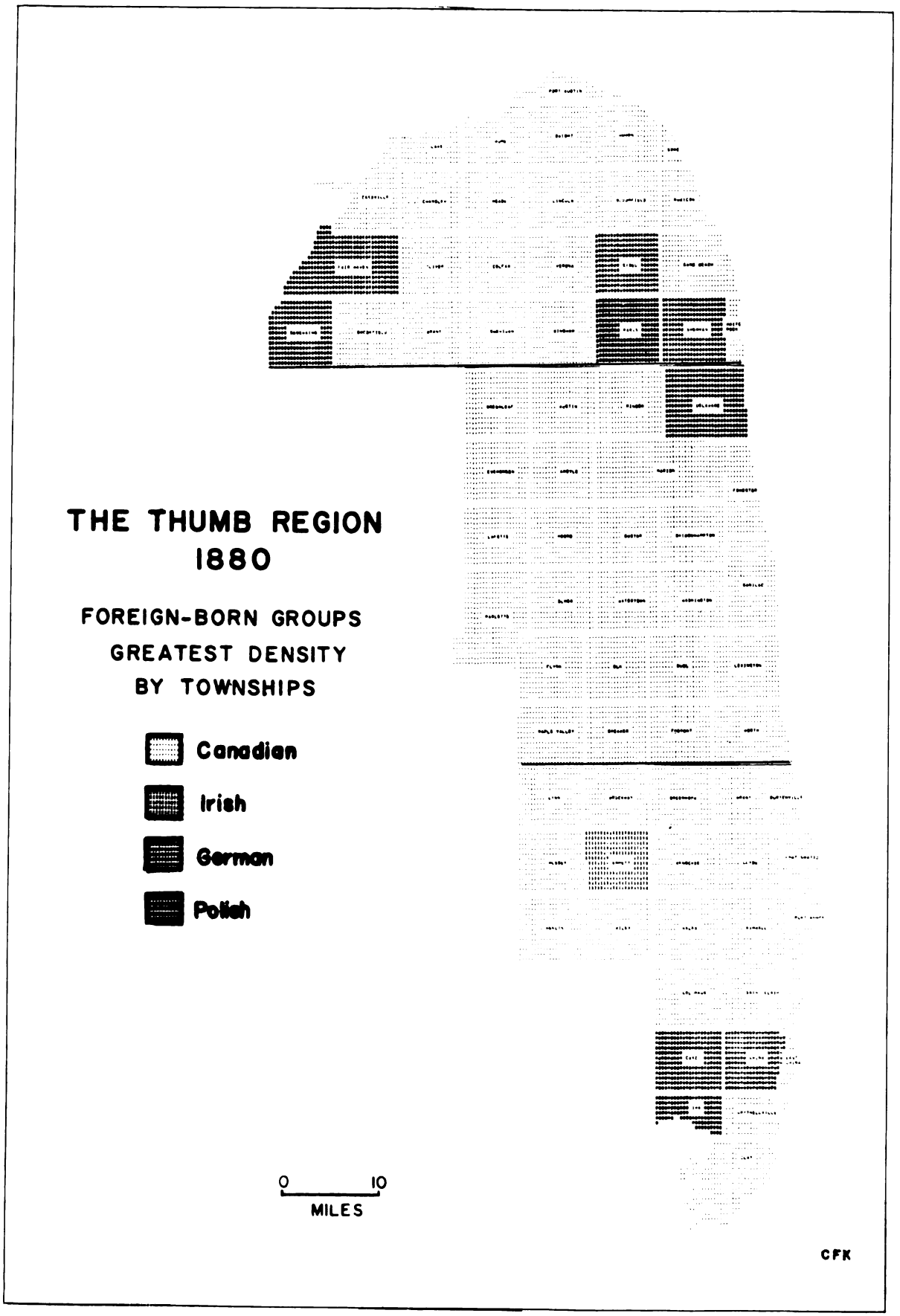

THE THUMB REGION
1880
FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS
GREATEST DENSITY
BY TOWNSHIPS
Canadian
Irish
German
Polish
0
10
MILES
CFK

Figure 26.

mile who comprised 28 per cent of its total and 77 per cent of its foreign-born. Sherman equalled 6.49 Germans per square mile, Sigel 4.09, and Fair Haven 4.06 per square mile. Poles were the third largest foreign-born group in the county but averaged less than one per square mile. Poles outnumbered all other foreigners in Paris Township, accounting for 14.63 per square mile, 75 per cent of all Thumb region Poles, and 83 per cent of the Poles residing in Huron County. The Irish in Huron County counted less than one per square mile.

## Summary

Foreign-born residents of the Thumb region accounted for significant proportions of the population. Foreigners actually outnumbered natives in Sanilac County from 1850 to 1870. The same was true in Huron County from 1860 to 1870. Although St. Clair County maintained the largest number of foreigners, the foreign-born did not comprise as significant a proportion of the population as those in Sanilac and Huron counties. Canadians constituted the largest foreign-born group in the Thumb equalling from 55 to 65 per cent of all foreign-born residents. Germans, Irish, English, Scots, and Poles comprised the other significant foreign-born groups.

The relationship between the foreign-born, Canadian, and total population reveals the real significance of the Canadians in the settlement of the Thumb region. The most important factor regarding the role of the Canadians and their relationship to the total and foreign-born populations is the recurrent theme concerning the Canadian proclivity to assume significant proportions of the total and foreign-born populations in the more recently settled and less densely populated townships. It is not meant to infer that Canadians avoided locating in populated areas, but Canadians dominated all other foreign-born groups in the more sparsely settled areas.

Port Huron Township generally accounted for the greatest number of Germans, Irish, English, and Scots. With the exception of this concentration, the Irish, English, and Scots were relatively evenly distributed throughout the region. The Germans, however, manifested a tendency to cluster in a few rural townships. The Poles of the Thumb region were concentrated in the single township.

CHAPTER V

# THE CHANGING FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FOREIGN-BORN IN THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

## Changing Population Densities

### Introduction

It was during this period that the Thumb region moved out of the wilderness era and into the era of occupance. Michigan's population expanded by 312 per cent between 1850 and 1880. The Thumb region, occupying a frontier location within the state, increased by 601 per cent with 79,406 persons added to its population. Population density swelled from 5.30 to 37.12 persons per square mile.

Lumbering provided the initial lure for settlement. Agricultural development became significant after the local timber supply was depleted. A Sanilac County legislator in the early 1880's summarized the settlement history of the Thumb region:

> We came there to lumber, and then to quit: we had no more thought of farming than of flying. We planted a few vegetables in the cleared space around our lumber camps, and the yield was so remarkable that we cleared off a field and put it into grain, and the harvest was so bountiful that before we knew it we were farming. Thats the way Sanilac County was settled. Here is my friend, the representative from Huron County, who will tell you the same story for his county.[1]

Statistics concerning manufacturing lend credence to the legislator's statement. The number of establishments concerned with the manufacture of lumber products compared to those manufacturing agricultural

[1]Frederick Morley, Michigan and Its Resources (Lansing, Mich.: W. S. George & Co., State Binders and Printers, 1881), pp. 60-61.

products clearly illustrates the early dependency on lumbering (see Table 17). St. Clair County maintained more saw mills than flour mills in 1854, but the reverse was true by 1884. Flour milling gained more significance with increased settlement in Sanilac and Huron counties.

TABLE 17.

THE SAW MILL: FLOUR MILL RATIO IN THE THUMB REGION, 1850-1884

| Year | Thumb | St. Clair | Sanilac | Huron |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1854 | 11.0:1 | 9.8:1 | 16.0:1 | .... |
| 1860 | 7.3:1 | 5.6:1 | 4.5:1 | 14.0:1 |
| 1870 | 3.1:1 | 2.0:1 | 2.3:1 | 10.3:1 |
| 1884 | 2.5:1 | 0.9:1 | 3.9:1 | 3.3:1 |

Sources: Compiled by author from Census of Michigan: 1854, 1860, 1870, and 1884.

Greatest population gains occurred between 1870 and 1880, while largest percentage increases took place between 1850 and 1860 (see Table 18). St. Clair County enjoyed its greatest population increase between 1850 and 1860. Less densely populated Sanilac and Huron counties added more population from 1870 to 1880. Huron tallied the greatest proportional increases during each decade while St. Clair accounted for percentage increases below the regional mean. The more densely settled portion of the Thumb, St. Clair County, attracted the greatest number of settlers from 1850 to 1870. During the next ten years, however, the trend reversed.

## Total Population Change

Townships were organized as population growth warranted. The number and size of townships varied in both a spatial and temporal sense.

For example, the entire area of Huron County was organized as a single township in 1850. With increased settlement nine townships were created by 1860, twenty-two by 1870, and twenty-six townships had been organized by 1880. As a result of the township organization process, analysis is limited to those townships which maintained comparable boundaries.

TABLE 18.

POPULATION CHANGES IN THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| Year | County | Population | Density | Per Cent Increase |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850-1860 | St. Clair | 15,705 | 22.59 | 144 |
| | Sanilac | 5,487 | 5.81 | 260 |
| | Huron | 2,955 | 3.53 | 1407 |
| | Thumb | 24,147 | 9.68 | 183 |
| 1860-1870 | St. Clair | 10,057 | 11.89 | 38 |
| | Sanilac | 6,963 | 7.23 | 92 |
| | Huron | 5,884 | 7.03 | 186 |
| | Thumb | 22,904 | 9.18 | 61 |
| 1870-1880 | St. Clair | 9,536 | 16.29 | 27 |
| | Sanilac | 11,779 | 12.24 | 81 |
| | Huron | 11,040 | 13.18 | 122 |
| | Thumb | 31,355 | 12.96 | 52 |

Source: Compiled by author.

Figure 27 illustrates the location, time, direction, and rate of population change in the Thumb region from 1850 to 1880. During the first decade of change, comparable township units existed only in St. Clair County. Excepting Lynn, each township displayed substantial population density increase. Lynn Township, situated far in the interior, received its initial settlement during this period. Port Huron Township added over ninety persons per square mile.

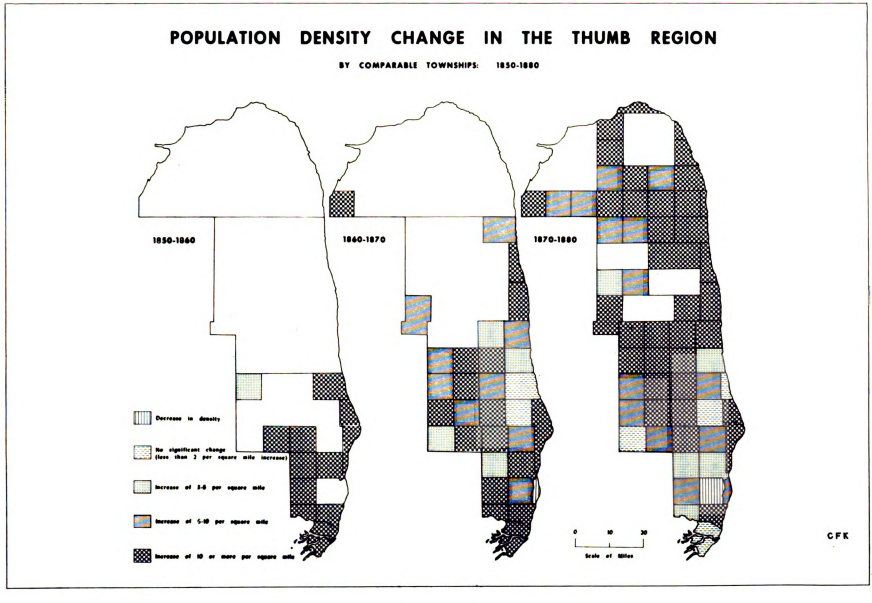

POPULATION DENSITY CHANGE IN THE THUMB REGION
BY COMPARABLE TOWNSHIPS: 1850-1880
1850-1860
1860-1870
1870-1880
Decrease in density
No significant change (less than 3 per square mile increase)
Increase of 3-5 per square mile
Increase of 5-10 per square mile
Increase of 10 or more per square mile
0 10 20
Scale of Miles
CFK

Figure 27.

The number of comparable townships almost tripled between 1860 and 1870. Increased population growth resulted in the organization of more and smaller townships. Population density increased most in St. Clair County, especially in townships situated adjacent to the St. Clair River. The area encompassed by Port Huron Township, by 1870 divided into Fort Gratiot and Port Huron townships, increased by almost fifty persons per square mile. Most of this increase was absorbed in the city of Port Huron. Substantial change also occurred in interior locations. Little growth took place in Burtchville and Clyde townships, while East China actually decreased in population density.

Although Sanilac and Huron counties added over seven people per square mile, township organization lagged behind St. Clair. Only nine comparable townships were organized in Sanilac County. Speaker Township added over twenty-two inhabitants per square mile, and Sanilac increased by nearly twenty. Forester and Fremont also tallied substantial changes. Sebewaing was the only comparable township in Huron County, and it added over ten persons per square mile.

The rapid settlement of Sanilac and Huron counties is especially apparent during the final decade. The majority of comparable townships in these two counties exhibited substantial population density increases, both along the coast and in the interior. Largest increases were recorded in Port Austin and Gore townships, each added more than thirty persons per square mile. Delaware, Sand Beach, and Rubicon increased by more than twenty persons per square mile.

Population growth in St. Clair County slowed between 1870 and 1880, and China Township suffered a decrease in density. However, Port Huron and Fort Gratiot enjoyed the greatest increases in the Thumb region. Fort Gratiot added over forty persons per square mile while Port Huron

swelled by over one hundred and sixty-six inhabitants per square mile.

## Foreign-Born Population Change

The number of foreign-born residents of the Thumb increased from 4,440 in 1850 to 39,826 in 1880. However, foreign-born growth did not keep pace with total population change.

Between 1850 and 1860, the foreign-born exceeded the total population growth rate. Foreigners accounted for 56 per cent of the Thumb's population change (see Table 19). Greatest numerical gains occurred in St. Clair County. Foreigners accounted for more of the population change than native inmigration and natural increase combined.

The next decade witnessed a decrease in the foreign-born rate of change. Foreigners accounted for 40 per cent of the population change between 1860 and 1870, no longer maintaining a rate commensurate with the total population change. Foreigners probably accounted for more of the population change than natural increase in Sanilac and Huron counties. St. Clair County suffered the greatest numerical decrease in foreign-born change, while Huron County enjoyed a larger numerical change than incurred during the previous decade.

Although the foreign-born change increased between 1870 and 1880, the change was below that exhibited by the total population. Native inmigration and natural increase continued to overwhelm foreign-born change. It should be pointed out that any children born in the United States of foreign-born parents are considered natives. Density changes in Huron and Sanilac counties were greater than recorded in previous decades.

Figure 28 illustrates the location, time, direction, and rate of foreign-born population change between 1860 and 1880. Comparable town-

TABLE 19.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION CHANGES IN THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| Year | County | F.B. Increase | Density Increase | % F.B. Increase | F.B. Percentage of Pop. Increase |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850-1860 | St.Clair | 8,458 | 12.16 | 258 | 54 |
| | Sanilac | 3,412 | 3.54 | 320 | 62 |
| | Huron | 1,760 | 2.11 | 1853 | 60 |
| | Thumb | 13,630 | 5.47 | 310 | 56 |
| 1860-1870 | St.Clair | 3,122 | 4.49 | 27 | 31 |
| | Sanilac | 3,222 | 3.35 | 72 | 48 |
| | Huron | 2,916 | 3.48 | 157 | 50 |
| | Thumb | 9,260 | 3.71 | 51 | 40 |
| 1870-1880 | St.Clair | 2,355 | 4.35 | 16 | 26 |
| | Sanilac[1] | 4,382 | 4.55 | 57 | 37 |
| | Huron | 4,977 | 5.94 | 104 | 45 |
| | Thumb | 11,714 | 5.01 | 43 | 37 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[1]Data are based on the author's research of the manuscript census records. Bridgehampton Township of Sanilac County is missing from the manuscript census.

ships which displayed the greatest increase in foreign-born density during the first decade of change were Port Huron, Burtchville, Casco, St. Clair, and Ira. These townships, plus Columbus, added more foreigners than natives. Port Huron attracted the largest number, over 500 more foreigners than natives. Port Huron Township accounted for 21 per cent of the county and 15 per cent of the Thumb region change.

Fewer foreign-born arrived between 1860 and 1870. More than half the comparable townships recorded significant changes, but only Port Huron and Speaker added more than ten per square mile. Compared to total population change (Figure 27), the rate of foreign-born change was considerably lower. Five townships actually suffered a decline in

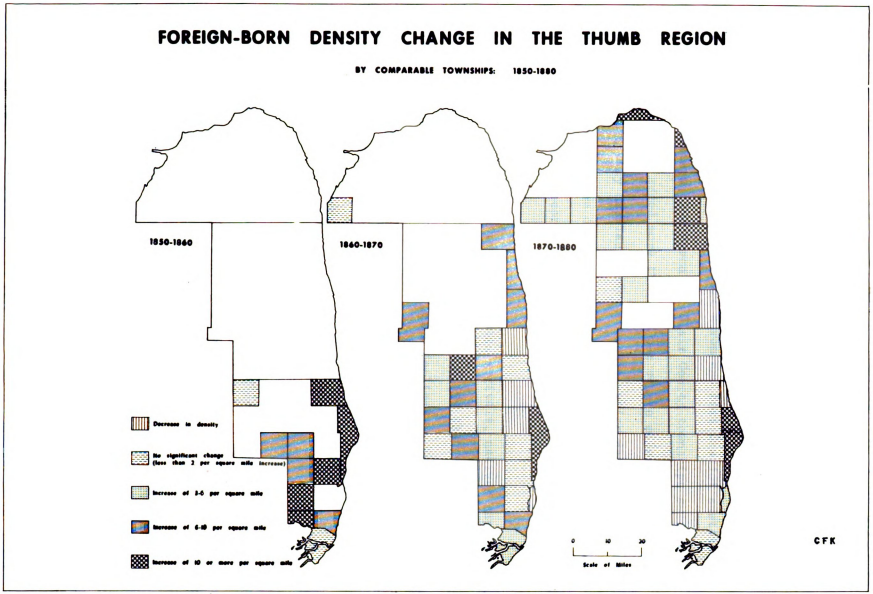

FOREIGN-BORN DENSITY CHANGE IN THE THUMB REGION
BY COMPARABLE TOWNSHIPS: 1850-1880
1850-1860
1860-1870
1870-1880
Decrease in density
No significant change (less than 2 per square mile increase)
Increase of 2-6 per square mile
Increase of 6-10 per square mile
Increase of 10 or more per square mile
0 10 20
Scale of Miles
CFK

Figure 28.

foreign-born density, while eight recorded no significant change. Most of the inactivity was centered in more densely populated St. Clair County.[2]

Between 1870 and 1880, more foreigners took up residence in the Thumb than during the previous decade. Six comparable townships added more than ten per square mile. Port Huron and Fort Gratiot sustained the largest increases, but seven St. Clair County townships suffered declines. Delaware added more than ten per square mile while Worth and Sanilac were the only Sanilac County townships which decreased. Gore, Port Austin, and Sherman demonstrated substantial increases. No township in Huron County recorded a decline, all tallied significant increases.

Despite the increase in foreign-born arrivals, natives supplied the greatest proportion of the Thumb's population change. Indeed, some more densely populated townships suffered declines in foreign-born density even though total population density increased. Excepting Port Huron and Fort Gratiot, greatest foreign-born change occurred in Huron and Sanilac County townships.

Canadians

The Canadian-born far outnumbered all other foreign-born groups in the Thumb region. Canadians accounted for the most significant regional as well as county density changes for each decade (see Table 20). Although the pattern of Canadian and foreign-born change was similar, it did differ to a degree. While the most significant foreign-born change

[2]Foreigners accounted for large proportions of the population in many townships (Chapter IV). However, with respect to density change the foreign-born influence appears to have been less significant. This disparity is the result of the foreigner's apparent desire to locate in the less densely populated townships, Port Huron notwithstanding.

TABLE 20.

CHANGE IN POPULATION DENSITY AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN INCREASE FOR SELECTED FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| Year | County | Can. | % of F.B. | Ger. | % of F.B. | Ir. | % of F.B. | Eng. | % of F.B. | Scot. | % of F.B. | Pol. | % of F.B. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850-1860 | St.Clair | 5.92 | 46 | 2.26 | 19 | 1.65 | 14 | 0.84 | 7 | 0.66 | 5 | 0.02 | ... |
| | Sanilac | 2.29 | 65 | 0.25 | 7 | 0.43 | 12 | 0.35 | 10 | 0.17 | 5 | .... | ... |
| | Huron | 0.89 | 42 | 0.76 | 36 | 0.15 | 7 | 0.14 | 7 | 0.08 | 4 | 0.04 | 2 |
| | Thumb | 2.83 | 52 | 0.98 | 18 | 0.68 | 12 | 0.42 | 8 | 0.27 | 5 | 0.02 | 0.3 |
| 1860-1870 | St.Clair | 2.44 | 54 | 1.84 | 41 | 0.12 | 3 | 0.15 | 3 | -0.14 | -3 | -0.01 | ... |
| | Sanilac | 2.55 | 76 | 0.20 | 6 | 0.22 | 7 | 0.18 | 5 | 0.09 | 3 | .... | ... |
| | Huron | 1.95 | 56 | 0.42 | 12 | 0.23 | 7 | 0.21 | 6 | 0.18 | 5 | 0.41 | 12 |
| | Thumb | 2.43 | 65 | 0.73 | 20 | 0.20 | 5 | 0.18 | 5 | 0.06 | 1 | 0.13 | 4 |
| 1870-1880 | St.Clair | 2.99 | 69 | 0.34 | 8 | 0.04 | 1 | 0.34 | 8 | 0.10 | 2 | .... | ... |
| | Sanilac | 3.17 | 70 | 0.83 | 18 | 0.13 | 3 | 0.20 | 4 | 0.12 | 3 | 0.06 | 1 |
| | Huron | 3.54 | 60 | 1.28 | 22 | 0.30 | 5 | 0.23 | 4 | 0.17 | 3 | 0.32 | 5 |
| | Thumb | 3.13 | 62 | 0.87 | 17 | 0.16 | 3 | 0.25 | 5 | 0.13 | 3 | 0.13 | 3 |

Source: Compiled by author.

occurred between 1850 and 1860, Canadian change was greatest from 1870 to 1880. Both total foreign-born and Canadian change was least significant between 1860 and 1870.

From over one-half to almost two-thirds of the foreign-born change was contributed by Canadian-born peoples. Between 1850 and 1860 Canadians accounted for 52 per cent of the foreign-born change. St. Clair County enjoyed the greatest numerical change while Sanilac reported the most significant proportional change. Less than one-half of the foreign-born change was made up of Canadians in St. Clair and Huron counties. Foreign-born change in Sanilac County was primarily due to the growth of the Canadian population.

Although the foreign-born density change declined by almost two persons per square mile between 1860 and 1870, decline in Canadian density was slight. St. Clair County suffered the most severe decline, but Canadian densities increased in Sanilac and Huron counties. Canadians accounted for over three-fourths of the foreign-born change in Sanilac County. Well over one-half the increase in Huron and St. Clair resulted from Canadian change.

The most significant change in Canadian density occurred between 1870 and 1880. Change was greatest in Huron County and least in St. Clair. Over two-thirds of the foreign-born added to Sanilac and St. Clair counties were Canadians. Relative to foreign-born change, each county tallied a greater Canadian change than was recorded during the previous decade.

The location, time, direction, and rate of Canadian change between 1850 and 1880 is illustrated in Figure 29. Six townships recorded significant Canadian density changes from 1850 to 1860. Port Huron and Burtchville added more than ten per square mile. Four reported no sig-

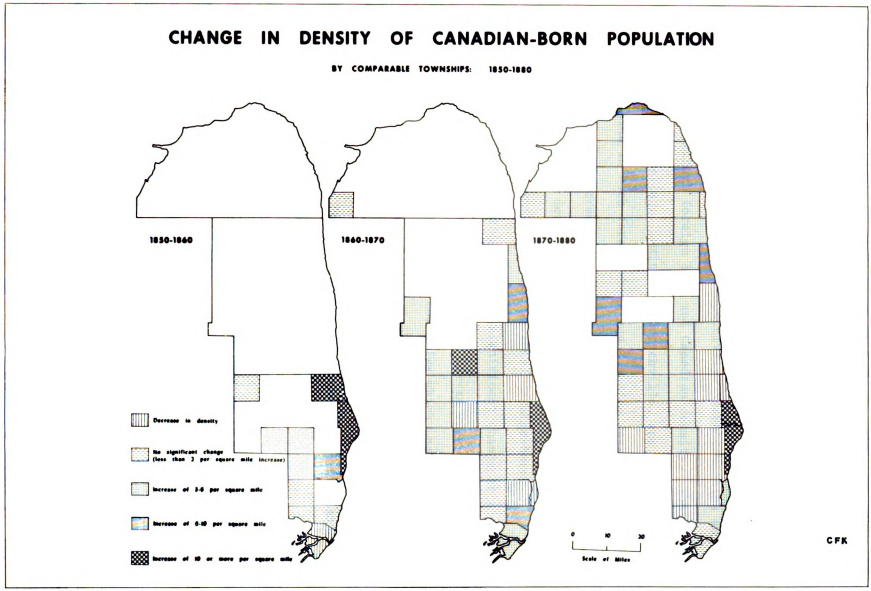

CHANGE IN DENSITY OF CANADIAN-BORN POPULATION
BY COMPARABLE TOWNSHIPS: 1850-1880
1850-1860
1860-1870
1870-1880
Decrease in density
No significant change (less than 3 per square mile increase)
Increase of 3-5 per square mile
Increase of 6-10 per square mile
Increase of 10 or more per square mile
0 10 30
Scale of Miles
CFK

Figure 29

nificant change, and Clay Township suffered a decline in Canadian density.

The patterns of foreign-born and Canadian change share some similarities for the 1860 and 1870 decade. Port Huron and Speaker townships were alone in reporting changes of over ten per square mile in both foreign-born and Canadian density respectively. Five townships suffered a decline in both foreign born and Canadian density. The pattern of decline was dissimilar. Lexington, Burtchville, and East China manifested a decline in both foreign-born and Canadian density. However, foreign-born density decreased in Clyde and Columbus while no significant change in Canadian density was recorded. Emmett and China recorded decreases in Canadian density but not in total foreign-born.

Sixteen townships demonstrated no significant change or a decline in Canadian density between 1860 and 1870. Eleven were situated in St. Clair County. Eleven of the sixteen townships which recorded significant changes in Canadian density occupied interior locations while five were situated along the St. Clair River on Lake Huron. The changing Canadian density pattern further substantiates the notion the Canadians settled both in frontier and established areas.

Fourteen townships in Sanilac County, twelve in Huron County, and only seven in St. Clair tallied significant changes in Canadian density between 1870 and 1880. Only Port Huron and Fort Gratiot townships added over ten Canadians per square mile while five townships recorded a similar increase in foreign-born density. Fifteen townships recorded no significant change. Seven were situated in St. Clair County. Eleven townships declined in Canadian density, nine of which were located in St. Clair County. Two Sanilac County townships declined. During this decade, when the most significant Canadian change was recorded for the

Thumb, most of the change occurred in Huron and Sanilac counties.

Germans

Persons born in Germany ranked behind Canadians in both numbers and density change. Although never achieving a change over one person per square mile, Germans provided nearly one-fifth of the foreign-born change for each decade. The greatest German density change occurred between 1850 and 1860, but Germans accounted for their largest proportion of foreign-born change between 1860 and 1870.

St. Clair and Huron counties shared significant German density change. German increase was less significant in Sanilac County. The largest German change was recorded in St. Clair County between 1850 and 1860. Change declined from 1860 to 1870, but 41 per cent of the foreign-born change was contributed by Germans. Germans provided 36 per cent of Huron County's foreign-born change between 1850 and 1860. The largest German density changes in Huron and Sanilac counties were recorded between 1870 and 1880.

Only Casco Township recorded a change of more than ten per square mile from 1850 to 1860. Port Huron, St. Clair, Ira and Cottrellville also recorded significant changes. Casco Township attracted more Germans than Port Huron. It would appear that Germans preferred less populated rural areas than more densely populated areas. Clay Township recorded a decline.

Only seven townships recorded significant changes between 1860 and 1870 as compared to sixteen which reported significant Canadian change. Change was greatest in Casco and Ira townships. Less significant changes were tallied in Port Huron and St. Clair. Germans manifested a tendency to cluster in established German areas during this decade as

compared to the more dispersed Canadian pattern. Fewer townships recorded declines in German density than in Canadian. However, twenty-one townships reported no significant change.

Delaware Township reported the largest change in German density between 1870 and 1880. Of the eight townships which tallied significant German changes six were situated in Huron County, one in Sanilac, and one in St. Clair. The established German cluster in Casco and Ira townships attracted few Germans and recorded no significant change. Mussey Township remained an attractive area for German settlement in St. Clair County. New clusters of settlement appeared in Huron and Sanilac counties. Since German Settlement was clustered and six townships recorded a decline, forty-five townships recorded no significant change.

Irish

The Irish contribution to the changing foreign-born population of the Thumb was most significant during the first decade. In succeeding decades their significance was marginal. Twelve per cent of the foreign-born change between 1850 and 1860 was provided by the Irish. The largest density change occurred in St. Clair County.

Port Huron Township recorded the most significant Irish density change. Significant change also occurred in Columbus Township. Since the Irish manifested a dispersed settlement pattern and their numbers were small, no township recorded a significant change during the next two decades. In fact, between 1860 and 1870, nineteen townships recorded no significant change and twelve tallied declines. A similar pattern prevailed in the next decade. The Thumb region proved less attractive to to the Irish than to Canadians or Germans.

English

Persons born in England also accounted for portions of the Thumb's foreign-born change. However, their contribution was less than the Irish. The most significant English change took place between 1850 and 1860, most of which occurred in St. Clair County. English change declined during the next decade but increased from 1870 to 1880.

Port Huron Township stood alone in recording significant English density changes. The greatest English change occurred from 1870 to 1880. English arrivals to the Thumb apparently preferred the more densely populated urban area. Similar to the Irish, the English were not great in numbers and were dispersed throughout the region, excepting Port Huron Township.

Scots, Polish, and Dutch

Over a dozen other groups contributed to the Thumb's foreign-born population change. Individually their change was slight and irregular. The Scots, Poles, and Dutch were the most significant.

The greatest density change exhibited by the Scots occurred between 1850 and 1860. A considerable decline in density was recorded from 1860 to 1870. In fact, more Scots either died in or left St. Clair County than arrived. Port Huron Township, however, reported a significant increase in density for each decade. East China, between 1870 and 1880, was the only other township to record a significant increase. Scots, like the Irish and English, were few in number and relatively dispersed throughout the region.

The Polish contribution to foreign-born change was slight with respect to the entire region. However, Poles contributed significantly to change in Huron County. Within Huron County, Poles were clustered in

Paris Township. Between 1870 and 1880, Paris was the only township ever to report a significant Polish density change. Poles accounted for more of the foreign-born change between 1860 and 1870 than either the Irish, English, or Scots. Only Canadian and German density change exceeded the Polish change for Huron County during the final decade. Although extremely clustered in one township, Poles added considerable numbers to the foreign-born population of Huron County.

The Dutch also contributed more to foreign-born change in one county than to the region. In fact, the Dutch contribution was significant only between 1850 and 1860. Few Dutch were attracted to or resided in the Thumb after 1860. During the first decade, Dutch arrivals to St. Clair County registered 3 per cent of the foreign-born change. Most of the Dutch elected to settle in townships adjacent to the St. Clair River. Their location in the Thumb was only temporary. A dramatic decrease in the Dutch population took place between 1860 and 1870.

## Significance of the Foreign-Born

### Age-Sex Composition

The age-sex composition is a significant factor in attempting to ascertain the economic, social, and political contributions of a population. Trewartha claims:

> To an important degree, a person's age influences what he needs, buys, does, and thinks.... All aspects of community life--social attitudes, economic activities, political tendencies, military service, mobility, etc.--are affected by the age composition.[3]

Associated with age, the balance or imbalance between males and females also influences the group's activities.[4]

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[3]Glenn T. Trewartha, A Geography of Population: World Patterns (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969, p. 117.)

[4]Ibid., p. 114.

Migration fundamentally changes the age-sex composition of the population which receives migrants. Migrations are both age and sex selective. Places which receive migrants usually contain a preponderance of young adults. When migrations span long distances males tend to outnumber females.[5]

Thus, in considering the age-sex composition of the Thumb's foreign-born population, one would expect: (1) a preponderance of males in all foreign-born groups, (2) a majority of young adults in all foreign-born groups, (3) a disproportionate number of males with groups whose countries of origin are most distant from the Thumb (particularly among Germans, Irish, English, and Poles), and (4) more females among the Canadian-born.

It must be noted, that during this period and particularly between 1860 and 1880, most of the population increase was not the result of international migration. To a large degree, increase was the result of natural increase and internal migration. Internal and international migrants manifest similar age-sex characteristics with regard to distance from point of origin. Therefore, comparisons between the age-sex composition of the various foreign-born groups and total population are actually comparisons of the foreign-born group with a population which includes the characteristics of both internal and international migrants plus natural increase. However, it is suggested that these characteristics are more pronounced among the foreign-born.

Age-sex composition is graphically portrayed by the age-sex pyramid (see Figures 30 and 31). Because of the dynamic nature of the Thumb's population during this period, interpretation of the age-sex pyramids is

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[5]Donald J. Bogue, Principles of Demography (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), pp. 154-167.

AGE-SEX COMPOSITION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION AND SELECTED FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN THE THUMB REGION BY COUNTY: 1850-1860

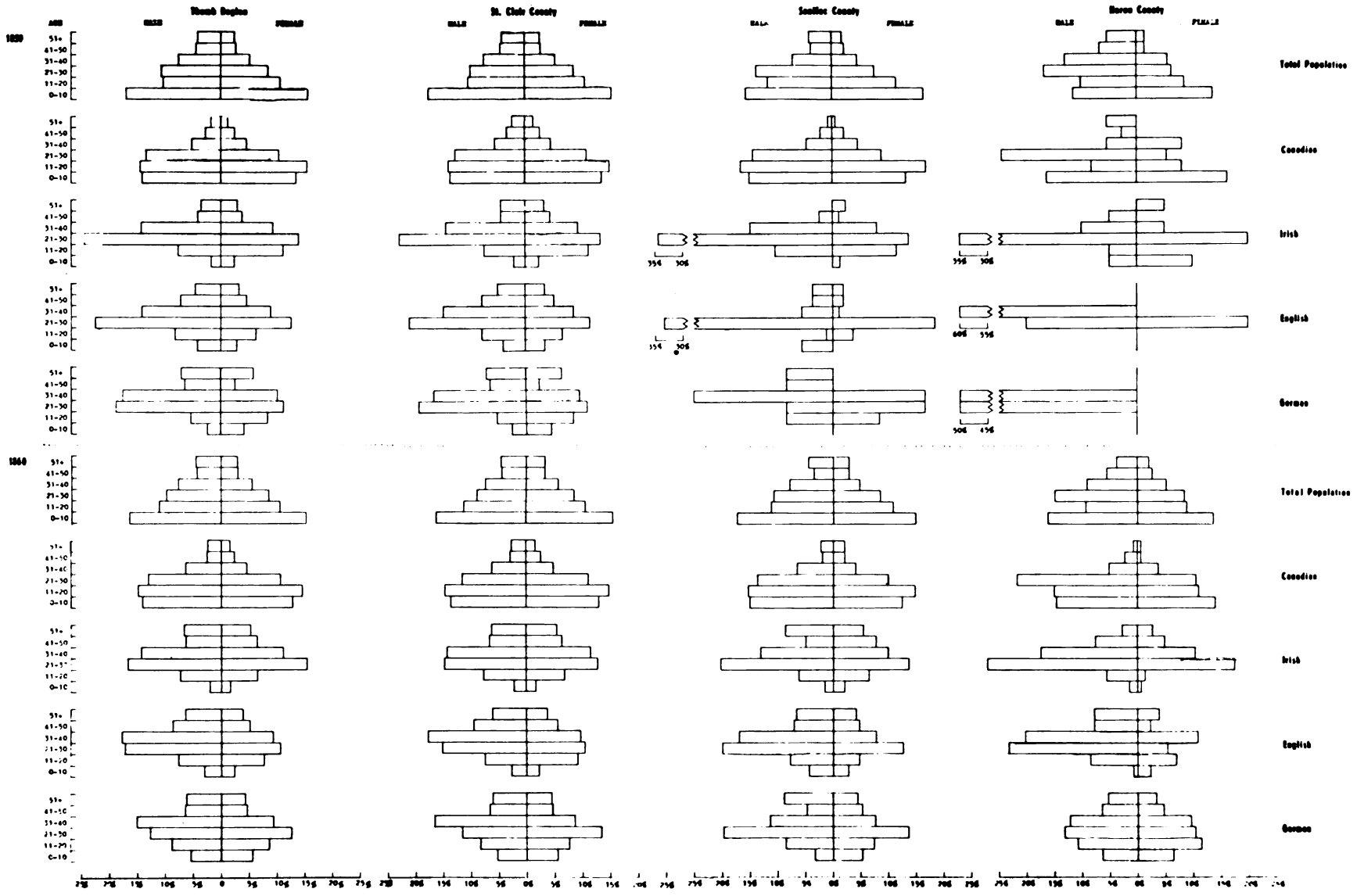


Figure 30.

AGE-SEX COMPOSITION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION AND SELECTED FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN THE THUMB REGION BY COUNTY: 1870-1880

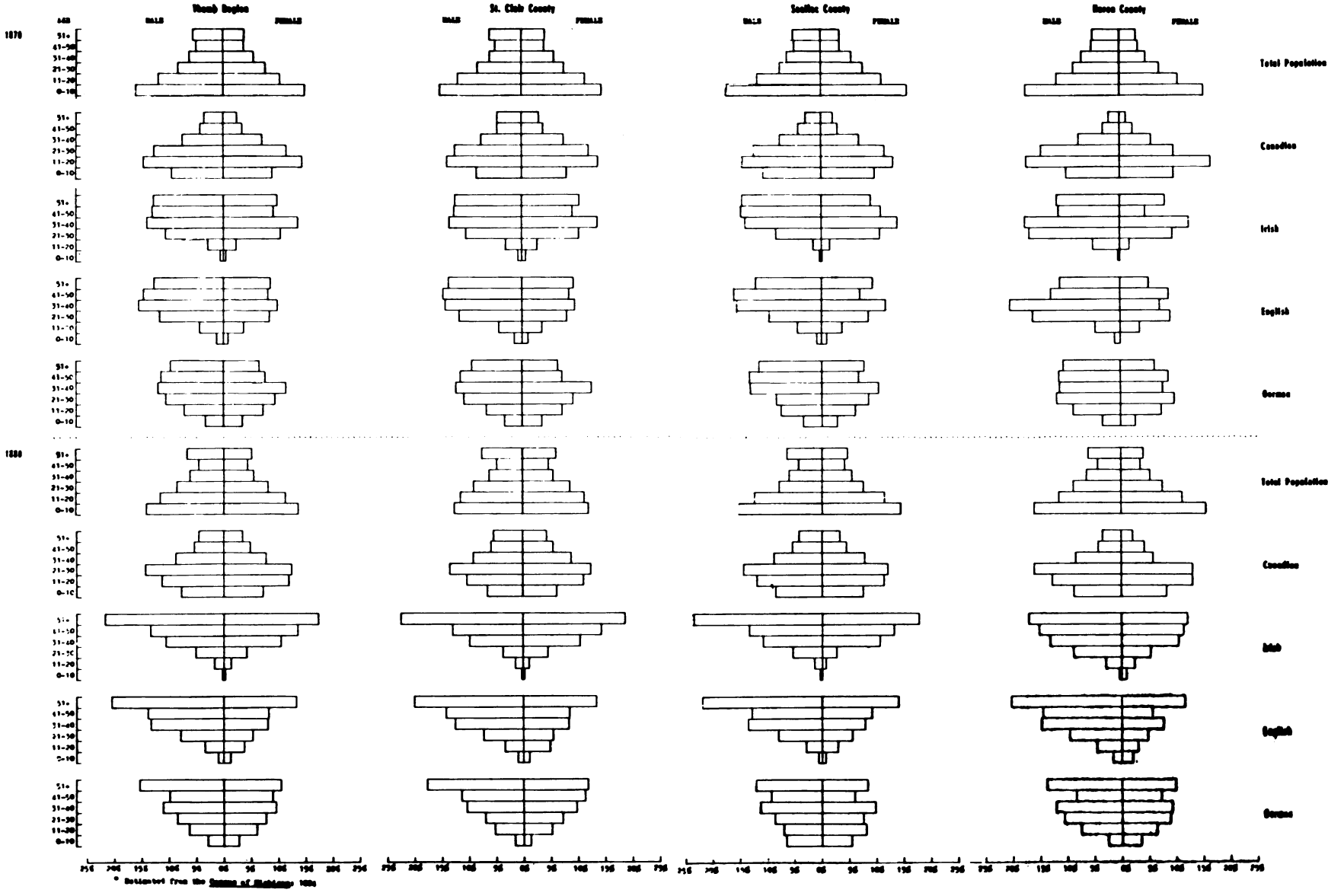


Figure 31.

difficult and complex. Inferences drawn from cohort change are tenuous. However, some guarded generalizations can be made.

Typical of frontier areas, males outnumbered females. The proportion of males to females decreased as the region became settled (see Table 21). However, in almost every decade the proportion of males was greater in the total, German, Irish, and English populations than among Canadians. The low ratio of Canadian males appears to be related to the proximity of Ontario to the Thumb.

To a large degree the native population consisted of New Yorkers and New Englanders who had to travel greater distance to the Thumb than did the Canadians. The Canadian population was overwhelmingly made up of persons from neighboring Ontario. By the end of the period, most of the population increase consisted of native Michiganders. This, in large part, accounts for the low male ratio of the total population in 1880.

Furthermore St. Clair County, which is least distant from Ontario, maintained the lowest proportion of Canadian males throughout the period. As distance from Ontario increased, Huron and Sanilac counties, the proportion of Canadian males usually increased.

There was a substantial sex ratio difference, among both foreign-born and native populations, between more populated St. Clair County and less densely settled Huron and Sanilac counties. It is clear that the English, Irish, and German populations contained significantly more males than the Canadian or total populations. These groups were even less likely to be accompanied by females in sparsely populated areas.

The age-sex pyramids suggest a general aging trend within the total population. The proportion of persons in the youngest cohort, 0-10 years of age, diminished. Children accounted for a smaller proportion of the Thumb's population in 1880 than in 1850. This trend was most

TABLE 21.

PERCENTAGE OF MALES AMONG THE TOTAL AND SELECTED FOREIGN-BORN POPULATIONS OF THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| County | Year | Total Population | Canadian | German | Irish | English |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thumb | 1850 | 54.0 | 51.9 | 58.0 | 56.3 | 61.1 |
| | 1860 | 53.8 | 53.3 | 54.8 | 53.4 | 60.8 |
| | 1870 | 52.6 | 51.9 | 54.4 | 53.8 | 60.1 |
| | 1880 | 52.1[1] | 52.4 | 54.1 | 52.8 | 60.1 |
| St.Clair | 1850 | 53.2 | 51.0 | 57.4 | 55.2 | 60.7 |
| | 1860 | 52.7 | 51.6 | 54.8 | 52.2 | 58.9 |
| | 1870 | 51.7 | 50.9 | 53.1 | 52.1 | 59.1 |
| | 1880 | 51.4 | 50.5 | 53.3 | 50.4 | 58.3 |
| Sanilac | 1850 | 55.5 | 53.5 | 58.2 | 62.0 | 63.0 |
| | 1860 | 55.4 | 54.9 | 56.5 | 54.9 | 63.0 |
| | 1870 | 53.0 | 52.4 | 57.4 | 53.6 | 58.7 |
| | 1880 | 52.6 | 53.8 | 54.9 | 55.1 | 59.9 |
| Huron | 1850 | 62.9 | 62.1 | 100.0 | 60.0 | 80.0 |
| | 1860 | 58.8 | 59.5 | 54.2 | 61.8 | 68.2 |
| | 1870 | 55.7 | 54.3 | 57.1 | 62.8 | 65.9 |
| | 1880 | 52.8 | 53.3 | 54.9 | 57.2 | 65.1 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[1]Based on the Census of Michigan: 1884.

strongly manifested in St. Clair County. However, it wasn't until 1870 that the youngest cohort attained its greatest proportions of Sanilac and Huron county's population. It would appear that the unsettled or frontier milieu of Huron and Sanilac counties between 1850 and 1870 discouraged settlers from bringing children.

Among the foreign-born groups, only the Canadians contributed significant numbers to the youngest cohort. The Irish and English were least apt to be accompanied by children. To a lesser degree, this was also true of Germans. No doubt, distance accounted for the disparity between the proportions of Canadians and other foreign-born children.

It seems that Canadians, and to a lesser degree Germans, manifested a greater tendency to settle as family units than the Irish or English.

The statement concerning the Canadian tendency to settle as family units must be qualified. Not all Canadian-born children were born of Canadian parents. Examination of the manuscript census revealed that many were born of Irish, English, and Scot parents. This represents certain evidence that some English, Irish, and Scots arrived via Canada. This trend was less evident among Germans.

While the youngest cohort diminished, the oldest cohort, 51 years and older, increased. Among the foreign-born, this tendency was magnified. By 1880 the Irish, English, and Germans exhibited an inverse age structure when compared to the total population. Instead of a wide base at the younger ages, these foreigners exhibited disproportionate proportions at the oldest cohort.

In 1850, there was a definite preponderance of Irish, English, and Germans included within the 21 to 30 year old cohort. This was particularly evident among males. Canadians were more evenly distributed between birth and 30 years of age. Males far outnumbered females in the young adult ages. This trend was best illustrated in Huron and Sanilac counties.

Canadians maintained their greatest numbers between the ages of 11 and 30. Since there were fewer Irish, English, and German arrivals; their populations aged more dramatically.

Table 22 illustrates the sex composition of the Thumb's adult population, aged 21 or over, by county. The Thumb's total population suffered a decline in the proportion of adult males from 1850 to 1870, but between 1870 and 1880 the proportion increased. The proportion of adult females increased with each decade.

TABLE 22.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULT MALES AND FEMALES AMONG THE TOTAL AND SELECTED FOREIGN-BORN POPULATIONS OF THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| County | Year | Total Population | | Canadian | | German | | Irish | | English | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Thumb | 1850 | 26.6 | 19.2 | 23.2 | 18.8 | 50.3 | 29.6 | 46.7 | 30.2 | 48.7 | 29.7 |
| | 1860 | 26.3 | 20.3 | 24.3 | 19.2 | 40.5 | 31.0 | 44.1 | 38.4 | 50.1 | 29.0 |
| | 1870 | 24.8 | 21.0 | 27.9 | 27.9 | 43.9 | 35.0 | 50.4 | 43.3 | 54.6 | 35.3 |
| | 1880 | 26.2[1] | 22.9[1] | 33.2 | 28.4 | 44.2 | 37.0 | 50.9 | 45.7 | 55.7 | 22.9 |
| St.Clair | 1850 | 25.7 | 19.9 | 23.5 | 19.9 | 49.8 | 29.6 | 45.7 | 31.1 | 48.8 | 30.1 |
| | 1860 | 25.4 | 20.9 | 23.4 | 20.3 | 41.1 | 32.2 | 42.2 | 39.2 | 48.6 | 29.7 |
| | 1870 | 24.8 | 22.0 | 28.8 | 26.9 | 43.3 | 36.0 | 48.5 | 44.3 | 43.3 | 37.1 |
| | 1880 | 27.4 | 25.2 | 33.7 | 31.2 | 46.4 | 40.2 | 48.8 | 48.3 | 54.0 | 35.7 |
| Sanilac | 1850 | 28.5 | 16.4 | 22.0 | 16.4 | 49.9 | 33.4 | 51.7 | 25.3 | 46.3 | 23.3 |
| | 1860 | 26.7 | 18.9 | 24.5 | 17.9 | 44.8 | 31.0 | 47.1 | 36.8 | 50.9 | 29.4 |
| | 1870 | 23.8 | 20.1 | 27.1 | 23.6 | 46.5 | 33.6 | 51.8 | 44.8 | 53.4 | 36.7 |
| | 1880 | 24.9 | 21.6 | 33.2 | 27.4 | 41.4 | 31.7 | 53.3 | 44.2 | 56.3 | 36.5 |
| Huron | 1850 | 41.5 | 14.7 | 37.8 | 13.5 | 100.0 | .... | 50.0 | 30.0 | 80.0 | 20.0 |
| | 1860 | 33.3 | 18.5 | 29.8 | 15.5 | 37.1 | 27.9 | 54.9 | 35.5 | 59.0 | 22.5 |
| | 1870 | 26.7 | 18.3 | 27.2 | 18.1 | 44.9 | 32.7 | 57.5 | 33.4 | 60.3 | 30.5 |
| | 1880 | 25.4 | 20.4 | 31.9 | 25.3 | 44.8 | 35.2 | 54.0 | 39.5 | 58.9 | 29.9 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[1]Based on the Census of Michigan: 1884.

The proportion of adult Canadian males and females increased with each decade. The steady increase in the proportion of adult Canadian females was of greater magnitude than that manifested by adult females in the total population. There as some variance reflected in the adult Canadian male ratios. It wasn't until 1870 that the proportion of adult Canadians exceeded that of the total population. Huron County reported the lowest proportion of adult Canadian females while St. Clair recorded the highest. Between 1870 and 1880 the Canadian-born population demonstrated a greater aging tendency than the total population.

The Germans, Irish, and English included much larger proportions of their populations as adults than either the total or Canadian populations. In most cases adults accounted for at least 75 per cent of their populations. The German, Irish, and English were older than either the total or Canadian populations. In most cases there was considerably more variance between the proportions of adult males and females among the German, Irish, and English populations. The English displayed the greatest disparity between the ratios of adult males and females while less difference occurred among the Irish. In any case, males predominated.

It would appear that the Canadian-born reflected age-sex characteristics of both the foreign and native populations. The disparity between sexes was not as great as among other foreign-born groups. Canadians did exhibit a greater aging tendency than the native-born but not as great as the other foreign-born groups.

Examination of age-sex structures of the city of Port Huron and selected rural townships revealed differences between urban and rural portions of the Thumb. Significant numbers of Canadians, Germans, Irish, and English took up residence in Port Huron. Rural areas were selected on the basis of significant foreign-born density increases. Rural Canad-

ian increase was greatest in Speaker Township of Sanilac County. Significant Germany density increases occurred in Casco Township in St. Clair County and Delaware Township in Sanilac County. Poles increased significantly in Paris Township in Huron County but never accounted for much of Port Huron's population. The Irish and English were relatively evenly dispersed throughout the region, and Port Huron maintained their largest concentration.

The city of Port Huron's Canadian age-sex structure contrasted considerably with that of the county and the Thumb. While males predominated in St. Clair County and were substantially more dominant throughout the Thumb, females outnumbered Canadian males in the city in each decade excepting 1850 (see Table 23). The proximity of Port Huron to Ontario probably accounts for the preponderance of females. In each decade the proportion of females was greatest between the ages of eleven and twenty.

Rural Speaker Township exhibited a much different sex structure. A plurality of Canadian males existed in each decade excepting 1860 when the sexes were equally divided. Rural areas appeared to be more attractive to Canadian males than females.

The urban Canadian population was younger than that of the county or region. In most cases, the proportion of adult males and females was lowest in Port Huron. However, the general aging trend was reflected in Port Huron. The proportion of Canadians in the youngest cohort steadily decreased from 1850 to 1880 while the proportion over fifty-one years of age increased. Except for 1860, rural Speaker Township revealed an older population than the city of Port Huron.

Emulating the Canadian sex structure, the Irish in the city of Port Huron maintained more females than males except in 1850. However,

TABLE 23.

PERCENTAGE MALE, ADULT MALE, AND ADULT FEMALE OF MAJOR FOREIGN-BORN GROUPS IN SELECTED THUMB REGION TOWNSHIPS: 1850-1880

| | City of Port Huron | | | | Speaker Township | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Foreign-Born Group | 1850 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 |
| Canadian Population | 374 | 588 | 1503 | 2318 | 148 | 498 | 587 |
| % Total Pop. | 24 | 26 | 25 | 26 | 45 | 45 | 40 |
| % Male | 56 | 48 | 45 | 47 | 50 | 52 | 53 |
| % Adult Male | 22 | 22 | 24 | 29 | 20 | 26 | 33 |
| % Adult Female | 18 | 20 | 28 | 30 | 20 | 27 | 30 |
| German Population | 3 | 311 | 495 | 489 | .. | 3 | .. |
| % Total Pop. | .. | 7 | 8 | 6 | .. | .. | .. |
| % Male | 100 | 56 | 55 | 54 | | | |
| % Adult Male | 67 | 46 | 42 | 45 | | | |
| % Adult Female | .. | 31 | 29 | 37 | | | |
| Irish Population | 121 | 397 | 375 | 413 | 20 | 56 | 61 |
| % Total Pop. | 8 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| % Male | 55 | 45 | 49 | 49 | | | |
| % Adult Male | 44 | 38 | 45 | 46 | | | |
| % Adult Female | 26 | 44 | 45 | 48 | | | |
| English Population | 68 | 214 | 269 | 403 | 14 | 30 | 47 |
| % Total Pop. | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| % Male | 53 | 57 | 57 | 51 | | | |
| % Adult Male | 40 | 47 | 49 | 45 | | | |
| % Adult Female | 40 | 29 | 84 | 39 | | | |
| Polish Population | .. | 6 | 1 | 2 | .. | .. | .. |
| % Total Pop. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| % Male | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Male | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Female | | | | | | | |

TABLE 23 (cont'd.)

| Foreign-Born Group | Casco Township 1850 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 | Delaware Township 1870 | 1880 | Paris Township 1870 | 1880 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Canadian Population | 24 | 78 | 81 | 53 | 228 | 394 | 80 | 86 |
| % Total Pop. | 18 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 31 | 19 | 9 | 6 |
| % Male | | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Male | | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Female | | | | | | | | |
| German Population | 5 | 420 | 716 | 720 | 62 | 661 | 80 | 37 |
| % Total Pop. | 4 | 39 | 36 | 33 | 8 | 31 | 9 | 3 |
| % Male | 80 | 53 | 50 | 52 | 56 | 54 | | |
| % Adult Male | 60 | 39 | 40 | 45 | 53 | 35 | | |
| % Female | 20 | 32 | 39 | 41 | 40 | 29 | | |
| Irish Population | .. | .. | 6 | 8 | 34 | 36 | 4 | 5 |
| % Total Pop. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 | 2 | .. | .. |
| % Male | | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Male | | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Female | | | | | | | | |
| English Population | | | | | | | | |
| % Total Pop. | 1 | 13 | 5 | 5 | 48 | 67 | 7 | 7 |
| % Male | .. | 1 | .. | .. | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| % Adult Male | | | | | | | | |
| % Adult Female | | | | | | | | |
| Polish Population | .. | .. | .. | 1 | 11 | 11 | 312 | 528 |
| % Total Pop. | .. | .. | .. | 11 | .. | .. | 35 | 35 |
| % Male | | | | | | | 52 | 54 |
| % Adult Male | | | | | | | 36 | 40 |
| % Adult Female | | | | | | | 31 | 32 |

Source: Compiled by author.

the urban Irish population was considerably older. Among the urban English, males predominated. The English were also older than the Canadians. There was a greater disparity between adult English males and females than among the Canadian or Irish. Males dominated the English adult population.

There was a preponderance of males in both urban and rural German populations. However, the proportion of males was greater in Port Huron than in Casco Township. Port Huron recorded its largest German increase between 1860 and 1870. During this decade the number of German children increased, demonstrating that Germans were prone to settle as families in an urban environment. Port Huron's German population aged considerably and decreased in numbers between 1870 and 1880.

Delaware Township received a significant number of German immigrants between 1870 and 1880. These migrants, lured from Saxony, were the result of a state program to provide miners for the Upper Peninsula iron ore ranges. Upon their arrival in New York City, they heard of the severe Upper Peninsula winters and decided against proceeding to Munising.[6] The group finally settled in Delaware Township.

Although a number of Germans were already resident in the township, few children were present. The new group of Germans dramatically altered the age structure. The proportion of children rose to 16.5 per cent by 1880. The ratio of German males to females as well as the proportion of adults declined. Thus, the notion that Germans were likely to settle as family units is reinforced. Also, the more recent arrivals were younger than the established German population of Casco Township.

Paris Township in Huron County represented the first Polish settle-

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[6]Jenks, "Michigan Immigration," pp. 87-88.

ment in Michigan.[7] Three families emigrated to Huron County by way of Canada in 1854, but it wasn't until 1856 that permanent settlement was established in Paris Township.[8] By 1859, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was founded and was the largest rural Polish Catholic Church in the United States.[9] The Poles in Paris Township antedated the wave of Polish immigrants which arrived in Michigan near the turn of the century. Poles were late arrivals to Michigan but early in the Thumb. Paris Township represents an anomaly in that most of the later Polish immigrants were attracted to urban areas. Paris Township was entirely rural.

Males outnumbered females in the Polish settlement. Poles, like the Germans, brought their children to the Thumb. The Polish population between 1870 and 1880 was younger than the rural German population of Casco Township but older than the rural Canadians in Speaker Township. Few Poles were attracted to the city of Port Huron.

## Occupations

Occupational status provides a measure of the foreign-born's economic significance. The foreign-born population of Port Huron Township increased significantly from 1850 to 1880 and registered the greatest increases in the Thumb. Most of the growth took place in the city of Port Huron. Associated with this growth was an increase in the number of employed foreign-born. Between 1850 and 1880, the number of employed male foreigners increased from 198 to 1435 workers. Growth was greatest between 1850 and 1860. Since the city of Port Huron was the major urban, manufacturing, and service center of the Thumb; the manuscript census re-

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[7]Joseph A. Wytrwal, America's Polish Heritage (Detroit: Endurance Press, 1961), pp. 64-65.

[8]Gwinn, Pioneer History of Huron County, pp. 33-35.

[9]Hey, Huron County, Centennial History, p. 9.

cords revealed a diverse occupation structure for the foreign-born.

A classification of foreign-born occupations, by industry group, was devised especially for this paper. The classification embraces four major groups including the traditional primary, secondary, and tertiary activities. A fourth category includes those foreign-born who were simply reported as laborers (see Table 24).

Primary occupations account for those employed in agriculture, lumbering, and other primary industries. Agriculture includes farmers, farm laborers, and such specialized horticulturalists as bee keepers. Lumbering encompasses those who were directly employed in exploiting the forest resource such as lumbermen, hewers, and log scalers. Fishermen made up most of those employed in the other primary occupational group.

Occupations in the primary industries never accounted for more than 5 per cent of Port Huron's employed foreign-born. Agriculture provided the largest proportion of foreign-born employment. Only in 1870 did Canadians significantly exceed the mean foreign-born proportion employed in primary activities. Canadians exceeded the mean in both agriculture and lumbering. Germans manifested the greatest variation from the mean in 1880 when 23 per cent of all employed Germans were in primary occupations, 21 per cent in agriculture.

Occupations in the secondary industries account for those employed in manufacturing, of both durable and non-durable goods, and construction. Those in durable manufacturing were employed primarily in saw mills and included such occupations as saw mill worker, sawyer, and whip sawyer. Durable goods also embraced those employed in the manufacture of other wood products such as coopers, stave makers, cabinet makers, and lath mill workers. In addition, the foreign-born found employment in the manufacture of other durable goods (other than wood

TABLE 24.

OCCUPATIONAL COMPOSITION OF THE MALE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION, PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS BY INDUSTRY GROUP FOR THE CITY OF PORT HURON: 1850-1880

| Year | Nativity | Total Employed | % of Employed male F.B. | PRIMARY | Agriculture | Lumber | Others | SECONDARY | Manufacturing | durable | non-durable | Construction | TERTIARY | Transportation | Retail | Services | prof. | non-prof. | Others | LABORERS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1850 | Foreign-Born | 198 | 100 | 2 | 1 | 1 | . | 14 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 36 | 12 | 7 | 17 | 5 | 12 | a | 48 |
| | Canadian | 107 | 54 | 2 | 1 | 2 | . | 17 | 9 | 9 | . | 8 | 21 | 10 | 3 | 8 | . | 8 | . | 60 |
| | German | 3 | 2 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 67 | . | . | 67 | | 33 | 33 | 33 |
| | Irish | 46 | 22 | . | . | . | . | 9 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 39 | 17 | 2 | 20 | 4 | 16 | . | 52 |
| | English | 23 | 12 | . | . | . | . | 4 | 4 | . | 4 | | 70 | 4 | 35 | 31 | 13 | 18 | . | 26 |
| | Others | 19 | 10 | 5 | 5 | . | . | 21 | 16 | 16 | . | 5 | 68 | 26 | 5 | 37 | 21 | 16 | . | 5 |
| 1860 | Foreign-Born | 736 | 100 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 31 | 19 | 15 | 4 | 12 | 40 | 16 | 6 | 18 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 25 |
| | Canadian | 298 | 40 | 5 | a | 2 | 3 | 37 | 21 | 19 | 2 | 16 | 40 | 26 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 18 |
| | German | 133 | 18 | 5 | . | 5 | . | 29 | 20 | 14 | 6 | 9 | 34 | 1 | 15 | 18 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 32 |
| | Irish | 155 | 22 | 2 | 1 | . | 1 | 23 | 18 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 40 | 13 | 4 | 23 | 5 | 18 | . | 35 |
| | English | 74 | 10 | . | . | . | . | 35 | 18 | 15 | 3 | 17 | 39 | 4 | 11 | 24 | 9 | 15 | . | 26 |
| | Others | 76 | 10 | 1 | . | 1 | . | 24 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 15 | 55 | 18 | 8 | 29 | 8 | 21 | . | 20 |

TABLE 24 (cont'd.)

| Year | Nativity | Total Employed | % of Employed male F.B. | PRIMARY | Agriculture | Lumber | Others | SECONDARY | Manufacturing | durable | non-durable | Construction | TERTIARY | Transportation | Retail | Services | prof. | non-prof. | Others | LABORERS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1870 | Foreign-Born | 1020 | 100 | 5 | 3 | 2 | . | 39 | 23 | 19 | 4 | 16 | 37 | 12 | 6 | 19 | 3 | 16 | a | 19 |
| | Canadian | 442 | 43 | 9 | 5 | 4 | . | 42 | 23 | 21 | 2 | 19 | 34 | 13 | 3 | 18 | 3 | 14 | 1 | 15 |
| | German | 195 | 19 | 2 | 1 | 1 | . | 44 | 33 | 26 | 7 | 11 | 31 | 4 | 7 | 20 | 2 | 18 | . | 24 |
| | Irish | 150 | 15 | 5 | 1 | 4 | . | 27 | 20 | 16 | 4 | 7 | 35 | 16 | 7 | 12 | 1 | 11 | . | 33 |
| | English | 131 | 13 | 2 | 2 | . | . | 32 | 17 | 11 | 6 | 15 | 52 | 14 | 11 | 27 | 4 | 23 | . | 14 |
| | Others | 102 | 10 | 1 | . | 1 | . | 37 | 18 | 13 | 5 | 19 | 49 | 17 | 10 | 22 | 3 | 19 | . | 13 |
| 1880 | Foreign-Born | 1435 | 100 | 5 | 4 | a | a | 29 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 15 | 41 | 16 | 5 | 20 | 4 | 14 | 2 | 25 |
| | Canadian | 699 | 49 | 1 | a | a | a | 32 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 40 | 17 | 5 | 18 | 5 | 12 | 1 | 27 |
| | German | 243 | 17 | 23 | 21 | 1 | a | 20 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 36 | 5 | 9 | 22 | 2 | 17 | 3 | 21 |
| | Irish | 184 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 1 | . | 20 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 46 | 18 | 5 | 23 | 4 | 19 | . | 30 |
| | English | 175 | 12 | . | . | . | . | 41 | 24 | 19 | 5 | 17 | 40 | 18 | 4 | 18 | 3 | 13 | 2 | 19 |
| | Others | 134 | 9 | 2 | . | 2 | . | 25 | 11 | 9 | 2 | 14 | 54 | 22 | 1 | 31 | 7 | 19 | 5 | 19 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[a]Less than one per cent.

products). Occupations such as shipbuilder, brick maker, machinist, and foundry worker were most frequently reported. Occupations most frequently reported in the non-durable category ranged from brewer, grist mill worker, harness maker, tanner, to woolen mill worker. Construction workers were predominately carpenters but also included masons and painters. It must be mentioned that many of the carpenters may have been employed in the manufacture of durable goods, such as shipbuilding or other wood products. But, since this distinction was impossible to discern from the manuscript census, all carpenters were classified as construction workers.

Foreign-born employment in secondary industries increased by 25 per cent from 1850 to 1870 but decreased in 1880. Employment in the manufacture of durable goods accounted for most of the fluctuation. Canadians exceeded the mean proportion of foreign-born employed in secondary industries during each decade while the Irish maintained a ratio significantly below the mean. The chief occupation reported by each foreign-born group in the manufacture of durable goods between 1850 and 1870 was saw mill worker. Foreign-born employment in the saw mills dropped dramatically between 1870 and 1880. The saw mills of Port Huron employed more Canadians than any other foreign-born group. A significant number of Germans found employment in the saw mills in 1870.

Canadians never exceeded the mean proportion of foreigners employed in the non-durable industries. Foreign-born workers in the construction industry, predominately carpenters, also increased between 1850 and 1870 but suffered only a slight decline from 1870 to 1880. In each decade the Canadian proportion of construction workers exceeded the foreign-born mean. Carpenter was the leading single occupation reported by

Canadians throughout the period. Although some Canadians were employed as masons and painters, nearly 17 per cent of all employed Canadians reported carpenter as their occupation in 1870 and 1880.

Tertiary occupations include those employed in transportation, retail, professional and non-professional, and other service industries. Transportation includes a wide range of occupations pertaining to rail, water, and land conveyance. Occupations of those employed in rail conveyance range from engineer, porter, brakeman, fireman, to time keeper and ticket agent. Among those employed in water conveyance were sailors, steamboat pilots, dock workers, and raftsmen. Teamsters and draymen were the major occupations reported by those employed in land conveyance. A host of occupations were reported in the retail services but bakers, butchers, grocers, and merchants were most frequent. The service category includes both professional and non-professional services. The most frequently reported professional service occupations were attorney, doctor and teacher. Perhaps the greatest variety of occupations are included in the non-professional service group ranging from blacksmith, clerk, hotel keeper, shoemaker, to barber, cook, gardener, and watchman. The category of other tertiary occupations includes those employed in wholesale trade, finance, real estate, insurance, and various national, state, and local government positions.

Foreign-born employment in the tertiary industries ranged from 36 to 41 per cent of all workers between 1850 and 1880. Canadians never exceeded the foreign-born mean proportion. Canadians did exceed the foreign-born mean in transportation services between 1860 and 1880. In 1860 an extraordinary number of Canadians reported raftsman as their occupation. The number of raftsmen declined sharply, and in 1870, Canadians were most numerous in other types of water conveyance. By

1880 emphasis shifted to rail conveyance and many Canadians were employed by the Grand Trunk Railway and the Port Huron and Northwestern Railway Company.

Canadians were below the mean proportion of foreign-born employed in the retail services from 1850 to 1870. Proportionally, the Germans and English predominated in retail services. The foreign-born mean in the service category was fairly stable with more emphasis in the non-professional services. Canadians were below the mean employed in non-professional services throughout the period, but some growth was attained between 1870 and 1880. The English ranked highest in professional services from 1850 to 1870.

Laborers include all those foreigners who were employed but reported no specific occupation. These workers simply listed laborer as their occupation. Almost one-half of all foreign-born workers were laborers in 1850 including 60 per cent of all employed Canadians. The proportion of laborers declined from 1850 to 1870, most of the decline was added to the number of employed in the manufacture of durable goods. However, in 1880 when employment dropped in the manufacture of durable goods, the result of decreased employment in the saw mills, the proportion of laborers increased. In 1880, one-fourth of all employed Canadians and 30 per cent of the Irish were laborers.

Although Canadians accounted for from 51 to 62 per cent of Port Huron's total foreign-born population, employed male Canadians ranged from 40 to 54 per cent of all employed foreign-born. The other major foreign-born groups accounted for greater proportions of the employed foreign-born than of the total foreign-born population. For example, Germans made up 17 per cent of all employed foreigners but accounted for only 13 per cent of the foreign-born population in 1880. The youth-

fulness of the Canadian population and the large number of young Canadian females who elected to locate in Port Huron explain this disparity. However, male Canadians dominated the city's foreign-born work force.

It has been mentioned that, during this period, foreign-born males outnumbered females. Male ratios were lowest in St. Clair County. The Canadian and Irish populations of the city of Port Huron displayed an anomalous sex structure as females were in the majority from 1860 to 1880. Furthermore, in each decade, the female Canadian population maintained its greatest numbers in the 11-20 year old age cohort. It would appear that Port Huron demonstrated a consistent appeal to young Canadian females. Employment opportunity probably accounted for much of the appeal.

The manuscript census records revealed that from one-half to three-fourths of all employed foreign-born females were Canadians. Nearly one-fifth of all Canadian females and over one-third of those between the ages of eleven and twenty were employed in 1880. Canadian females were employed in a variety of jobs ranging from artist and cook to prostitute. The overwhelming majority were employed as servants or domestics, which included 61 per cent of those employed between the ages of eleven and twenty in 1880. Seamstress or dressmaker, milliner, and teacher were the next ranking occupations.

Urban development was passive in the Thumb with only Port Huron, St. Clair, Marine City, and Fort Gratiot reporting over 1,000 residents in 1880. Only eight other places reported over 500 inhabitants; Lexington, Port Austin, Algonac, Caseville, Port Sanilac, Sebewaing, Capac, and Sand Beach (see Table 16). Although secondary and tertiary activities were pursued in the smaller centers, Port Huron predominated. Since the Thumb was largely rural, the occupational structure outside

Port Huron was severely restricted. Employment was limited to agriculture, primarily farmers. Opportunity for female employment was especially restricted.

## Voting Behavior

The Republican party dominated Michigan's political scene from 1854 to 1932. Dunbar attributes this dominance to strong anti-slavery sentiment resulting from the predominance of New England stock in the population, the slow growth of cities, and the tendency for rural populations to prefer the Republican party.[10] The Thumb region paralleled the state pattern in the presidential election of 1868 and gubernatorial campaigns of 1870 and 1880.

The Republicans scored an overwhelming victory in the presidential election of 1868. Fifty-eight per cent of the Thumb voters selected the Republican candidate. Sanilac County was a Republican bastion and gave the party's candidate 70 per cent of its vote, Huron gave 58 per cent, and St. Clair 53 per cent. Sixty-four townships reported election returns,[11] and forty-nine tallied Republican majorities.

Fifty-seven per cent of the Thumb vote went to the Republican candidate for governor in 1870. Sanilac County favored the candidate by 68 per cent, Huron 58 per cent, and St. Clair by 53 per cent. Of the sixty-five townships, forty-five reported Republican majorities.[12]

In the gubernatorial campaign of 1880, the Republican candidate once again carried the Thumb region claiming 56 per cent of the vote.

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[10]Dunbar, Michigan: A History, pp. 525-526.

[11]Township returns for the presidential election of 1868 and gubernatorial campaign of 1870 are reported in Manual for the Use of the Legislature of the State of Michigan: 1871-72 (Lansing, Mich.: W. S. George & Co., Printers to the State, 1872), pp. 269, 295, 297.

[12]Ibid.

Sixty-two per cent of Sanilac County's votes favored the Republicans, 56 per cent in Huron County, and St. Clair County reported 52 per cent. Seventy-four townships reported returns and fifty-six displayed Republican majorities.[13]

Without investigating the individual campaigns and issues as they relate to the respective counties, it is extremely hazardous to make inferences concerning foreign-born voting behavior from such a cursory review of three major elections. However, some trends can be recognized.

At both county and regional levels, it appears that Republican preference declined from 1868 to 1880. It appears that the more rural counties, Sanilac and Huron, favored Republican candidates more strongly than densely settled St. Clair County. It would also appear that where the combination of the Canadian and native populations was greatest, 85 per cent in Sanilac County in 1870, voters were most likely to choose Republican candidates. Whereas, in areas where other foreign-born groups were numerous, there was less of a Republican majority.

At the township level, more direct foreign-born influences were manifest. Only four townships reported Democrat majorities in all three elections: Sebewaing and Sherman in Huron County, China and Emmett in St. Clair. Each of the four reported a higher proportion of its total population as German or Irish than Canadian. Each demonstrated a German or Irish population well above the county mean and a Canadian proportion well below. Sebewaing, Sherman, and China reported significant German populations while Emmett's foreign-born were predominately Irish.

In the four townships, Democratic candidates received from 66 to 88 per cent of the 1870 vote and from 52 to 86 per cent in 1880. Al-

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[13]Township returns for the gubernatorial election of 1880 are reported in Manual of the State of Michigan: 1881 (Lansing, Mich.: W. S. George & Co., State Printers and Binders, 1881), pp. 229-230, 243-244.

though voting behavior is difficult to assess, there appears to be a relationship between the foreign-born population and the Democrat vote in these townships. This relationship is expressed in the percentage of total population and potential voting population of the native and foreign-born population as revealed in Table 25.

Natives outnumbered the foreign-born in each township in both 1870 and 1880, excepting Sherman. The native population was younger than the foreign-born and accounted for considerably smaller proportions of the potential voters, adult males twenty-one years and older, than the total population. The German and Irish were considerably older than the Canadian and native populations and constituted a much more significant proportion of the potential voting population. In Sebewaing Township, for example, natives made up 58 per cent of the total population in 1870 but accounted for only 22 per cent of the potential voters. Whereas, Germans accounted for 35 per cent of the total population but included 72 per cent of all potential voters.

Thus, it would appear that Republican majorities were related to areas dominated by natives and Canadians. The Democratic strongholds were seemingly related to areas which contained significant proportions of Germans or Irish. It should be mentioned that the Poles, Paris Township, also leaned toward the Democratic party.[14]

## Participation in Local Government

Participation in local government provides yet another measure of the foreign-born significance in the Thumb region. Were the foreign-born included in the administrative and decision-making process at the county

[14]Seventy-one per cent of the voters in 1868 and 80 per cent in 1880 voted for Democrats, while the Republican candidate mustered 56 per cent of the vote in 1870.

TABLE 25.

PERCENTAGE OF POTENTIAL VOTING POPULATION AMONG NATIVE AND FOREIGN-BORN ADULT MALES IN TOWNSHIPS WHICH FAVORED THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY: 1870-1880

| Year | Township | Total Population | Adult Males | Per Cent Democrat | Percentage of Total Population and Potential Voters | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Native | | Canadian | | German | | Irish | | Other F.B. | |
| | | | | | Pop. | Voters | Pop. | Voters | Pop. | Voters | Pop. | Voters | Pop. | Voters |
| 1870 | Sebewaing | 907 | 206 | 88 | 58 | 22 | 5 | 3 | 35 | 72 | .. | .. | 2 | 3 |
| | Sherman | 385 | 94 | 82 | 45 | 16 | 13 | 7 | 29 | 46 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 18 |
| | China | 1638 | 390 | 66 | 67 | 35 | 4 | 6 | 22 | 42 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 14 |
| | Emmett | 960 | 226 | 82 | 53 | 15 | 15 | 16 | 2 | 3 | 28 | 59 | 2 | 7 |
| 1880 | Sebewaing | 1489 | 417 | 52 | 64 | 27 | 6 | 18 | 28 | 50 | .. | .. | 2 | 5 |
| | Sherman | 1049 | 283 | 74 | 47 | 14 | 20 | 21 | 21 | 37 | 4 | 10 | 7 | 18 |
| | China | 1628 | 456 | 56 | 73 | 53 | 3 | 4 | 19 | 34 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| | Emmett | 1480 | 400 | 86 | 57 | 28 | 14 | 19 | 4 | 7 | 22 | 41 | 3 | 5 |

Source: Compiled by author.

or township level? For the purposes of this study, nativities of such county officials as clerk, sheriff, prosecuting attorney, register of deeds, circuit court commissioner, surveyor, coroner, treasurer, superintendent of schools who held office between 1850 and 1880 were investigated. Nativities of township supervisors were also examined.

The county histories provide the official's name and tenure for both county and township positions. But nativity is not readily available. Country of origin was ascertained by searching for the individual name in the following three sources: (1) the biographical sketch portion of the county histories, (2) lists in county atlases where nativity was reported for prominent individuals, and (3) notes concerning individuals gleaned from the manuscript census. This research procedure resulted in only partial coverage. Of the 216 county officials who held office between 1850 and 1880, nativities were discovered for 58 per cent. Nativities for 53 per cent of the 660 township supervisors were determined (see Table 26).

Of those county officials whose nativity was established, natives only slightly outnumbered foreigners. It appears that the foreign-born did participate in local government at the county level. Foreigners were less likely to hold county offices in St. Clair than in Sanilac County. Concomitantly, foreigners accounted for greater proportions of the population of Sanilac County than of St. Clair. Canadians provided the majority of foreign-born officials.

Although the Canadian proportion of Sanilac County's total population ranged from 35 to 41 per cent, Canadians supplied 55 per cent of all Sanilac County officials. It appears that the German, Irish, and Polish populations did not provide representative proportions of county officials. For example, while Germans comrpised significant proportions

TABLE 26.

PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN-BORN PERSONS HOLDING
LOCAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS IN THE THUMB REGION: 1850-1880

| | Number of Officeholders | Foreign-Born | Canada | England | Ireland | Scotland | Germany | Poland | Others | Natives | Not Available |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Percentage by Country of Origin | | | | | | | |
| | | | | County Officials | | | | | | | |
| Thumb | 216 | 28 | 22 | 1 | a | 3 | 1 | a | a | 30 | 42 |
| St. Clair | 108 | 11 | 9 | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 | 38 | 51 |
| Sanilac | 44 | 64 | 55 | 2 | 2 | 5 | .. | .. | .. | 16 | 20 |
| Huron | 64 | 33 | 20 | 2 | .. | 6 | 3 | 2 | .. | 27 | 40 |
| | | | | Township Supervisors | | | | | | | |
| Thumb | 660 | 32 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 3 | a | a | 21 | 47 |
| St. Clair | 269 | 16 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 2 | a | .. | .. | 30 | 56 |
| Sanilac | 188 | 40 | 26 | 2 | 3 | 8 | .. | .. | 1 | 13 | 47 |
| Huron | 203 | 47 | 14 | 6 | 2 | 12 | 11 | 1 | a | 15 | 38 |

Source: Compiled by author.

[a]Less than one per cent.

of Huron County's population, from 10 to 20 per cent between 1860 and 1880, only 3 per cent of its officials were German. Whereas the Scots, who never accrued more than 3 per cent of Huron's population, provided at least 6 per cent of its county officials.

Compared with the native population, it appears that the foreign-born were more likely to hold office and better represented at the township rather than county level. Canadians were the most frequent office holders. The Scots continued to maintain a disproportionate ratio of office holders.

## Summary

During this period of rapid population growth, the foreign-born accounted for substantial proportions of the Thumb's total population change. The change in population density was greater among the foreign-born than the native population between 1850 and 1860. Canadians provided from over one-half to almost two-thirds of the foreign-born change. Canadian density change was greatest between 1870 and 1880, primarily due to the influx of Canadians into the less populated counties of Huron and Sanilac. Throughout the period, Canadian density change was greatest in Port Huron Township. Density changes demonstrate a Canadian willingness to settle in both densely and sparsely populated areas.

Other foreign-born groups revealed less significant density changes. Germans and Poles demonstrated a tendency to settle in rural clusters. Although Port Huron Township recorded significant German density changes, Germans tended to show greatest change in Casco, Delaware, Ira and a few other rural townships. Paris Township recorded the only significant Polish density change. The English, Irish, and Scots were more evenly

dispersed throughout the region. Port Huron Township tallied the most significant density changes among all foreign-born groups except the Germans and Poles.

Males outnumbered females in the Thumb region. Male ratios were higher in the total, German, Irish, and English populations than among the Canadians. Distance probably accounts for this disparity since St. Clair County reported the lowest Canadian male ratios. In fact, Canadian females outnumbered males in the city of Port Huron. English, Irish, and German males were less likely to be accompanied by females in sparsely populated areas.

The population of the Thumb demonstrated a definite aging trend during this period. Aging was most dramatic among the Germans, Irish, and English who exhibited a disproportionate proportion of their population as adult males. Although the Canadian population also grew older, they contributed most to the younger age cohorts. Canadians and Germans tended to settle as family units. The Canadians displayed age-sex characteristics of both the foreign and native-born populations.

Occupation serves as a measure of a group's economic significance. Employment opportunities were restricted in the rural areas and greatest in the city of Port Huron. Canadians exceeded the foreign-born mean employed in the secondary industries, primarily in the manufacture of durable goods. The saw mills of Port Huron employed more Canadians than any other foreign-born group. Carpenter was the leading single occupation reported by Canadians in Port Huron, and Canadians exceeded the foreign-born mean employed in construction industries. Canadians were well below the foreign-born mean employed in retail, professional, and non-professional services. The Germans and English prevailed in the retail services while the Irish predominated in non-professional services

and English in professional services. Employment opportunity probably accounted for some of the appeal the city of Port Huron exhibited for young Canadian females. Due to the youthful nature of the Canadian population and the disproportionate number of young Canadian females in Port Huron, other foreign-born groups counted greater proportions of the employed foreign-born than of the total or foreign-born populations.

The Republican party dominated the political scene of both Michigan and the Thumb region. Where Canadians and natives made up the greatest proportion of the population, it appears that voters were most likely to elect Republican candidates. Only four townships reported majorities for Democrat candidates in the elections of 1868, 1870, and 1880. Germans and Irish accounted for significant proportions of their populations. Due to the greater aging tendency among the Germans and Irish, these groups tallied disproportionate ratios of the potential voters.

The significance of the foreign-born can also be measured by their participation in local government. It appears that Canadians did participate as county officials, especially in Sanilac County. In most cases, other foreign-born groups were less likely to be county officials. Foreign-born participation was greater at the township level with more even representation among groups. The Scots exhibited an unusually high rate of participation at both levels.

# CHAPTER VI

## CONCLUSIONS

Since initial occupance was established, foreign-born persons have accounted for significant proportions of the population of both Michigan and the Thumb region. While much has been written about the Dutch, Germans, Finns, et. al.; very little has been written about Canadians. Canadians comprised the most numerous foreign-born group. No foreign nation has contributed as many of her sons and daughters to the development of the Thumb region, or Michigan, as has Canada.

More than one of every four persons residing in the Thumb between 1860 and 1880 was born in Canada. Over one-third of the residents of Sanilac County were Canadians. Canadians numbered from 55 to 65 per cent of all foreigners between 1850 and 1880. The Thumb region clearly represented a significant area of Canadian settlement.

Canadians were most numerous in St. Clair County but accounted for the greatest proportions of the total and foreign-born population in Sanilac County. Port Huron Township, which included the city of Port Huron, recorded the densest Canadian populations. In areas where population densities were low, Canadians accounted for unusually large proportions of the population. In many cases, Canadians outnumbered natives. Thus, Canadians demonstrated a willingness to settle in both highly and sparsely populated areas.

Port Huron Township reported the greatest densities for all foreign-born groups, excepting the Polish. The Germans and Poles, however, ex-

hibited a tendency to settle in rural clusters. The Irish, English, and Scots maintained a more dispersed distribution.

The age-sex composition of the Canadian population displayed characteristics of both the native and foreign-born. While males outnumbered females, the Canadian population exhibited less of an aging trend than the other foreign-born. Among all foreigners, only the Canadians contributed appreciably to the youngest age cohorts. Canadians, and Germans to a lesser degree, tended to settle as families.

While most of the Thumb region's Canadians were farmers, many found employment in the city of Port Huron. Compared to all other employed foreigners, Canadians were predominately employed in the secondary industries. Carpenter and saw mill worker were the leading occupations reported. Canadians were less likely to be employed in the retail, professional, and non-professional services.

Politically, little difference could be discerned between Canadian voting behavior and that of the native population. Townships which included large Canadian populations usually reported majorities for Republican candidates. Some townships which included significant German, Irish, and Polish populations favored the Democratic party. Canadians participated in local government as county officials and township supervisors.

## Foreigners in 1880 and 1945

The origin and spatial distribution of the foreign-born population has been established for the Thumb region. Figure 26 (Chapter IV) portrays the distribution of the densest concentration of foreign-born settlers by county of origin for each organized township in 1880. Katzman claims that the geographical distribution of immigrants in 1960 is remark-

ably similar to their distribution in 1880.[1] The most recent study concerning the distribution of foreigners, which can be interpreted at the township level for the Thumb region, was completed in 1945.[2] Thaden's study includes a map, "The Farm People of Michigan According to Ethnic Stock: 1945," which can be compared to the foreign-born map of 1880.

Canadians predominated in Huron County in both 1880 and 1945. Both maps illustrate German concentrations in approximately the same areas. However, the Germans increased their areal extent by 1945. Although three outlier areas of Polish concentration were prevalent in 1945, Paris Township maintained its Polish identity. Several small areas were considered under Irish, Scot, and French influence in 1945. Excepting the French, each were recognized in 1880 but neither the Scots nor Irish accounted for the highest density in any township.

Sanilac County exhibited a definite Canadian predominance in both 1880 and 1945. The Polish concentration in Paris Township expanded into the northernmost tier of Sanilac County townships and accounted for the greatest disparity between the two maps. The German influence in Delaware Township was absent in 1945.

The most striking difference between the patterns of 1880 and 1945 was apparent in St. Clair County. While Canadians accounted for the densest foreign-born concentrations in 1880, Thaden concluded that most of the county was not dominated by any single group. Instead, a number of groups demonstrated a dominance over relatively small areas. None

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[1] Martin T. Katzman, "Ethnic Geography and Regional Economies, 1880-1960," Economic Geography, XLV (1969), p. 45.

[2] F. J. Thaden, "Ethnic Settlements in Rural Michigan," Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station Quarterly Bulletin, XXIX (1946), pp. 102-111.

exerted its influence over an entire township. Only in portions of such townships as Ira, Casco, China, and Mussey did the German influence remain. While the Scots, Poles, Belgians, and Hungarians were of marginal significance in 1880, they did demonstrate some dominance over small areas in 1945. The Irish concentration in Emmett Township was absent in 1945.

Canadians were the dominant foreign influence in the populations of both 1880 and 1945. Canadian predominance was reduced in areal extent whereas German and Polish settlements expanded. It would appear that Canadians were prone to lose their identity while Germans and Poles maintained and enlarged their territorial extent. Similarities do exist between the foreign-born pattern of 1880 and the ethnic settlement pattern of 1945.

## Population Origins, the Manuscript Census, and Further Research

Historical and cultural geographers have long attempted to determine population origins of particular regions. A region's cultural landscape can be more effectively analyzed through an understanding of its population. Spatial manifestations of economic, social, and political differences are often determined by population characteristics.

The manuscript census offers a significant research opportunity for those concerned with population origins during the mid-nineteenth century. Not only the manuscript population censuses but the manuscript agricultural censuses, as well, provide a tremendous source of data. While published census data are usually organized at the county level, the manuscript censuses provide data which can be analyzed at the township level and, in the case of the agricultural censuses, even by individual farm units.

Recently, some efforts have been undertaken to exploit this source

of data.[3] Terry G. Jordan, a former student of Andrew Clark's at the University of Wisconsin, has probably utilized the manuscript census records most extensively. His efforts have made a considerable contribution to the understanding of population and cattle ranching origins in mid-nineteenth century Texas.

Jordan remarks, and to this the author can certainly attest, that counting the manuscript census schedules is a tedious job.[4] The simple tallying of data for this dissertation demanded five months of microfilm reading. Summarizing and analyzing the tallied data can then begin. The spatial and temporal extent of the study determines the research effort. However, this painstaking research effort provides the basic groundwork for future research concerning the cultural, political, and economic geography of a region.

Several research possibilities exist in the Thumb region which could utilize the population origin data. The relationship between various foreign-born groups and the production of a certain crop, crops, or livestock merits investigation. The research could be conducted through the analysis of both the manuscript population and agricultural censuses. Research could be limited to one or several townships. For example, was there a preference among the Polish in Paris Township to produce certain crops or livestock? Assuming there was a preference; can it be compared

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[3]Michael P. Conzen, "Spatial Data from Nineteenth Century Manuscript Censuses: A Technique for Rural Settlement and Land Use Analysis," Professional Geographer, XXI (1969), 337-343; Terry G. Jordan, "The Imprint of the Upper and Lower South on Mid-Nineteenth-Century Texas," Annals, Association of American Geographers, LVII (1967), 667-690; The Origin of Anglo-American Cattle Ranching in Texas: A Documentation of Diffusion from the Lower South," Economic Geography, XLV (1969), 63-87; and "Population Origins in Texas, 1850," Geographical Review, LIX (1969), 83-103.

[4]Jordan, "Population Origins in Texas, 1850," p. 103.

with the Germans in Casco Township, Irish in Emmett Township, or the Canadians in Speaker Township?

Once the dominance of a particular foreign-born group has been established, its influence on the cultural landscape could be investigated. Research would probably be most successful at the township level. Clustered or dispersed settlement patterns and the question of group assimilation could be examined. The relationship between a group's predominance and place names would be a worthy study. Finally, the relationship between various groups and the presence of relict landscape features, such as house types, warrants study.

It is hoped that this study illustrates the true value of the manuscript population census in determining population origins, particularly in areas which were settled between 1850 and 1880, and that this effort will inspire further research into the question of population origins in other sections of Michigan and in other states.

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13. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for St. Clair County, 1850.

14. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for St. Clair County, 1850.

15. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census of 1860 for St. Clair, Sanilac, and Huron counties.

16. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for St. Clair County, 1860.

17. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for Sanilac County, 1860.

18. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for St. Clair County, 1860.

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19. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census for Sanilac County, 1860.

20. Based on data gleaned from the microfilmed manuscript population census of 1870 for St. Clair, Sanilac, and Huron counties.

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