

HOW TO MAKE A REVOLUTION : THE PARIS DISTRICTS IN 1789

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ALTHOUGH the history of the sixty Districts into which Paris was divided in 1789 has received some attention from historians,¹ the specific rôle of the Districts in organizing and carrying through the revolution of 1789 has never been effectively explored. Instead, attention has generally been focused on other centres of revolutionary activity. Attacking the question of the alleged bourgeois character of the 1789 revolution, for example, Professor Cobban took his data from the Etats-Généraux, meeting at Versailles.² In his examination of the mechanics of revolt in Paris itself Professor Rudé stresses the importance of the Palais-Royal agitators, and of the Paris Electoral Assembly, in organizing the crowd on 14 July.³ Such studies need to be complemented by an analysis of the social composition of the active rank-and-file revolutionaries of the Districts, and of their successful efforts to provide the Versailles assembly with a secure power-base in Paris by arming and directing the people.

The sources for such an assessment are familiar enough to historians. Most accounts of 1789 make use of the standard autobiographies, such as those of Bailly, Dusaulx, Dumont, the materials in the Archives Nationales and other Paris repositories, and Chassin's collection of documents. The present study also relies additionally on a re-examination of the extensive pamphlet

¹ See, in particular, Ch. L. Chassin, *Les élections et les cahiers de Paris en 1789* (Paris, 1888-9), 4 vols. ; G. Garrigues, *Les districts parisiens pendant la Révolution française* (Paris, 1935) ; L. Foubert, "L'idée autonomiste dans les districts de Paris en 1789 et en 1790", *La Révolution française*, xxviii (1895), 141-60 ; H. E. Bourne, "Improvising a government for Paris in July, 1789", *American Historical Review*, x (1905), 280-308, and H. E. Bourne, "Municipal politics in Paris in 1789", *American Historical Review*, xi (1906), 263-85.

² A. Cobban, "The myth of the French Revolution", in *Aspects of the French Revolution* (London, 1968), pp. 90-111.

³ G. F. E. Rudé, *The crowd in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 48-60, and *Revolutionary Europe 1783-1815* (London, 1964), pp. 93-98.

literature on 1789 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the British Library and other libraries.¹

There are many possible starting points for a study of the revolt of the Third Estate in 1789: the first session of the *Etats-Généraux* on 5 May; the Tennis Court Oath of 20 June; the assault on the Bastille itself on 14 July. The first general, deliberate and sustained act of insubordination by the Paris Third Estate took place earlier than any of these episodes, when assemblies of the sixty Districts were convened on 21 April, to choose members of the Electoral Assembly of Paris, and, indirectly, the twenty Paris Deputies.

In the first place, almost unanimously the District assemblies insisted on taking control of their own procedures by rejecting the presidents and bureaux imposed upon them by the Royal Government. In the second place they challenged an invidious distinction drawn by the Government between Paris and the rest of France, and insisted on drafting their political demands in the form of *Cahiers de Doléances*, for consideration and endorsement by the Paris Electoral Assembly.

The division of Paris into sixty electoral Districts (plus an additional constituency for the University) was an artificial division for which there was no historical precedent. Since July 1788 the officers of the Paris Municipality had been busy ransacking the archives of previous assemblies—1560, 1614, 1649-50—in search of a form of election which would allow the expression of an organic voice of the “bourgeois of Paris”: a unified general assembly of the three estates, clergy, nobility and commons.² The possibility of assemblies based on the ancient division of the capital into sixteen *Quartiers*³ had also been canvassed, while others argued for a mode that would allow a rôle for the Parishes, the six *Corps de Marchands* and the forty-eight *Communautés Industrielles*.⁴

¹ Items from these collections will be identified below, using the abbreviations: British Library = BL, Bibliothèque Nationale = BN.

² Chassin, *Elections*, i, pp. xxviii-iv, 1-15; Bourne, “Improvising a government”, pp. 283-4.

³ Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 98, 120.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 158-9; *Manière dont des parisiens doivent s’y prendre pour s’assembler et faire connaître leur vœu*, 22 pp. [BL FR 33 (36)].

The attempt to exploit the crisis of the old régime to reassert municipal independence was resisted by the chief royal official in Paris, the Prévôt de la Ville, and the officers of the Châtelet, the royal court over which he presided. In the event the Châtelet won, the chief municipal officer, the Prévôt des Marchands, was replaced by a complaisant royal nominee, and the electoral arrangements published in March and April 1789 were so framed as to keep the political voice of Paris as disunited and ineffectual as possible. Not only were the three estates to deliberate and elect separately, but the sixty primary assemblies of the Third Estate reflected no continuing corporate reality of Quarter, Parish or Gild that might provide a rallying point for political combination. The lengthy controversy over electoral forms, it was moreover held, had left it too late to ask the Districts to draft Cahiers de Doléances. Instead, a single day, 21 April, was set aside for the elections, and the procedures were cut and dried. The president, who, with his assistants, would be appointed by the Municipality, would simply check the register of voters, call for the election of one second degree elector for every hundred electors present, and close the meeting.¹ In the event, not only did the Paris Districts overthrow these arrangements in April, but they reconvened to form organizing centres for the uprising of 14 July, and they survived until July 1790 as centres of revolutionary political power and agitation.

Of all these developments the most remarkable is the initial collective action of the electors of the Third Estate in April. On the morning of 21 April men who had never been accustomed to act together politically met for the first time to transact business for which there were no precedents. Within a few hours, from one corner of Paris to another, these *ad hoc* assemblies, varying in size from two dozen to almost five hundred members, had each improvised modes of procedure for elections, committee business, the conduct and reception of deputations, and the drafting and publication of their proceedings, and had established a network of communications with one another and with allies among the Nobles and the Clergy. The sense of

¹ Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 399-404.

innovation and excitement is conveyed in the records left by contemporaries.

Jean-Sylvain Bailly, famous astronomer and member of three academies, "felt himself breathing a new atmosphere" when he entered the doors of the Bernardine Church near the Manège, in which the elections for the Feuillants District were held.¹ "The finest day in our lives . . . we used to be subjects . . . today we are citizens, we are brothers." Thus Millin de Grandmaison, naturalist and antiquary, before the electors of the Saint-Roch District.² "Citizens! here you are gathered together after being deprived of the right of assembly for two centuries." Brissot apostrophized the electoral assembly of the Filles Saint Thomas: "Here you have once again become citizens, after having been slaves for two centuries."³ The Assembly of Saint Nicolas des Champs decided that its very first business should be to draft a Cahier "so that every citizen who makes up the assembly can make his first act of liberty, in rendering public his ideas and his views, and by so doing really contribute to the regeneration of the State".⁴

The process by which the District assemblies took control of their own destinies may be illustrated by a summary of the proceedings of the Petit Saint-Antoine District, in the Place Royal Quarter of the east-centre of Paris.⁵

The District convened at 9.30 a.m. in the Church of the Petit Saint-Antoine, in the Rue Saint Antoine, and Boyer de Saint-Leu, a retired Echevin of Paris, the president appointed by the Prévôt des Marchands, had the secretary read out the formal instructions for the elections. The next step was to call the roll of the two hundred or so voters present, after which Boyer proposed to

¹ *Mémoires de Bailly, avec une notice sur sa vie, des notes et des éclaircissements historiques par Mm. Berville et Barriere*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1821-2), i. 9.

² Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 397-8.

³ *Discours prononcé par M. Brissot de Warville à l'élection du district de la rue des Filles Saint Thomas, le 21 Avril 1789*, 15 pp. [BN 8° Le²³ 128A].

⁴ *Cahier de l'assemblée partielle du Tiers Etat de la ville de Paris séante en l'Eglise de S. Nicolas des Champs, Quartier Saint Denys, Premier District*, 20 pp. [BL FR 33 (12)], p. 8.

⁵ *Procès-verbal du Tiers Etat composant le premier District du Quartier de la Place Royale, convoqué en l'Eglise du Petit Saint-Antoine, le mardi 21 Avril 1789*, 42 pp. [Australian National Library, A.N. 11 794; with manuscript corrections].

move straight to the choice of the District's second degree electors.

At this point Boyer's presidency was challenged, as not being the free choice of the meeting, together with the credentials of the secretary and the four assistants he had brought with him. Whereupon the meeting unanimously decided that Boyer's "mission" had been entirely completed by the transaction of the introductory formalities, and despite his objections, elected a new president, a distinguished legal official, Jérôme-Louis Trudon, *avocat en Parlement et notaire vétérane au Châtelet de Paris*, and a new secretary, the *avocat* Jean-François Dufour, and eight scrutineers. All the newly elected committee promptly swore an oath to fulfil the duties confided in them by the assembly.

It was then pointed out that Boyer had "not entirely withdrawn" and his status as a noble preventing him from remaining a member of the assembly, he was asked to remove himself, which he did, grumbling and threatening. As soon as the official party had left the members decided, once more unanimously, to place the drafting of a Cahier first on the agenda instead of the elections. To accomplish this task they set up ten bureaux, each of twenty-one members, each bureau to elect two delegates to join a drafting commission, the final Cahier to be ratified by the full assembly. While the commission was meeting the District welcomed six deputations from the assemblies of the Paris Nobility and sixteen from other Districts, each expressing solidarity and seeking information. It despatched several deputations in return, protested formally against the regulations that separated the three estates for electoral purposes and excluded from the Third those paying less than six livres of *capitation*, and decided to send seven second degree electors to the Electoral Assembly instead of the two prescribed by the regulations.

Together with the conduct of the elections these operations were to demand more than twenty-seven hours of unbroken activity by the officers and delegates, finishing with the execution of the Procès-verbal about noon on 22 April.

Events followed a similar pattern in other Districts. In the Barnabites District, on the Ile de la Cité, the members first

displaced the official president and then elected an avocat in his place, along with four notables as scrutineers : another avocat, a négociant, and two marchands orfèvres. They then recorded a formal protest against the electoral regulations of 28 March and 13 April, and explained why these had been set aside : “ Since the regulations are not at all obligatory and cannot be considered except as simple instructions, since the right of explaining its demands, its complaints, and of giving a mandate to its Representatives is inherent in every assembly of French citizens called together by the King to send a deputation to the Etats-Généraux.”¹ In the Minimes District, also in the Place-Royale Quarter, the official president, Cheret, a Municipal Councillor, opened the proceedings and was immediately challenged by the *bourgeois* Soulès, already noted for his activity in forming a political club during the winter of 1788-9, who “ moved that the presidency is vacant ”. Soulès was seconded by Bruyard, *Inspecteur du Commerce*, who read out “ a little pamphlet of three or four pages ”. Cheret declared himself unable to accept the motion, but allowed the assembly to choose its own assessors and scrutineers. The assembly protested unanimously and then proceeded to compromise, electing Cheret (the official nominee) president by 142 votes to 9, and choosing a committee to draft a Cahier. When this committee reported back it was the middle of the night, but the twenty-eight clauses were each put to the vote one by one, Cheret’s opposition to three items being noted. The business finished at 3 a.m., and only then was the assembly able to proceed to the choice of second degree electors, which took another two hours, before the members dispersed, at 5 a.m. on 22 April.²

The conquest of liberty was not always so smoothly accomplished. The official president of the District of Saint-Louis de la Culture refused to accept the members’ demand that he withdraw, and the assembly split, the insurgent party electing a notary as president and both sections proceeding to

¹ *Procès-verbal de l’assemblée partielle du Tiers Etat de la Ville de Paris, séante dans d’Eglise des Barnabites, Quartier de la Cité, tenue le 21 avril 1789* [sic], 30 pp. [BN 8° Le²³ 126].

² *Relation de ce qui s’est passé a l’assemblée du troisième Ordre, de l’arrondissement de la Place Royale, district des Minimes, le 21 Avril 1789*, 7 pp. [BL F 27 (1)].

hold rival elections.¹ Elsewhere the electoral operations were bedevilled by party conflict, as in the Filles Saint Thomas where Brissot and Clavière were at grips with another group, led by Carra. "For a long time", a member recalled, "there were not two hundred individuals present. The difficulty of getting started was extreme: the noise was frightful. Everyone was standing up, everyone was talking at once, the greatest efforts of the president could not win two minutes of quiet."² Joseph Charon went along to the Bonne Nouvelle District assembly equipped with his own model Cahier ready for adoption. "Almost nobody had prepared anything" he noted, when the time came for choosing the second degree electors, "except for seven or eight persons" and the whole thing was rushed through. When Charon finally got the ear of the assembly, in the evening, he was scandalized to see many of his hearers drifting to the refreshment bar "where, since the morning, some honourable members had taken the precaution of putting on ballast". A deputation from the Nobility was first kept waiting unannounced at the door, and then acclaimed, with "somewhat boisterous proceedings". Nevertheless even Bonne Nouvelle got through its elections by 10 p.m., and was able to begin work on a Cahier.³

The businesslike manner in which most of the District assemblies eventually managed to carry out their operations suggests that their members may not always have been either such strangers to one another or such political innocents as is sometimes supposed. Indeed Bailly says as much explicitly in his memoirs. Some, at least of the members of the Feuillants' assembly were old friends and colleagues on learned academies and other bodies.⁴ The business of the Courts and of the Bar doubtless made many of the lawyers acquaintances. Moreover many of the well-to-do in the District assemblies must inevitably have collaborated in the business of the *Fabriques*, the assemblies

¹ Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 306.

² E. Dumont, *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau et sur les deux premières Assemblées Législatives*. Ouvrage posthume, publié par M. J. L. Duval (Paris, 1832), pp. 39-40; J. P. Brissot de Warville, *Observations sur la nécessité d'établir dans les différents Districts et dans l'Assemblée générale des Electeurs de Paris des comités de correspondance avec les députés de Paris . . .*, 22 pp. [BN 8° Lb³⁹ 1671], pp. 13-15.

³ Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 298-9.

⁴ *Mémoires de Bailly*, i. 12-13.

of the fifty-three ecclesiastical parishes into which Paris was divided. Many of the Districts were roughly contiguous with the parishes, at least in part.

According to the Abbé de Boyer, author of a contemporary guide to Parish administration, it was customary to enrol as parish *notables* inhabitants assessed at 30 livres of capitation or above, and to choose parish officers (*marguilliers comptables*) from among “ les Procureurs, les Notaires, les Bourgeois et les Marchands ”. In principle, all the inhabitants were entitled to attend the Conseil-général de Paroisse, but “ because of the inconveniences of such a tumultuous assembly ” Parish meetings usually comprised the Curé, the marguilliers, officiers de justice, anciens marguilliers, and notables.¹ Only persons paying more than about 12 livres in direct taxation were normally allowed to take office as marguilliers, or vestrymen.² For those experienced in Parish affairs the transition to the business of the Districts must have been an easy one. In one case, at least, it was also direct. Pierre-Martin Charpentier, master mason and marguillier comptable of the Parish of Notre Dame de Bonne Nouvelle, was chosen second degree elector for the Bonne-Nouvelle District, whose assembly met in the Parish Church.³

The readiness with which the District assemblies, in the majority, followed a common programme, and concerted their action generally, demands a more specific explanation.

The publication of the electoral regulations of 13 April produced a number of public protests, and most notably a pamphlet entitled *Arrêtes concernant le choix des Electeurs de Paris par une assemblée de citoyens*. Apparently circulated on the eve of the elections, this was, very likely, the “ brochure ” quoted by Bruyard in the Minimes assembly. Said to have been drafted by a meeting at the house of Adrien Dupont, it instructed the Districts to begin by electing their own president and officers, and to protest against the illegalities of the original ordinances,

¹ Abbé de Boyer, *Principes sur l'administration temporelle des Paroisses* (Paris, 1786), i. 21-22, 273-7.

² J. Kaplow, *The names of Kings: the Parisian laboring poor in the 18th century* (New York, 1972), pp. 104-12.

³ Archives Nationales ADXVI 68A. *Procès-verbal de l'assemblée de Notre Dame de Bonne Nouvelle*, 13 pp., p. 6.

and provided a model Cahier, in the form of a Declaration of Rights. The names of both Mirabeau and Lafayette have been connected with this guide to action, which certainly seems to have provided a general programme for the revolt of the Districts.¹

During the elections themselves some Districts seem to have taken the lead in "enlightening" others by deputation. The Blancs-Manteaux District, for example, resolved early in its proceedings to delegate thirty members, two by two, each pair to notify four other Districts of its own transactions.² Thus a "hidden hand" was certainly manipulating events. The influence of a conspiracy is not enough, nevertheless, to explain the virtual universality of the Districts' revolt, with only six out of the sixty Districts failing to upset the official regulations.

To an extent, the events of April 1789, as of July, reflected a more profound and generalized political revolution of the Paris middle-class, acting by and through the Districts. The social analysis of the leadership of the Parisian revolution of 1789 was begun by Chassin in 1889, with his breakdown of the profession of the 407 members of the Paris Electoral Assembly chosen by the Districts in April, many of whom were to play an important rôle in the events of 14 July. Chassin's conclusions were that about 42 per cent were lawyers, 34 per cent were drawn from the world of commerce and industry, and 15 per cent from the liberal professions, with the only other important group being royal and municipal officials.³

At first sight, even allowing for the fact that these are figures for the greatest financial, commercial and industrial centre in France, this analysis differs strikingly from that offered by Cobban in his study of the social composition of the Constituent Assembly: 25 per cent lawyers, 13 per cent bankers, merchants

¹ *Arrêtes concernant le choix des Electeurs de Paris qui doit être fait le mardi 21 Avril 1789, pris dans une assemblée de citoyens de Paris le 19 du même mois*, 4 pp. [BL FR 33 (8)].

Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 470; Bourne, "Improvising a government", p. 285.

² *Cahier d'instructions données par l'assemblée partielle du Tiers Etat de la Ville de Paris, tenue en l'Eglise des Blancs-Manteaux, le Mardi, 21 Avril 1789 et le lendemain, Mercredi, sans desemparer*, 36 pp. [BL FR 37 (3)], p. 30.

³ Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 331. The percentages are mine.

and manufacturers, 5 per cent other professional men, and 43 per cent office-holders.¹ Apparently the "Bourgeois" revolution meant something different in Paris than in the rest of France. However, in order to sustain his thesis that the politically active middle-class in 1789 was very substantially made up of office-holders, Cobban listed procureurs, and all officials of the Courts, not as lawyers, but as office-holders. Crudely adjusting Chassin's figures in the same way produces more comparable results: the proportion of lawyers in the Electoral Assembly is reduced to 34 per cent, and that of office-holders doubled, to 16 per cent. But even the inclusion of the *censeurs royaux*, and of other men of lettres who happened to hold royal offices would not turn the Paris revolution of 1789 into a revolution of office-holders.

Broad generalizations about the social composition of the base of that revolution, the Parisian electorate, are not difficult to arrive at. The franchise for the Third Estate was specifically limited to males over 25, holding a royal office, a degree or similar qualification, *lettres de maîtrise* in a guild, or those paying more than 6 livres capitation (or poll-tax) per year.² The capitation rolls for Paris have not survived, but Kaplow has shown that in neighbouring Saint-Denis the 6 livres qualification would have excluded the great majority of artisans as well as unskilled labourers and petty traders.³ Historians differ on how many of Paris's six to seven hundred thousand inhabitants were enfranchised. Professor Godechot places the number as high as 150,000,⁴ but most agree with Chassin's estimate of 40-50,000, which is also the sort of figure given by contemporaries.⁵

The number of "active citizens" in 1790 was only just over 80,000,⁶ when the qualification was an annual tax payment of 3 livres, and it is unlikely that the number of qualified electors in 1789 could have been greater than this. The constituency for

¹ Cobban, *op. cit.* p. 111.

² Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 402.

³ Kaplow, *op. cit.* p. 159.

⁴ Godechot, *La prise de la Bastille* (Paris, 1965), p. 173.

⁵ Chassin, *op. cit.* i. 120, 158; cf. Bourne, "Improvising a government", p. 285; Garrigues, *op. cit.* p. 7.

⁶ E. Mellié, *Les sections de Paris pendant la Révolution française* (Paris, 1898), pp. 23-41.

the Third Estate in Paris was thus the wealthiest third of the adult male population. In point of fact fewer than a quarter of those qualified, or just under 12,000, actually took part in the elections.¹ The Saint-Roch District assembly, in Paris's wealthy West End, chose twenty second-degree electors, as if for 2,000 primary electors, although only 451 attended. As the assembly explained: "Although one may count on the progress of public spirit, it is certain that the poor, who have no working days to spare, the sick, the heedless, citizens who are too busy, men who are too rich, etc. will never go to such assemblies of the locality, where there will always be a little confusion and noise."² In the Filles-Dieu District, in the Faubourg Saint Denis, there were said to be 700 qualified voters, but only 99 attended.³

By examining the surviving records of the elections it is possible to be more precise about the social composition of the Paris primary electors. For three Districts we have a detailed list of the names and conditions of those who attended the electoral meetings: Saint-Honoré,⁴ Petit Saint-Antoine,⁵ and the Blancs-Manteaux.⁶ To this total of 666 electors may be added the names of 41 out of about 210 electors in the Cité District, whose professions are also indicated.⁷

Generalizations drawn from these data must inevitably be rough and inexact. The pitfalls awaiting the social analyst who tries to use eighteenth-century French descriptions as the basis of statistical calculations are well known. Among those identified as *marchands* we may expect to find the wealthiest wholesalers and small shopkeepers; among the *maîtres* or artisans, vocations as diverse as shoemaker, restaurant keeper

¹ Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 319.

² Archives Nationales AD XVI 68A. *Des électeurs du district de Saint-Roch à Mm. les électeurs des autres districts*, 3 pp.

³ Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 293-4.

⁴ *Extrait du procès-verbal de l'assemblée partielle du Tiers Etat de la Ville de Paris, District Saint-Honoré* (1789), 24 pp. [BN 8° Le²³ 248].

⁵ *Procès-verbal du Tiers-Etat . . . convoqué en l'Eglise du petit Saint-Antoine, le . . . 21 Avril 1789* (see above p. 429, n. 5).

⁶ *Cahier d'instructions . . . des Blancs-Manteaux* (see above p. 434, n. 2).

⁷ *Extract du procès-verbal de l'assemblée du Tiers Etat du District de la Cité . . . dans l'Eglise de Notre Dame de Paris, du Mardi 21 Avril 1789, neuf heures du matin jusqu'au Mercredi 22 à six heures et un quart du matin . . .*

and goldsmith. Because a man gives his condition as *Avocat au Parlement* it does not necessarily mean that he makes a living from the Bar rather than from investments, or even that he practises law at all. And then there are the problems of demarcation. Is M. Guillotin of the Saint-Honoré District, *docteur régent et ancien professeur de la faculté de médecine*, to be listed as a doctor or as a professor? Is J.-B. Target, of the Blancs-Manteaux, *Avocat au Parlement, l'un des Quarante de l'Académie française*, a lawyer or a man of letters? How, without other information, would we classify Caron de Beaumarchais, who uniquely insisted on being recorded in the transactions of the Saint-Honoré District as *Citoyen de France*? And in what category, to descend from these lofty regions, are we to place Jean Chevalier, "old-clothes merchant and dancing-master" of the Blancs Manteaux?

Again, our data is drawn exclusively from three relatively wealthy Districts on the Right Bank, and we cannot be certain that it is significant for Paris as a whole.

Yet, provided too much is not expected of them, social analyses based on such material may be of some positive use in assessing the nature of the politically active middle class in Paris in 1789. The results are summarized in the tables on pp. 438-9.

What is immediately apparent is that once again, at this level, the notion of a "revolution of office-holders" is difficult to sustain. The indications are that fewer than one in four of the Paris primary electors was an office-holder. Almost a half, by contrast, were active in the world of commerce and industry. The incomplete data from the Cité District shows a very close correlation. Only by assuming that all the legal profession *would have liked to have become* office holders (a not unreasonable assumption) does the case become arguable. In the three Districts for which complete lists survive, taken together, more than a third of the primary electors were either office-holders or lawyers, and in the Blancs-Manteaux these two groups made up virtually half the assembly.

Another implication of the evidence is that a "refining" process operating in Paris politics in 1789 tended to sift out other professions and leave in lawyers. In the three Districts

analysed lawyers made up 29 per cent of the primary electors. In the Paris Electoral Assembly they held 42 per cent of the places. Of the forty Paris Deputies and *Suppléants* elected to the *Etats-Généraux*, 50 per cent were lawyers, and eleven, fewer than a third, came from commerce and industry.¹ This process of “sifting” probably began earlier, at the point of the initial decision whether or not to spare the time to attend the electoral assemblies, or to leave them to the professional men of affairs. An anonymous contemporary pamphlet explained how the elections had been “worked”: “Given the Third Estate, composed in the greater part of merchants, artisans, retailers,

TABLE I

The Occupations of Primary Electors in Three Paris Districts
in April, 1789

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Saint-Honoré</i>	<i>Petit Saint-Antoine</i>	<i>Blancs- Manteaux</i>	<i>Total</i>
Négociants	1	5	5	11
Marchands	75	53	27	155
Manufacturers and artisans	62	40	32	134
Bankers and agents de change	3		2	5
Fiscal and other office holders, royal and municipal	18	10	12	40
Officers of the Court and the Princes	12	1	1	14
Procureurs	11	22	33	66
Other legal officials	6	13	16	35
Avocats	15	32	35	82
Notaires	4	1	1	6
Other lawyers	1	4	2	7
Professors and teachers	1	3	3	7
Literary men and scientists			4	4
Doctors	5		5	10
Surgeons, pharmacists and dentists	8	1	7	16
Architects	2	5	4	11
Other liberal professions	3	1	1	5
Bourgeois	15	14	9	38
Others	2	2	5	9
Unidentified	7	1	1	9
Total	251	208	205	664

¹ Chassin, *Elections*, op. cit. ii. 331-2.

TABLE 2

Summary of the Occupations of Primary Electors in Three Paris Districts in April 1789

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Numbers</i>	<i>As percentage</i>
Commerce and manufacture	305	46
Office-holders	54	8
Legal office-holders	101	15
Other lawyers	95	14
Liberal professions	53	8
Bourgeois	38	6
Others	18	3
Total	664	100

TABLE 3

Summary of the Occupations of Forty-one Primary Electors in the Cité District in April 1789

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Numbers</i>	<i>As percentage</i>
Commerce and manufacture	21	52
Office-holders	2	5
Legal office-holders	6	15
Other lawyers	7	16
Liberal professions	4	10
Bourgeois	1	2
Total	41	100

etc., timid, peaceful citizens, accustomed to subordination, revering any man decorated with a black or red robe, or even parti-coloured, raised in the fear of *Commissaires*, and respect for *Présidents*. . . . Thus you will have 300 Electors of your choice, who will name twenty deputies from amongst your friends, or yourselves, if you prefer.”¹

There is no need to assume a conscious lawyers’ conspiracy, however. On the one hand District assemblies naturally (although not exclusively) turned to lawyers as the men to represent them in public business. On the other the elections were certainly seen by some ambitious lawyers as opening a gateway to public office, in the nature of things shunned by most men active in business. There is evidence that where the

¹ *Methode arithmétique ou moyen ingénieux de réunir toutes les voix* (1789), 4 pp. [BL FR 33 (27)].

interests of trade and industry were directly concerned, in the drafting of the Cahiers, the merchants and artisans made sure that they were suitably represented. Thus in the Mathurins District, on the Left Bank, “à la requisition de Mm. les commerçants présent” the committee responsible for the cahier was strengthened so that it comprised two printers, a hatter, a silk merchant and a paper merchant, and a retired merchant, but only two avocats.¹

The District of Saint Nicolas des Champs elected a commission of seven traders: four grocers (marchands épiciers), two silk merchants and one other large-scale merchant; and three lawyers: two procureurs and an avocat.² In the Abbaye District the analogous commission included a grocer, two drapers, a wool merchant and two clockmakers out of a total of sixteen, but only four lawyers.³ By contrast the Petit Saint-Antoine commission had sixteen lawyers out of a total of twenty.⁴

The “moins de six livres”, the mass of Paris artisans and labourers, it has been noted, were excluded from participation in the elections. At least four Districts, the Petit Saint-Antoine,⁵ the Petits-Augustins,⁶ Saint Martin des Champs⁷ and the Mathurins formally protested against this exclusion, and five more “warmly received” the Mathurins protest.⁸ The members of the Saint-Joseph District also formally undertook to “represent” their absent co-citizens.⁹ Such deliberations helped to preserve the appearance, and something of the reality of a general political and social solidarity among the Paris Third Estate despite the discordant rumblings from the Faubourgs Saint Antoine and Saint Marceau. In no case however, did the

¹ Chassin, op. cit. ii. 343.

² Ibid. p. 378.

³ Ibid. p. 355.

⁴ *Procès-verbal du Tiers Etat . . . convoqué en l'Eglise du petit Saint-Antoine . . .*, p. 25.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 31-32.

⁶ Chassin, op. cit. ii. 303-4.

⁷ *Motion faite par M. Jallier de Savault, architecte, ancien pensionnaire du Roi . . . à l'ouverture de l'Assemblée du Tiers Etat, convoqué à S. Martin des Champs* (Nouvelle édition, 1789) [BL FR 33 (26)].

⁸ *Motion du District des Mathurins du 21 Avril 1789 omise dans le procès-verbal dont elle a été déclarée annexe*, 2 pp. [BN 8° Lb⁴⁰ 1449]. The Districts were: L'Oratoire, Saint Honoré, Saint-Roch, Jacobins Saint Honoré and Feuillants.

⁹ *Procès-verbal, Cahier, Doléance et Grieffs du Quatrième District du Quartier des Halles, assemblé en l'Eglise de S. Joseph*, 18 pp. [BN 8 Le²⁴ 242], p. 11.

Districts follow up their bold abrogation of the other royal regulations for the conduct of the elections by actually throwing open the doors and inviting their poorer fellow citizens to take part. Instead the assembly halls were under military guard, with the right of entry rigorously policed.

Sent off by his District on a deputation, one primary elector was interrogated by an anxious gathering outside the hall: "Are they doing anything for us Monsieur? . . . is anybody thinking about bringing the price of bread down? I haven't eaten for two days . . . It is so dear . . . now we are having to pay 15 sous . . .". The man promised to put the people's case, but on his return found that the District Cahier had already been drafted. His only way of keeping faith was to publish a private pamphlet.¹

According to Montjoie's journal, the *Ami du Roi*, there were a few cases, at the outer edges of the Faubourgs in which the people did get into the electoral meetings. In the Sainte-Margu rite assembly, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the *notables* (presumably the qualified primary electors) sat apart, but there were stormy sessions as the rest of the artisans strove unsuccessfully to have their demands incorporated in the Cahier. The Reveillon riots were partly caused by this and similar bitter confrontations in the neighbouring Enfants-Trouv s District, with popular wrath polarized against two of the largest employers in the Faubourg, the wallpaper manufacturer Reveillon, and the manufacturing chemist Henriot.²

In the Saint-Laurent District, by contrast, on the outer edge of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the porcelain manufacturer Bourdon des Planches was chosen as sole second degree elector without any trouble, and pledged himself to demand a reduction in the price of bread and price-control by elected representatives of the people. This was not the result of a popular breakthrough; Saint-Laurent was one of the Districts in which the official president maintained control, and only seventy-one primary electors took part in the proceedings.³

After the primary elections of 21-22 April the centre of

¹ Chassin, op. cit. ii. 585-6.

² Ibid. p. 305; ibid. iii. 54-55, 120-1.

³ Ibid. ii. 477.

political activity and interest shifted to the Paris Electoral Assembly, at the Archbishop's palace on the Ile de la Cité, where the Electors pressed home still further the city's revolt against the Royal regulations, chose their own officers, began to work on the consolidated cahier of the Paris Third Estate, and to elect the Paris Deputies and Suppléants. These proceedings lasted until 23 May, after which the Electors did not meet together again formally until the end of June and the beginning of the crisis that led to the uprising of 14 July.

With the opening of the Electoral Assembly the District assemblies ceased to have any official *raison d'être*, and it seems probable that most discontinued their activities, not to reform again until 13 July. However, two, and possibly a few more, maintained some kind of continuous corporate existence in the interim. On the morning of 23 April, on Brissot's proposal, the Filles Saint-Thomas District set up a *Commission intermédiaire* comprising Brissot (the president), the five District second degree electors, and seventeen others, to undertake a correspondence with the Paris Deputies. In a pamphlet published during May Brissot urged the other Districts to follow suit "until a Declaration of Rights had been sanctioned".¹ Millin de Grandmaison advised the members of the Saint-Roch District to hold weekly meetings while the Etats-Généraux were in session, and proposed arrangements for circulating correspondence from any Elector from the District who might be elected Deputy. Another member of the Saint-Roch Assembly moved the establishment of a *comité permanent*, which would remain in existence throughout the meeting of the Etats-Généraux.²

The only concrete evidence of such machinery in action comes from the Notre Dame District, in the form of printed minutes of a meeting of "citizen members", held in the study of the Secretary, the avocat Oudet, on 28 June. A further meeting was arranged for 3 July, but it is clear from the text that there had been no previous meetings of the kind during May and June.³

¹ Brissot, *Observations sur la nécessité d'établir des comités de correspondance*. . . .

² Chassin, *op. cit.* ii. 397-8.

³ *Seconde suite de l'assemblée du district ou département de Notre Dame de la Ville de Paris*, 8 pp. [BN 8° Le²³ 143].

The meeting in Oudet's study was plainly part of the general quickening of political activity which was under way as a result of the developing confrontation at Versailles between the King and the Third Estate. On 20 June the Third had made clear, in the Tennis Court Oath episode, their determination to create a constitution for France even in the face of royal resistance. On 25 June the Paris Electoral Assembly began to meet again after a gap of more than a month, first in temporary quarters, and then in the Hôtel de Ville, so that the liberal deputies could be assured of the active and vocal support of Paris. During the first days of July the political security of the capital became the key issue of the Revolution, as the King concentrated troops in the outskirts and in key positions of strength, in preparation for a reassertion of authority against the Third Estate, now transformed into a self-styled National Assembly at Versailles.

Against this background the bolder leaders of the Electoral Assembly began to canvass the need for a citizen's militia, a counter-force which would at the same time maintain order in Paris and provide a moral and physical support for the National Assembly. A revival of the Districts seemed to offer the most effective machinery for raising and organizing such a force.

The first public proposal for a *Garde bourgeoise* seems to have been made by the journalist Nicolas de Bonneville, second degree elector of the Carmes-Deschaussés District, on 25 June, in an address to the reconvened Electoral Assembly; de Bonneville's motion was renewed on the evening of 10 July. The dual function of the proposed force is apparent from de Bonneville's text: "The first of our duties is to protect by our prudence and our arms, the Representatives of the French people . . . the bourgeois guard will prevent internal troubles, the dearth of foodstuffs, and that blind enthusiasm which might lead our ardent youth astray . . . if you fear for your persons, your wives, your children, set up the bourgeois guard."¹

In supporting the motion, Charton, a cloth-manufacturer from the Recollets District, urged the immediate recall of the sixty Districts "in the same place they were convoked on 21 April". The Districts were each to elect a president and

¹ Chassin, *op. cit.* iii. 474-5.

two secretaries, and establish a liaison with the Electoral Assembly, which would take note of their advice in communicating in turn with the Paris Deputies at Versailles. The Districts should remain in activity until the complete withdrawal of all troops except the King's ordinary guard.¹

These and other proposals were referred to a committee of the Electoral Assembly which reported on 11 July, through Agier, its president, but only in favour of much less radical action: a petition to be sent to the National Assembly seeking the authorization of a bourgeois guard for Paris. The petition was entrusted to the Paris deputy, Dr. Guillotin, and the assembly went into recess until the following Monday, 13 July.²

On Sunday the news of the King's dismissal of Necker and the other *patriote* ministers broke. The resulting tumult, as the Parisians, led by the Palais Royal crowds, demonstrated their support for Necker and the National Assembly brought a handful of fifteen or sixteen second degree electors back to the Hôtel de Ville in the evening, where they struggled to cope with a huge crowd demanding arms. The situation made immediate action imperative. Apart from the menace of the royal troops, there were ominous signs of a breakdown of order in Paris: a break-out of the inmates of the La Force prison, riots at the Chatelet prison, threats to the customs barriers, a confrontation between troops and the people in the Tuileries gardens, and open mutiny by the Gardes françaises, who were firing on the King's German cavalry.

The Electors yielded to the tide, and ordered the distribution of arms. Finally, at 11 p.m. they ordered the Districts to convene; de Bonneville was one of the eleven signatories of the order, as was Soulès. In the early morning of 13 July a regular formal session of the Electoral Assembly confirmed these decisions and set up a Permanent Committee to take post at the Hôtel de Ville, while the majority of the members dispersed to the District meeting places to organize a citizen's militia and an improvised authority to control it.³

Not all Districts responded effectively; Professor Godechot notes that while 1200 citizens gathered at the headquarters of

¹ Ibid. p. 483.

² Ibid. p. 485.

³ Ibid. pp. 491-4.

the Petit Saint-Antoine only four turned up at the Minimes District close by.¹ Equally not all effective action was channelled through the Districts. In several cases the Parisians rallied instead to their parishes. On 13 July eighty inhabitants of St. Germain le Vieil on the Ile de la Cité presented themselves at the District meeting of Saint-Séverin, only to find themselves driven off with violent menaces; the inhabitants of Saint-Séverin would only admit fellow parishioners. They returned, therefore to the church of St. Germain, and rang the bell. "Within an instant" 344 of the principal inhabitants gathered, set up a committee and a detachment of the guard, and placed themselves in communication with the Permanent Committee of Electors at the Hôtel de Ville.² The inhabitants of the parishes of Saint-Pierre des Arcis and Saint-Croix close by,³ and those of Saint-Jacques and La Madeleine⁴ followed suit. The Parish of Saint-Jean de Latran united with Saint-Etienne du Mont to offer a force of 250 "citoyens de bon volonté" to the Permanent Committee.⁵ The Notre Dame District required its young men to enrol first at the parish church so that the Curé or the parish officers could check their residential and moral credentials. In several other districts where the Parish and the District more or less coincided the Curés or Vicaires readily offered their services: in Saint-Méry and Saint-Leu for example.⁶ The Vicaire of Saint Germin l'Auxerrois joined a deputation to the Hôtel de Ville garbed "en soutane, monteau et ceinture" but soon found this to be a mistake, as he tried to force his way through the crowded Paris streets.⁷

¹ Godechot, op. cit. p. 245.

² Archives Nationales C 134 Dossier 6. Mémoire pour les habitants de la Paroisse de St. Germain le Vieil en la Cité.

³ *Delibération du District et Paroisse de Saint-Séverin, Saint Germain le Vieil, Saint-Pierre des Arcis et de Saint-Croix en la Cité*, L. Jorry (Paris, 1789) [BL R 229 (36)].

⁴ Archives Nationales C 134 Dossier 1 : Procès-verbal de la paroisse de Saint Jacques et de Les Saints Innocents le 13 Juillet 1789; Procès-verbal de la paroisse de La Madeleine en la Pitié, le 13 Juillet 1789.

⁵ Chassin, op. cit. iii. 503.

⁶ Arch. Nat. C134 Dossier 1.

⁷ Abbé Rudemare, *Journal d'un prêtre parisien, 1788-1792*, avec préface et notes de Ch. d'Héricault (Paris, 1896), pp. 15-16.

Apart from these parochial variations, the Palais Royal raised its own force,¹ and there were other "private armies" organizing. Units were formed by the law clerks of the Palais and the Chatelet, and by the medical students.

The main organizing centres were nevertheless the Districts, and by the evening of 13 July twenty-seven out of the sixty had reported to the Permanent Committee on their progress in organizing the bourgeois guard.² Contemporary records and memoirs throw a few flashes of illumination on this process of revolutionary organization. In the Mathurins District the bookseller Hardy awoke to uproar about 7 a.m. on 13 July. About 10 a.m. a drumroll in the Rue Saint-Jacques heralded a recall of the District assembly, and the tocsin began to ring. Madame Hardy would not let her husband go, but he was told that about 400 citizens had assembled, under the presidency of a second degree Elector, the avocat (and abbé) Bertolio. Meanwhile an adventurous aristocrat, Le Chrétien Quesnay de Beaurepaire, was beginning to get the District force together, enrolling citizens from his own and neighbouring Districts, and even medical students, under the District colours, without prejudice. According to Quesnay, the first lists of potential guard members had been drawn up as early as 7 July. About 5 p.m. Hardy saw the first detachment of the Mathurins guard pass by his window, in column of three, marching to the Hôtel de Ville, to collect arms. At the same time Quesnay placed the District in a posture of defence: old men, women and children were posted at the windows with stones, water bottles, oil bottles, boiling water, cinders, and even furniture, ready to rain down on an invading column.

Quesnay was to be ill-recompensed for his enterprise. As soon as the immediate crisis of 14-15 July was over he was replaced as commander, his plebeian successor observing "qu'il n'était plus foutu pour être commandé par de bougres de nobles".³

The creole adventurer Claude Fournier L'Héritier recalls

¹ Chassin, op. cit. iii. 552.

² Ibid. pp. 500-3.

³ Ibid. pp. 507-9; Le Chr. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, *Rapport adressé à Mm. les honorables membres du comité civil du district des Mathurins le 24 Juillet 1789*, Laporte (Paris, 1789), 32 pp. [BL F60 ** (16)].

that on 13 July he broke into the District assembly at Saint-Eustache with a call to arms, and immediately enrolled the first fifty volunteers, whom he afterwards led in the Bastille fighting.¹ The banker Delessart, of the same District, armed all his household, sons, clerks and servants alike. On the 14th his house was turned into an arms workshop for the citizens of the District. For several days Delessart personally met the cost of feeding one of the Saint-Eustache battalions garrisoned at a neighbour's house.² Jacques Danton, a primary elector of the Cordeliers District, rallied to the Cordeliers church on 13 July with his neighbour, Gély, climbing on a chair to urge the citizens to take up arms against the mob: the "15,000 brigands of Montmartre", and "the 30,000 military who are ready to descend on Paris to loot the city and slaughter its inhabitants". Danton himself enrolled in the Cordeliers battalion, along with Paré, his chief clerk, and Gély, but he was not given command of the 571 men raised.³ Nor did he figure in the earliest transactions of the District that followed. On the morning of 14 July the Cordeliers assembly reconvened to elect permanent officers and to take a firm grip on events. The District Commander, Grammont, was instructed to collect in arms from all the "inhabitants and citizens" (with promise of compensation). The assembly named its members to the provisional Central Committee of the guard at the Hôtel de Ville, and set up a liaison with the committee by runners. Meanwhile the Cordeliers was already foreshadowing its future rôle as leader of the most democratic and independent of the Paris Districts, declaring for daily meetings of the assembly, at which "every citizen without distinction will have the right to participate by his opinion in anything which may be for the general good", and circularizing the other Districts with these decisions.⁴

¹ *Extrait d'un mémoire contenant les services de la compagnie de M. Fournier, l'un des Commandans du District de Saint-Eustache depuis le 13 Juillet 1789, époque de la Révolution*, 7 pp. [BN 8° Lb⁴⁰ 326].

² Godechot, *op. cit.* p. 250.

³ R. Christophe, *Danton, a biography*, trans. from the French by Peter Green (London, 1967), pp. 61-63.

⁴ *Extract du procès-verbal de l'assemblée du district des Cordeliers, du Mardi, 14 Juillet 1789*, 4 pp. [BL F 620 (23)].

In such manner, within a matter of hours, the Paris Districts, in liaison with the Permanent Committee of Electors at the Hôtel de Ville, improvised the basis of a Parisian bourgeois guard of more than forty thousand armed men, and established a network of effective revolutionary committees capable of resolute action: it was Thuriot, on behalf of the District of Saint-Louis de la Culture, who led the first delegation to summon De Launay to surrender the Bastille,¹ and the armed detachments of the Districts that finally forced its surrender, setting the seal on the *journée* of 14 July.

The survival of a transcript of the records of the Petit Saint-Antoine District for 13 and 14 July, incorporating the signatures of nearly 1,200 inhabitants who attended the District assembly and volunteered for guard service, make it possible to say something further about the social forces behind the revolution of 14 July.²

The meeting on the morning of 13 July was convened by the second degree Elector Dufour, who had been secretary of the District electoral assembly in April, the president designate, Trudon, excusing himself on the grounds of ill-health and advancing years. A comparison with the list of voters attached to the Procès-verbal of the electoral meeting for the District shows that only eighty-three, or fewer than half, of the April electors attended the July meeting. This does not mean, however, that the élite of the District was overwhelmed by an influx of plebeian activists.³

Out of the six members of the first elected District committee, the president, Dufour, the vice-president, Annette Jaladon, and the secretary, Bellart, were all April electors. Two thirds of the thirty-two men who either served on the committee or took part

¹ Chassin, *op. cit.* iii. 523.

² G. Lecocq, *La prise de la Bastille et ses anniversaires d'après des documents inédits* (Paris, 1881), Troisième partie, Pièces justificatives, pp. 231-91: Procès-verbal de la réunion du Petit Saint-Antoine. The transcription appears to be from the private collection of Benjamin Fillon. Cf. *Inventaire des autographes et documents historiques réunis par M. Benjamin Fillon, décrits par Etienne Charavay* (Paris, 1878), 4 vols., no. 485.

³ *Procès-verbal du Tiers Etat . . . convoqué en l'Eglise du Petit Saint-Antoine . . .*, pp. 3-21. The comparison also indicates numerous errors in transcription of the second list.

in deputations over the period 14-16 July¹ had also voted in April. Within this "inner circle" of thirty-two, a dozen lawyers were the most substantial single component: two procureurs, seven avocats, two huissiers and a notaire. Two architects, a silk merchant and a marchand limonadier were also among them.

Something is known of the careers of a few,² although Dufour himself seems to have been a virtual nonentity, Anne-Clément-Félix Champion de Villeneuve, who served both as secretary and vice-president, was born at Versailles in 1758, the son of a valet-de-chambre at Court. Admitted Avocat au Parlement at 19, and since 1784 secrétaire du cabinet to the Comtesse de Provence, Champion began to plead in the Conseils du Roi in 1786, the same year in which he was elected to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. In 1792 he would serve as Minister of the Interior. Ironically in 1790 a contemporary pamphlet was to qualify this protégé of the Court as a "citoyen républicain", while dismissing Dufour as "an aristocrat and the Mayor's toady".³ Another of the secretaries, Nicolas-François Bellart, although aged only 22 in 1789 had already been an Avocat au Parlement for about four years. The son of a wealthy wheelwright and coachmaker of the Marais, Bellart was destined for a distinguished legal career and became Procureur-général under the Restoration. Of the other members of the committee, Edmé-Antoine Junot, aged 31, had been a Procureur au Parlement since 1780. Among members of deputations Antoine-Louis Verpy, 29, had been an huissier-commissaire-priseur since 1783, and Jacques-Hilaire Mennessier an Avocat au Parlement since 1765. Mennessier was eventually imprisoned, at the end of a chequered revolutionary career, for involvement in the Babeuf conspiracy in 1796. In 1790 a

¹ Lecocq, *op. cit.* pp. 31-55; 231-96.

² Biographical details are from: P. Robiquet, *Le personnel municipal de Paris pendant la Révolution: période constitutionnelle* (Paris, 1890); J. F. E. Robinet, *Dictionnaire historique et la Révolution et de l'Empire*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1899); E. Charavay, *L'Assemblée électorale de Paris* (Paris, 1890-1905), 3 vols.; and for Bellart and Coulon, *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*. Playfair has an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

³ *Etrennes à la vérité, ou almanach des aristocrates* (Paris, 1790). [BL F 401 (19)], p. 67.

pamphleteer would denounce him, as a disciple of Brissot, as "a troublesome and nasty aristocrat".¹ Despite Georges Lecocq, and earlier editors of the Petit Saint-Antoine documents, Louis-Marie Prudhomme, the publisher and proprietor of the *Révolutions de Paris* did not play any part in the proceedings of the Petit Saint Antoine District; he lived on the other side of the river, in the Petits-Augustins District. Nor did Coulon de Thévenot, one of the earliest pioneers of stenography, act as secretary, although he did attend the meeting of 13 July.

Lecocq, who apparently believed erroneously that the Petit Saint-Antoine was part of the turbulent Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and was impressed by the inhabitants' despatch in organizing a guard to restore order, was pleasantly surprised to find it an "aimable centre de réaction".² In fact the District lay within the old city boundaries and in the socially mixed Marais quarter. This part of Paris was distinguished by a higher proportion than average of relatively wealthy inhabitants and a relatively low incidence of absolute poverty.³

All ranks and conditions were represented among those who signed the procès-verbal of the 13 July meeting, from Jean François Jacquet, *ouvrier sur le port*, and J. N. Miloche, *garçon culottier*, all the way up to Nicolas Dupré de Saint Maur, Conseiller d'Etat, and his son-in-law, the Vicomte du Nord. There was even an Englishman, William Playfair, an engineer and formerly a draughtsman with Boulton and Watt.

Collating the list of 13-14 July with that of 21-22 April enables sufficient details to be added to establish the professions of 890 of the 1,192 July signatories. The results are tabulated on pp. 451-2. In interpreting these tables it is necessary to bear in mind that the original list seems to have served two purposes. It began as a roll-call of those attending the District meeting in the church of the Petit Saint-Antoine on 13 July, but it seems to have developed into a census of able-bodied men volunteering for guard service. There is even evidence that some of those listed were "volunteered" by others. Some names are entered more than once, as if a street-by-street survey

¹ Ibid.

² Lecocq, *op. cit.* p. 29.

³ Garrigues, *op. cit.* Plan hors texte; Mellié, *Les Sections de Paris*, pp. 23-41.

TABLE 4

Occupations of the Signatories of the Procès-Verbal of the Petit Saint-Antoine District, 13-14 July 1789

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
Négociants	11
Marchands	123
Manufacturers and artisans	345
Compagnons and garçons	55
Labourers, etc.	8
Bankers	1
Fiscal and other office holders	29
Procureurs	21
Other legal office-holders	19
Avocats	31
Notaires	8
Other lawyers	2
Professors and teachers	8
Doctors	2
Surgeons, dentists, pharmacists	12
Architects	9
Other liberal professions	15
Bourgeois	106
Commis, employés, clerics, secrétaires	31
Servants	25
Nobles	10
Clerics	2
Others	17
Total identified	890
Total unidentified	302
Total	1,192

TABLE 5

Summary of the Occupations of 890 Signatories of the Procès-Verbal of the Petit Saint-Antoine District, 13-14 July 1789

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Numbers</i>	<i>As percentage</i>
Commerce and manufacture	480	54
Compagnons, garçons, labourers	63	7
Office-holders	29	3
Legal office-holders	40	4.5
Other lawyers	41	4.5
Liberal professions	46	5
Commis, etc.	31	4
Bourgeois	106	12
Nobles	10	1
Servants	25	3
Others	19	2
Total	890	100

TABLE 6

Artisans in the Petit Saint-Antoine District in 1789 (Including Compagnons and Garçons), from the Procès-Verbal of 13-14 July

<i>Building trades</i>		<i>Jewellery and similar trades</i>	
Masons	35	Goldsmiths	9
Joiners	31	Jewellers	7
Painters	22	Toymakers	5
Locksmiths	14	Cutlers	3
Gilders	9	Clockmakers	2
Tilers	8	Goldbeaters	2
Paviors	7		—
Glaziers	5		28
Others	8		—
	—		
	139	<i>Other metal trades</i>	
	—	Founders	7
		Coppersmiths	5
<i>Clothing trades, etc.</i>		Tinsmiths	4
Shoemakers	58	Others	2
Tailors	31		—
Wigmakers and barbers	14		18
Hatters	3		—
Hosiers	2		
	—	<i>Miscellaneous</i>	
	108	Coopers	7
	—	Harnessmakers	5
		Cabinet-makers	4
<i>Other textile trades</i>		Basket weavers	4
Tapestry weavers	14	Potters	3
Others	5	Engravers	3
	—		—
	19		26
	—		—

had been undertaken, with citizens answering for their neighbours. There are several entries in which masters promised the services of their journeymen or servants.

The noble, Dupré de Saint-Maur, signed for nine servants "who will act as his substitutes", for example, and the Marquise de la Coudray sent her cook. A job lot of *sept garçons maçons* was set down for No. 13 Rue de la Verrerie, along with the cooper Gillard and his two apprentices, the painter Dupré, the tailor Contrit, and the shoemaker Boyer "and his father".

Most of those listed nevertheless signed personally, apart from a score or so of illiterates, whose disability is noted in the text. The meeting of 13 July resolved to limit the membership of the guard to domiciled inhabitants and their sons, workers living in the District and paying capitation, and workers living with their masters. In fact the 1,100-1,200 names collected by the secretary must have represented a staggeringly high proportion of the adult male inhabitants of the District. In 1790 the Petit Saint-Antoine and Blancs-Manteaux Districts, of roughly equivalent size and character, were united to form the Roi-de-Sicile Section, with a combined population estimated at 10,500.¹ Allowing a half of this total to the Petit Saint-Antoine and dividing this half by four to allow for a normal proportion of women and children leaves a potential maximum constituency of adult males of just over 1,300. We already know that more than 120 of the wealthier inhabitants, the April electors, were absent on 13-14 July; it is hardly likely that, to compensate, all those who had been absent in April turned out in July. At the other end of the social scale it is absurd to suppose that there were no more than eight labourers, *gagne-deniers*, and the like in the District, while the proportion of *compagnons* and *garçons* to *maîtres* is also far too low, at 1 : 6. Even allowing for a substantial representation of these classes among inhabitants whose occupation is not given, we may guess that at least two to three hundred of the poorest male inhabitants were not involved in the transactions of the District on 13-14 July. Even conceding that the adult male population must have been somewhat greater than the 1,300 estimate, in order to make up the numbers there must have been an almost total turn out of the middle ranks : merchants, bourgeois, shopkeepers and artisans.

The largest single social group represented was the master craftsmen and artisans, totalling, with fifty journeymen and apprentices, about 400, or just under half of the identifiable group. A further analysis of this group indicates that there were no large factories in the District like the few to be found further East in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, nor even any

¹ N. Kareiev, *La densité de la population des différentes sections de Paris pendant la Révolution* (Paris, 1912), p. 15.

predominant industries. About a third of the artisans were engaged in the building trade, with thirty-five masons and thirty-one joiners among them. The fifty-eight shoemakers and thirty-one tailors make up the only sizeable groups among the rest, with a handful of representatives of other clothing, textile, and specialist metal trades.

After the artisans the next most numerous group of signatures were those of 133 merchants and shopkeepers, commerce and industry thus accounting for substantially more than half of identified vocations. By contrast office and the law were absolutely and proportionately only slightly represented, with a combined total of 110, or 12 per cent.

The liberal professions and white-collar workers made up together another 9 per cent, with a bloc of more than 100 "Bourgeois de Paris" as the most substantial remainder. What those who claimed this title meant by it is guesswork. Presumably most of them were men with incomes from property or *rentes*, and a capitation of more than 6 livres.

Of the 300 or so inhabitants whose profession was not specified, a sizeable contingent is likely to have been domestic servants. Apart from this there is no reason to suppose an occupational distribution different from that of the other 900.

Our conclusion must be that the extraordinary crisis of 13-14 July roused the great majority of the ordinary inhabitants of this Paris District to active participation in politics, that they welcomed the decisive and competent leadership of a fairly wealthy bourgeois élite, among whom lawyers were particularly prominent, and that they kept the very poorest citizens at arms' length. If this is a fairly commonly accepted view of what happened in the Paris revolution of 1789, it does no harm to have it confirmed by specific evidence, with the important reservation that the Petit Saint-Antoine was probably by far the most democratic of the Paris Districts, as far as organized participation in the rising of 14 July was concerned.

To carry through a revolution successfully it is necessary not only to organize the conquest of power, but to consolidate and defend it. The uprising of 14 July produced an effective improvised revolutionary administration for Paris: a municipal

government, presided over by the Mayor, Bailly, based on the former Electoral Assembly, and defended by the National Guard, commanded by Lafayette.

Although there now began a steady trend towards the centralizing of authority on the Hôtel de Ville, in the days immediately following the uprising, the basis of revolutionary power remained the Districts, the permanent committees they now set up, and their armed detachments.

From the point of view of the bourgeoisie, the most important post-revolutionary task was the restoration of order, by which was meant disarming the dangerous classes and getting the artisans, apprentices and labourers off the streets, out of the public assemblies, and back to the workshops.

On 22 July the Prémontrés District, on the southern edge of Paris, issued a proclamation which was to form the model for at least half a dozen more District proclamations over the next few days :

Heads of households, merchants, shopkeepers, members of the communities of Arts et Metiers, and all citizens are invited to employ all means in their power to reduce to good order and tranquility all those who depend on them, and all good citizens of whatever quality and condition are instantly prayed to repress a vain and dangerous curiosity which, since the days of trouble, has taken a great many into public places.¹

The Cordeliers District, in a proclamation of 21 July, promised to arrest all guilty of offences, and to disarm all "gens sans aveu" in its own regiment and others, to confiscate the arms of arrested men, and to return armed "foreigners" to their own Districts.² On 27 July Saint-Eustache invited all citizens to get back to work, promising 6 livres for every gun handed in, and a further 3 livres on presentation of an employers' certificate that the applicant had, in fact, resumed his normal work again.³

The doors of the District meetings began to shut in the faces of ordinary people. The church of Saint-Roch, headquarters

¹ BN Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 2643, fol. 73 : *District des Prémontrés de la Croix Rouge. Extract des délibérations du 22 Juillet 1789* (Placard). For similar proclamations by Jacobins Saint Honoré, Capucins de la Chaussée d'Antin, Minimes, Capucins du Marais and Petits-Augustins Districts, see *ibid.* fols. 74-77.

² *Arrête du District des Cordeliers du Mardi, 21 Juillet 1789*, Nyon. (1789) (Placard). [BN 8 Lb⁴⁰1380].

³ BN N. acq. fr. 2643, fol. 81.

of the wealthy Saint-Roch District, lay uncomfortably close to the Palais Royal, with its agitators and its turbulent crowds, and it was soon found impossible to transact committee or assembly business while at the mercy of invasion by unknowns from this quarter. The strangers, moreover, were frightening the notables of the District away from the meeting place.¹ Only 119 citizens could be got together on 19 July to endorse the appointment of Lafayette as National Guard Commander, after the most rigorous efforts.² About 22 July, therefore, it was decided to mount a guard on the doors to keep "foreigners" out and to allow only those paying 6 livres capitation and above to vote.³ The Prémontrés District was more generous, if hardly permissive; its governing rules, enacted on 24 July, set the threshold at 3 livres capitation, and posted guards to enforce it.⁴

Of course the democratic ideas liberated by the revolution were not to be so universally or permanently disposed of. On 22 July M. Bayard of the District of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, in the crowded and popular Mont Saint Geneviève quarter of the Left Bank, presented a projected constitution for the District he had been working on ever since the fourteenth. "All citizens", he declared, "without distinction of estate or rank, ought to have access to public office, and it is just that in this District the shopkeepers [*marchands*] and artisans should be admitted to office in large numbers, since they compose for the most part the body of the citizens of the District".⁵

Some Districts were to remain more democratic than others, but for the moment government by shopkeepers and artisans was not a political possibility. Instead, power was more commonly to be vested, as the Prémontrés District explained, in the general assembly of "propriétaires, notables citoyens, bourgeois et habitans"⁶ and more or less in that order. On 19 July the

¹ BN N. acq. fr. 2670, fols. 2-4.

² BN N. acq. fr. 2665, fols. 17-18.

³ BN N. acq. fr. 2670, fol. 53.

⁴ *Règlement pour le District des Prémontrés* (Paris, 1789), 30 pp. [BN 4 Lb⁴⁰ 1519], p. 14.

⁵ *Extrait du procès-verbal des assemblées générales des citoyens de la Commune de Paris, au District de Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, tenues les 22, 25 et 27 juillet 1789*, Desaint (Paris, 1789), 16 pp. [BL F * 13 (1)], p. 3.

⁶ *Règlement pour le District des Prémontrés*, p. 6.

citizens of the Mathurins District elected their major committee, the Civil Committee, which would handle District affairs between sessions of the full assembly. Its twenty members included nine lawyers, a receveur de rentes, two architects, an astronomer, an optician and a schoolmaster. Only three members were connected with commerce: a marchand d'estampes, a marchand boucher, and a marchand limonadier, and only one, an engraver, could in any sense be considered an artisan.¹ This is what the "Bourgeois revolution" meant in practice in one Paris District.

¹BN N. acq. fr. 2696, fols. 48 f. Register of the civil committee of the Mathurins District, fol. 48.