

**THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF THE ARMY:  
THE PENNSYLVANIA NATIONAL GUARD, 1877-1917**

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This study examines the role of the Pennsylvania National Guard during the years between the railroad strike of 1877 to its mobilization for the Great War in 1917. An analysis of the labor disputes and strikes that took place during these years indicates that the Guard was used sparingly and with great reluctance by state authorities. Out of the hundreds of strikes during those years following the 1877 railroad strike, the Guard was deployed only six times. The Guard was a tool of last resort that was dispatched by Pennsylvania governors only after all other means to suppress violence and restore order in affected areas were exhausted. During its rare use in industrial disturbances the Guard was not at the disposal of corporate interests and certainly did not take orders or direction from factory and mine owners. On the contrary, the Guard proved such an unreliable “ally” that corporations increasingly turned to, and relied upon, private police forces such as the Pinkerton Detective Agency and the Coal and Iron police to engage the forces of organized labor. The Commonwealth authorities finally relieved the Guard of strike-related duties by creating the cost-effective and efficient Pennsylvania State Constabulary in 1905.

Rather than serving as a “policeman of labor” during this period, the Pennsylvania National Guard had initiated significant reforms in structure, training, and discipline that brought it into greater conformity with the standards of the Regular Army. Years before the Root reforms and the Dick Act, the Pennsylvania National Guard had initiated its own program of

reform that moved it toward higher standards of military efficiency and professionalism. The Pennsylvania National Guard had consciously fashioned itself to serve as a first-line reserve for the Regular Army, and its excellent performance in the Spanish-American War and the Mexican Border Campaign proved its value to the nation.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

But the primary design of the militia is to form a reserve for the regular army, and is, in fact, the only form of national military organization compatible with republican institutions.

Major General John F. Hartranft,

Commander, Division, Pennsylvania National Guard, 1884.

This work began as an investigation into the organizational history Pennsylvania National Guard after the Anthracite Strike of 1902 and was to culminate its service as the Twenty-Eighth Division in World War I. It was to be a narrative that detailed the evolutionary development of the Guard from a half-organized, amateurish state constabulary to a solid military unit that was thoroughly prepared for national service in 1917. As I gathered material relating to the Guard's pre- 1902 service it became apparent that organizational efficiency and thoroughgoing professionalism marked its service throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Pennsylvania National Guard had conducted all of its operations with a significant degree of expertise and soldierly detachment. Research indicated that most of the Guard's officers and its political supporters viewed the organization as an adjunct to the Regular Army as early as the 1880s. Its actual interventions in industrial strikes were few, and these were handled with speed, strength, and restraint. The Pennsylvania National Guard deployed for six highly

volatile strike situations in the period 1878-1902, and not one death was attributable to Guard action. The Ohio National Guard of 1969 could not lay a similar claim to such a high standard of restraint, efficiency, and tactical ability in its deployment at Kent State University. The research also belied the claim that the Guard was established and maintained as a policeman of industry and a prop for corporate interests and state power.

The scholarship of numerous American military and labor historians has portrayed the Pennsylvania National Guard as a military force that was consciously recruited, trained, and supported by the forces of industrial capital to control the working class. Those who propose this thesis contend that the militia system of the post Civil War period was nearing extinction due to lack of public interest, state funding, and a mission. This argument then assumes that the labor uprising of 1877 instilled such terror in the hearts and minds of both politicians and corporate interests that they took hold of a moribund state militia and transformed it into a formidable protector of upper class interests. The National Guard was a “private police force” at the beck and call of factory and mine owners who called upon state forces to intimidate their workers and break strikes.<sup>1</sup> In this respect the National Guard was employed in the same way as the various European civil guards.

Proponents of this thesis argue that the Pennsylvania state legislature and wealthy industrialist subsidized and promoted the Guard’s interests in exchange for the organization’s assumption of an industrial police role. This support was evident in annual appropriations from the General Assembly and private gifts from wealthy benefactors that enabled Guard units to

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<sup>1</sup> John Joseph Holmes, “The National Guard of Pennsylvania: Policeman of Industry, 1865-1905” (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 1970); Hyman Kuritz, “Pennsylvania State Government and Labor Controls from 1865-1922” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1953); Gary Jones, “American Cossacks: The Pennsylvania Department of State police and Labor” (Ph.D. diss., Lehigh University, 1994).

build grand armories that both provided the troops with comfortable quarters and served as an imposing physical reminder to the working class of the power of the state.<sup>2</sup> This conceptualization is not limited to the Pennsylvania National Guard. Some historians contend that corporate and upper class anxiety fueled the National Guard revival on a nationwide basis.<sup>3</sup> It is also claimed that social status of Guard personnel reflects its upper class orientation. National Guard company commanders deliberately excluded working class men from their rolls, thus making it an enclave of privilege and social elitism. As it was composed of men inclined to protect corporate power over the legitimate aspirations of the working class, the Guard was a faithful and reliable state constabulary.

This current study asserts a counter-thesis that revises the accepted understanding of the mission of the Pennsylvania National Guard during the years 1877-1917. An examination of labor disputes and strikes in the years under review indicates that the Pennsylvania National Guard was actually used sparingly and with great caution by state authorities. There were hundreds of strikes in Pennsylvania during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into the first few years of the twentieth. The Guard was called out on only six occasions for strike-related duty after its poor showing in the 1877 railroad riots. National Guard intervention was initiated only as a last resort after local authorities exhausted all their means to control violence and restore order. The state established a high threshold for Guard deployment and it was rarely met.

Sheriffs and their posses were the ordinary means of dealing with disorder in Pennsylvania's counties. In those few cases when the Guard was called up, sheriffs and their

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<sup>2</sup> Robert M. Fogelson, *America's Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> William Riker, *Soldiers of the States: The National Guard in American Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1957).

resources had been overwhelmed by the scale and intensity of strike violence. In several strikes the Guard was mobilized only after a considerable amount of blood had been spilled on both sides of a labor dispute. Pennsylvania governors typically hesitated to employ state troops to police industrial disturbances. In every one of the six National Guard interventions governors refused to act rashly, and their final decision to mobilize was made after they initiated a deliberate fact-finding process. State authorities grew increasingly concerned over the years about the cost of Guard deployments. It was an expensive proposition to pay and sustain state troops for strike duty. The taxpayers of the Commonwealth paid for the use of the Guard. In all of the deployments there is no indication that state troops were at the disposal of corporate interests or anxious county sheriffs.

If industrialists supported and promoted the Guard in order to use them as strikebreakers, they were invariably frustrated in their purposes. They could not demand a deployment of state troops during a strike. As noted above, governors proved to be resistant to the use of troops, and for reasons of economy, withdrew them as fast as the situation on the ground permitted them to do so. Company owners could use Guard deployment as cover to hire replacement workers, a tactic that usually intensified the violent reaction of the striking workers. But the troops were only a short term expedient. After their withdrawal the owners and operators were left to their own devices. It was the “unreliability” of the guard that moved corporations to employ their own private police forces such as Pinkerton detectives and the universally loathed Coal and Iron police. These private armies, not the National Guard, were the true policemen of industry after 1877. Pinkertons and Coal and Iron police were a much better alternative for suppressing strikes than the National Guard. They constantly patrolled working class districts and rural “coal patches” and were easily able to forestall strikes by ejecting

“troublesome” elements from company-owned towns. One could infer from the small number of Guard strike interventions that the company men were both an efficient and cost effective alternative to state troops.

After the massive Guard deployment during the anthracite strike in 1902, state authorities began to search in earnest for an alternative to the use of state troops. The Pennsylvania State Constabulary was established in 1905, and from its inception proved to be an excellent police force. National Guard officers greeted this new organization with relief. They had long been convinced that strike duty was a detriment to the service. In addition to its negative impact on recruiting, strike duty was beneath the dignity of a military organization that over the years had conceptualized itself as the national reserve force for the Regular Army.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Guard had instituted changes in its organization, training, and discipline that brought it into greater conformity with the Army. Both state and federal financial support had increased allowing the Guard more time and opportunity for military, not constabulary, training. In fits and starts the Army had grown more comfortable with state troops as a potential national reserve. Even before the Root reforms and the Dick Act, the Pennsylvania National Guard had initiated its own reform program that moved it toward greater military efficiency and professionalism. The Pennsylvania Guard had positioned itself in the vanguard of the coming national reform movement. The Guard had consciously fashioned itself as an integral part of the Regular Army by adopting the organizational scheme the regular forces. Pennsylvania troops proved their value in combat operations during the war with Spain. National Guardsmen formed the core of the Pennsylvania volunteer regiments that were called into federal service in 1898. Pennsylvania’s preparedness and logistical expertise were evident

from the moment that the president sent his request for troops. Pennsylvania volunteers performed well under fire in both the Puerto Rican and Philippine campaigns.

The 1903 Dick Militia Act provided more federal financial support for the National Guard and also placed it under greater federal control. The Pennsylvania National Guard once again displayed its military efficiency during the Mexican border mobilization of 1916. The Guard's reserve role reached its fruition with the mobilization for World War I in the spring of 1917. Once again Pennsylvania Guardsmen constituted a trained cadre that leavened the untrained volunteers and conscripts of the Twenty-Eighth Division.

This study shall examine the organizational history of the Pennsylvania National Guard during the years 1877-1917. Chapter 1 offers a brief overview of the Guard's history from the post Revolutionary War period to the labor uprising of 1877. During this time the militia system that relied on the principle of universal military service fell into decay and disuse. Volunteer military organizations filled the void left behind by the collapse of the enrolled militia. The General Assembly of Pennsylvania recognized the volunteers as the first line of the Commonwealth's defense. The militia was overhauled after the Civil War and provided with more funding, as well as greater oversight by the state. The Pennsylvania troops performed adequately in some small-scale labor disturbances in the early 1870s, but its weaknesses were laid bare by the 1877 riots. Chapter 1 concludes with a narrative of the riots in Pittsburgh.

Chapter 2 begins with focus on the criticism that the Guard received for its operational and tactical errors in the 1877 riots. Contemporary sources and later historical investigations both found the Guard wanting in organization, discipline, logistical capability, and tactical ability. Pennsylvania moved quickly to overhaul and retool the Guard. Chapter 3 looks at the effect of the reform effort and at additional measures that the Guard instituted on its own

volition. Summer encampments and an increased number of drill nights improved the organization to some degree. The Guard followed Regular Army training manuals and its summer encampment field exercises prepared that prepared both large and small units to maneuver on the modern battlefield in open order.

Chapter 4 examines the actual use of the Guard by state authorities in the post 1877 period. Although reformed, reorganized, and retooled state troops were not called up until 1889. The Guard was first deployed for a disaster relief mission at Johnstown after the great May flood. Those units deployed in Johnstown performed outstanding service in a relief effort that was unprecedented in American history.

Chapter 5 examines the last of the National Guard interventions in labor disputes. Coal strikes in the eastern and western regions of the state were the occasion for Guard interventions in the years 1894-1902. State troops performed with high levels of efficiency and professionalism in each of the deployments. Chapter 6 discusses the Pennsylvania National Guard's role within the national defense scheme within the context of the mobilizations for the war with Spain in 1898 and the Mexican border in 1916-1917. The chapter also examines the changes in the relationship between the National Guard and the federal government that were initiated by the passage of the Dick Act of 1903 and the National defense Act of 1916.

## Chapter One

The Pennsylvania National Guard evolved from the colonial militia organizations that were designed to provide towns and villages with an organized means of defense. After independence the states maintained their militias to supplement the small Regular Army. As security threats receded, the militias fell upon hard times. The War of 1812 laid bare the militia cupboard. Their irregular performance and loss of the citizen soldier ideal degraded the militia. State legislatures refused to provide them with adequate funds. In Pennsylvania volunteer militia organizations devolved into military style social clubs. But the Civil War revealed that the militia, although greatly debilitated, was not yet dead. Militias provided the state and the Union with valuable service. After the war the Pennsylvania militia lacked a sense of purpose and adequate state funding. But eventually various legislative initiatives provided a semblance of order and some limited funding. The newly “rechristened” National Guard, although rife with defects, demonstrated its usefulness when it was able to control some of the low intensity labor troubles of the early 1870s. But its failure during the great uprising of 1877 revealed its systemic weaknesses and led to calls for reform.



## I. “From Small Beginnings”

The Pennsylvania National Guard was born in the tumultuous labor unrest of the late 1870s. Pennsylvania was part of a general militia revitalization movement. Other states, especially those in the industrial northeast and the upper Midwest, were also in the process of instituting or augmenting their own state military forces. Prior to this critical juncture the defense policies of the United States and the individual states relied on the compulsory, or enrolled militia system whose roots reached back to colonial times.<sup>4</sup> Colonial experience with British regulars and a familiarity with English historical antecedents had instilled amongst most Americans a profound ideological opposition to professional standing armies with their concomitant threats to liberty and the public purse. And, like the militia system itself, this opposition had its origins in the English political tradition.

The principle that all men able to bear arms should voluntarily render military service and be subject to enrollment, training, and discipline is expressed in the Constitution and the earliest militia legislation enacted by Congress.<sup>5</sup> The Constitution limited the parameters of militia employment by prescribing that it was to be used solely to “execute the laws of the

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<sup>4</sup> For a summary of the early history of the militia see, Martin W. Andresen, *The New England Colonial Militia and its English Heritage, 1620-1675* (Fort Leavenworth, KS : Master of Military Art and Science Thesis, 1979), chap.1 passim; Douglas E. Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York : MacMillan, 1973) , chaps. 1-2; Michael D. Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard, 1636-2000* (Lawrence, KS : University of Kansas Press, 2003) , chap.1.

<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of original intentions see Charles A. Lofgren, “Compulsory Military Service under the Constitution”, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, vol. 31, no. 1 (Jan., 1976): 61-88.

Union, suppress insurrection and repel invasion.” For these purposes Congress was to provide for “organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia.”<sup>6</sup>

The Militia was conceived as an institution that was subject to both federal and state controls. State prerogatives were maintained, “by reserving to the States respectively the Appointment of Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.” The federal government, therefore, relied exclusively on the abilities and resources of the states- their legislators, governors, and appointed officers to prepare these forces in times of peace for the potential exigencies of war. The Constitution did demand that the state militia train according to the pattern of discipline established by Congress.<sup>7</sup>

In 1792 the Congress institutionalized the militia ideal and brought some measure of organization to the various state military forces in an aptly named bill passed as “an act to more effectually provide for the national defense by establishing a uniform militia throughout the U.S.”. According to the law’s provisions every white male citizen between the ages of eighteen and forty-five was required to enroll, and to provide himself with the proper weapons and accoutrements required by the soldiers of the late eighteenth century. Subsequent clauses in the statute make provisions for unit organization, state adjutants general, the designation of officers, and discipline.<sup>8</sup> The Calling Forth Act of the same year gives the President the power to employ

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<sup>6</sup> After the War with Spain the Attorney General of the U.S. questioned the constitutionality of using state militia units beyond the boundaries of the territorial U.S. in light of the specific uses contained in Art.1, sec. 8. The question remained unresolved until the 1916 National Defense Act rendered it moot. This question was exhaustively studied in *The Annual Report of the Division of Militia Affairs for 1912*, ii-xxiv.

<sup>7</sup> Much like the controversial term “regulated” as applied to the militia in the second amendment, discipline had a somewhat more variegated meaning in the eighteenth century when it was defined as “that training and instruction that troops must have after proper organization and equipment to make them efficient for field service.” See A.L. Mills, “The Organized Militia”, *Infantry Journal*, 11, no. 6 (1914):153-168, 160.

<sup>8</sup> Uniform Militia Act, *Statutes at Large* 1, Chapter XXXIII sections 1-11, 271-274 (1792).

the militia for national needs if the occasions of such uses meet specific statutory criteria.<sup>9</sup> The law also limited militia time in federal service to three months.<sup>10</sup>

In 1803 further legislation required that state adjutant generals report their enrollments “with their arms, accoutrements, and ammunition” to the President on an annual basis. Included in the annual state return was the adjutant general’s estimation of militia morale and state of readiness. The amended militia law also empowered the Secretary of War to “give such directions to the adjutant-generals of the militia, as shall, in his opinion, be necessary to produce a uniformity in the said returns”.<sup>11</sup> In 1808 Congress initiated an annual appropriation of \$200,000 “for the purpose of providing arms and military equipments for the whole body of the militia of the United States”. This federal grant in arms was apportioned according to number of militia duly enrolled in each state.<sup>12</sup>

The compulsory basis of both federal and state militia laws also institutionalized the citizen soldier ideal. As the militia of the United States was to be its primary defense force because the nation did not possess a large, professional standing army. It was essential that those liable to such service be enrolled and that they participate in the training days of their local units. The militia served as an adjunct of the Army. In time of war the state militias provided a pool of potential volunteers who had some military training. The legislation of 1808 placed the burden of organizing and supporting the militias on the states. After the 1792 act, each state created the necessary legislation to meet the new requirements. While statutes varied from state to state,

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<sup>9</sup> Militia Act , *Statutes At Large* 1, Chap. XXVIII, 264-265 (1792).

<sup>10</sup> Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders 1789-1878* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Military History The United States Army, 1988), 22. Coakley argues that, although federalized, the militia retained significant advantages that addressed the parochial concerns of the states.

<sup>11</sup> Militia Act, *Statutes at Large* 2, Chap. XV, Section 1, 207 (1803).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. , 490-491. (This amount would not be increased until 1887)

financial penalties were a ubiquitous feature.<sup>13</sup> Enrollment and participation in local units was obligatory. Militia musters, whether for actual service or for drill, took men away from their employment and their farms. Long-term service on campaign was an especially heavy burden. But absence from a militia muster or the appearance of an individual without the required arms and equipment were both punishable by the imposition of a fine.<sup>14</sup>

The Militia Act of 1792 compelled Pennsylvania to bring its state forces into conformity with federal mandates. The Pennsylvania Militia Act created a permanent state military force that was liable for both state and federal service.<sup>15</sup> It required all able-bodied white male citizens aged 18-45 to enroll for state military service unless exempted for reasons of conscience. The act further states that all men thus enrolled were to report for service with his personal arms.<sup>16</sup> The remaining articles of the militia law pertained to unit organization and the role of the state Pennsylvania's Adjutant General, who had control over the state's military affairs, and served as the conduit of the governor's orders to the militia.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> A collection of state militia statutes can be found in Selective Service System, *Backgrounds of Selective Service*, Special Monographs No. 1, (Washington, D.C., 1947), parts 2-14 *passim*.

<sup>14</sup> Lena London, "The Militia Fine 1830-1860", *Military Affairs* 15, no. 3 (1951): 133-144, 133; Arthur A. Ekirch, *The Civilian and the Military* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 67.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel Newland argues that the post Revolution state militia was a creation of the state legislature and existed at its pleasure. The federal militia legislation of 1792 required the states to maintain a militia on a permanent basis. See Samuel J. Newland, *The Pennsylvania Militia: Defending the Commonwealth and the Nation 1669-1870* (Annville, PA: Pennsylvania National Guard Foundation, Inc., 2002), 146-147.

<sup>16</sup> The right to firearm ownership (and the presumption that those enrolled in the militia would be armed) was enacted in the state constitution of 1790. Article XXI states that: "The right of the citizen to bear arms, in defence of themselves and the state, shall not be questioned".

<sup>17</sup> An excellent summary of early Pennsylvania militia legislation as well as the 1793 PA Act can be found in, William P. Clarke, *Official History of the National Guard from the Earliest Period of Record to the Present Time*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: privately published, 1909), 21.

As the nineteenth century began, the dual-army institution was the mainstay of national defense.<sup>18</sup> The state militias supplemented the small Regular Army, and both of these “arms” of the military establishment had a mixed record in defending the young republic from diverse threats. The western state and territorial militias, in conjunction with the regulars, were periodically engaged against recalcitrant Indian tribes. The use of state militias against the Indian tribes of the northwest underscored many of its most glaring weaknesses. The “Whiskey Rebellion” tested the ability of the state militias to suppress rebellion and execute the laws of the land. But a more serious test of American military capabilities began with the commencement of hostilities against the British Empire in 1812.

The mixed performance of American forces in general, and the militia in particular, during the first half of the war, appeared in most histories of the War of 1812. Critics pointed to frequent breakdowns in organization and discipline as well as the overall lack of combat effectiveness that characterized the American war effort.<sup>19</sup> They also point out that Jackson’s victory in New Orleans, achieved by a combination of Regulars and militia, was an anomaly.<sup>20</sup> The militia’s success in New Orleans has to be judged in the light of their horrendous record during the invasion of Canada at the beginning of the war. The failings of the militia in this conflict had a still more profound effect on the ideal of the citizen army and the institutionalization of compulsory service. “The militia’s woeful performance during the War of

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<sup>18</sup> The dual-army tradition is detailed in: Edward M. Coffman, “The Duality of the American Military Tradition: A Commentary,” *The Journal of Military History* 64, no. 4 (2000): 967-980.

<sup>19</sup> Alan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 102-114. This popular narrative typifies the critical view of the American military performance and the poor showing of militia forces. For a counterpoint see Doubler, *Civilian in Peace*, 82-86.

<sup>20</sup> H.W. Brands, *The Life and Times of Andrew Jackson* (New York: Doubleday, 2005), 263-288.

1812 is the best illustration not only of the failure of the Militia Act of 1792, but of the demise of the regular militia in American military affairs.”<sup>21</sup>

In the years following the War of 1812 the enrolled militia went into a general, irrevocable decline. Demographic as well as political, social, and cultural factors all contributed to its ultimate death as a viable military institution and the centerpiece of America’s defense. The first half of the nineteenth century was marked by steady population growth fueled by both natural increase and immigration. The sheer number of males liable to enrollment increased dramatically- to the point that neither the federal government nor the states could meet the bureaucratic and logistical demands that would have been necessitated by such massive armed force.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to population growth there were other factors at work that contributed to the decline of the enrolled militia and the ideal of universal, compulsory service. Exemptions from service had been granted in both the federal and state militia statutes. After 1815 the number of exemptions based on occupation increased precipitously. Marcus Cunliffe noted that the Vermont Militia Act of 1818 exempted a broad category of occupations and within a few years “manufacturers, founders and their employees joined the company of the exempt.”<sup>23</sup> But even in states that listed few exemptions, the threat of fines and potential imprisonment did not retain their power to coerce a growing, mobile, and commercially inclined male population.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1865-1920* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 10.

<sup>22</sup> John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: MacMillan, 1983), 80. Mahon cites an 1836 congressional study that indicated that a potential mobilization would bring out over one million militia.

<sup>23</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America 1775-1865* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 206-207.

<sup>24</sup> London, “The Militia Fine”, 136-142; Doubler, *Civilians in Peace*, 80. Doubler links the avoidance of militia duty to the advent of industrialization and the expanding market economy.

The republican theory of universal, obligatory service had become “a joke, a bore, a nuisance to the majority of citizens.”<sup>25</sup> The collapse of the enrolled militia was affirmed in fact when Congress revised the 1808 formula that governed the annual distribution of arms to the states. The appropriation had previously been divided between the states according to a formula based on numbers of eligible men enrolled. The statute was finally revised in 1855 when “the annual distribution of arms to the several states ... shall hereafter be made according to the number of representatives and senators in Congress, respectively.”<sup>26</sup> There were attempts made by politicians and soldiers to diagnose the various ills afflicting the system.<sup>27</sup> Many still had confidence in the militia. Still others viewed the militia as the embodiment of the civilian soldier ideal. But eventually the War with Mexico proved beyond a doubt the moribund condition of the enrolled militia as: “... the federal government depended on volunteer units rather than the militia to support the regulars.”<sup>28</sup> Volunteer, locally raised outfits like Jefferson Davis’s *Mississippi Rifles* supported and fought alongside the regulars, not the militia.

The Pennsylvania militia experienced a similar precipitous decline. The problems afflicting the national system were naturally reflected in Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth was simply unable to effectively organize, arm, train, and discipline the large numbers of eligible men whose names were on the state’s rolls. The martial spirit and the spirit of obligated service had been superseded by the materialist spirit of the age. Men saw better ways to use their time during an age of increasing commercialization. Militia duty with its attendant musters and drills,

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<sup>25</sup> Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 192.

<sup>26</sup> *Statutes At Large* 10, chap. CXIX, 639 (1855).

<sup>27</sup> See John K. Mahon, “A Board of Officers Considers the Condition of the Militia in 1826”, *Military Affairs* 15, no. 2 (1951) : 85-94. Mahon notes that politicians and the citizenry ignored the findings and recommendations of this board of inquiry. “The result was that it [the militia] proceeded, almost without stopping on the way, toward extinction.” 94.

<sup>28</sup> Coffman, “Duality”, 972.

when not ignored entirely, became the objects of satire and ridicule.<sup>29</sup> Discipline during muster was decidedly unmilitary, and members of the Pennsylvania House were concerned that that such a morally slack atmosphere would have a pernicious effect on the young men of the Commonwealth.<sup>30</sup> And despite a few attempts at legislative reform, it is clear that: “The problem of how to develop a stronger, better trained militia, and thus a better system of defense for both the Commonwealth and the United States, would elude resolution in the years between the War of 1812 and the Mexican War.”<sup>31</sup>

As the enrolled militia declined into irrelevance, the period 1815-1860 witnessed the rise of volunteer units. A volunteer militia movement swept the country in the decades preceding the Civil War. The volunteer companies, like the enrolled militia, had their roots in the English tradition and in the earliest military institutions of the colonies. Volunteer militia had fought alongside the Continental line during the Revolution and, some units had rendered superb service.<sup>32</sup> The Militia Act of 1792 not only recognized the existence of such volunteer formations, it also incorporated these units into the militia structure.<sup>33</sup> Chartered military companies and troops of cavalry retained their independent status but were incorporated into the militia tables of organization and were subject to the requirements of the Uniform Militia Act.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Clarke, *Official History*, vol. 2, 31-33.

<sup>30</sup> See Pennsylvania House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee on the Militia System* (Harrisburg: The State Printers, 1833), 3. The committee observed that musters were occasions of drunken revelry and that “the time lost or mispent [*sic*] is of immense value; that the temptations to form habits of idleness and dissipation are great and numerous.”

<sup>31</sup> Newland, *The Pennsylvania Militia*, 192.

<sup>32</sup> Millet and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 7-8.

<sup>33</sup> *Statutes At Large*, Ch. XXXIII, secs.10-11. “And whereas sundry corps of artillery, cavalry, and infantry now exist in several of the said states... That such corps retain their accustomed privileges, subject, nevertheless, to all other duties required by this act, in like manner the other militia.”

<sup>34</sup> The First Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry is an example of such a unit, chartered in the 1840s.



Pennsylvania had also made statutory provision for Commonwealth's independent volunteer military units.<sup>35</sup> In 1807 the state permitted independent corps of volunteers to form. The independent units were added to the existing table of organization alongside the compulsory units. Militia legislation with provisions for volunteers appeared in all subsequent state militia statutes. The law of 1810 established the minimum personnel, equipment, and uniform standards for units seeking official recognition from the governor. Volunteer companies of infantry, for instance, were required to have on their rolls no more than one hundred privates and no less than sixty-four.<sup>36</sup> Given that the men were required to provide their own uniforms and other equipment, the statute makes generous exceptions for those who could not meet the standards.

Perhaps the most important legislative development in this period for the volunteer companies was the legislature's decision to include them in the disbursement of arms from the annual federal grant.<sup>37</sup> In submitting to volunteer service men also earned an exemption from (enrolled) militia service except in circumstances of war and rebellion.<sup>38</sup> The protected and preferred status of the volunteer militia was confirmed in the statute of

1832 in which the legislature committed the entire federal arms appropriation to the volunteers, a move that relegated the enrolled militia to a potential force that existed only on paper.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Pennsylvania, *Militia Act, Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1807*, chap. MMDCCCXLII, sec. 4, 121.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 MMDCCXCVI, sec. 4, 417-418. A minimum of forty men in each volunteer company had to be uniformed and equipped according to state standards. Violations incurred a fifty-dollar fine for the company's captain.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, chap. 5247, secs. 42-46, 629-630 (1822); Joseph John Holmes, "The National Guard of Pennsylvania: Policeman of Industry, 1865-1905" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Connecticut, 1970). Holmes argues that the grant of arms to volunteers "was a clear indication that its [the state's] hopes for a viable militia were centered increasingly on the volunteers.", 38.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, secs. 47-48, 631.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, *A Further Supplement* ..., 8, no. 177, secs. 2-10, 464-465.

## II. "Volunteers"

Volunteers were motivated by a variety of reasons when they joined an independent company.<sup>40</sup> Many young men were attracted by displays of martial pomp and the opportunity to apply themselves to the demands of military discipline. They were drawn to military life but retained their accustomed independence and democratic outlook: "Since they participated willingly, they readily accepted discipline, although they were quick to resist bullying and cruelty".<sup>41</sup> In addition to time away from work, the volunteers were expected to outfit themselves. It follows, then, that most of the members of volunteer companies were men possessed of a degree of wealth and leisure time.

As an association of like-minded military enthusiasts, each unit developed a shared sense of purpose and aggressively defended their prerogatives. "The companies picked their members, elected their officers, raised their funds, designed their uniforms, wrote their rules and regulations, and otherwise enjoyed a great degree of autonomy."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Francis V. Greene, "The New National Guard", *The Century* 43, no. 4 (February, 1892): 483-499, 486. Greene observes: "With the rapid increase of urban population, the growing taste for outdoor and athletic sports, and the manifest advantages of club association, these volunteer organizations increased in numbers and popularity."

<sup>41</sup> Frederick P. Todd, "Our National Guard: An Introduction to its History", *Military Affairs* 5, no. 3 (Autumn, 1941): 73-86, 82. For another contemporary view of the attractions of volunteer service see: Lloyd S. Bryce, "A Service of Love", *The North American Review* 145, Issue 370 (1887): 276-286.

<sup>42</sup> Robert M. Fogelson, *America's Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 5.

These private military clubs established their own by-laws and elected their own officers. But these volunteer units were still required to obtain state approval in order to be officially sanctioned as a part of the state forces, and thereby become eligible for the grants of arms and equipment. In Pennsylvania the captain of a prospective company supplied the state Adjutant General with a personnel roster attesting that the unit had requisite numbers of men suitably equipped and uniformed. This placed the unit officially within the state's militia table of organization.<sup>43</sup>

Typically volunteer militia companies agreed to meet at least one a week for drill and target practice. A recreational spirit prevailed and drill nights usually evolved into social events, complete with company dinners and picnics that served as rewards for the efforts expended in drill. In winter months markets and meeting halls were used so that the men could go through their paces in relative comfort. In addition, a clubroom was considered an essential acquisition for most units. Small at first, they were the precursors of the imposing and luxuriant National Guard armories of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>44</sup> In their clubrooms officers and men enjoyed the ambience and amenities worthy of any respectable gentleman's club.<sup>45</sup>

As the units were self-funded, the members were required to pay dues and participate in money-raising activities.<sup>46</sup> Recruitment was done according to standards that were highly selective, reflecting the tastes and inclinations of the membership. Unit personnel invariably

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<sup>43</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1849*, no. 413, sec. 2, 667-668. "The persons thus uniformed shall then form themselves into companies and elect their officers, make their own by-laws, regulate, collect, and apply their own fines and forfeitures."

<sup>44</sup> Fogelson, *America's Armories*, chap.1, *passim*.

<sup>45</sup> Uzal Ent and Roy Grant Crist, *The First Century: A History of the 28<sup>th</sup> Division* (Harrisburg : 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division), 86. This page provides an excellent photograph of an N.C.O.'s Orderly Room.

<sup>46</sup> See note 39 above. The 1849 statute apportions fifty dollars from the annual militia fine (imposed for delinquency from the enrolled militia lists) to each unit for various expenses including rental of drill facilities and music.

reflected the religious, ethnic, racial, and occupational composition of the membership. Numerous organizations were built and maintained along ethnic lines. “Irish” and “German” units were proud standard bearers for their ethnicity. In New York and Boston militia units were entirely composed of firemen. In many ways the volunteer companies reflected the activities of other fraternal and social clubs that originated in this same period of American history.<sup>47</sup> The process fostered group solidarity and a sense of possession. In a very real way the company belonged to the members, thereby inclining them to resist to interference from state and federal officials.

Although the volunteer companies had a great deal of independence in their local activities, they were required to mobilize and respond to the orders of the governor and any presidential order that called out the militia.<sup>48</sup> The governor of the Commonwealth was empowered by the state constitution to use the militia (both enrolled and volunteer) to protect lives, property, and public order when these were threatened by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by local authorities.

Prior to the Civil War Pennsylvania governors had few occasions to employ the militia to suppress combinations of any sort.<sup>49</sup> One such occasion was the outbreak of anti-Catholic violence in the city of Philadelphia in the spring and summer of 1844. Mobs in the Kensington

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<sup>47</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 15-16. Cooper likens the volunteer companies to the Masons : “The civil rules governing uniformed militia units reveal the underlying social and fraternal nature of these military clubs. Uniformed companies hosted balls, dinners and theatricals with members sporting self-designed uniforms worthy of Hungarian hussars... .” 16 .

<sup>48</sup> The word “company” is used in a generic sense as the smallest unit in the state’s table of organization, but it also designates troops of cavalry and batteries of artillery. Companies trained independently and seldom maneuvered at battalion, regimental or brigade level. Like the other volunteers, independent companies would have to learn to drill, march, and fight in a larger unit structure.

<sup>49</sup> David Grimsted, “Rioting in Its Jacksonian Setting,” *American Historical Review*, 77 (April, 1972) : 361-397, 364. Grimsted sees a sharp increase in riots nationally.

and Southwark sections of Philadelphia burned Catholic churches and homes. Several residents of the city, both Catholic and non-Catholic, were killed and injured in the course of the riots. Governor David Porter, in a politically unpopular move, ultimately deployed 5,000 militia troops to quell the street violence and restore law and order.<sup>50</sup>

The Pennsylvania Militia's performance was uneven during the riots. One frightened unit released a popular agitator when they were threatened by a heavily armed mob.<sup>51</sup> But another, the Philadelphia City Guards, held their ground during intense gun battles with rioters.<sup>52</sup> Michael Feldberg notes that the use of citizen soldiers against unruly citizens in the Philadelphia riots was a watershed event, something new on the American scene. It was an incidence that foreshadowed the repressive response of the forces of order to social fragmentation and internal tension. The Philadelphia riots were a foretaste of the violence that would soon erupt in both the Civil War and the industrial strife of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>53</sup>

Ninety companies of Pennsylvania militia volunteered for service in the War with Mexico. Because the war was fought on foreign soil President Polk never called out the enrolled

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<sup>50</sup> Vincent P. Lannie and Bernard C. Diethorn, "For the Honor and Glory of God: The Philadelphia Bible Riots of 1844," *History of Education Quarterly*, 18, no.1 (spring 1965): 73-8. Lannie and Diethorn offer a concise narrative of the riots. For an expanded treatment see: Michael Feldberg, *The Philadelphia Riots of 1844: A Study of Ethnic Conflict* (Westport, CT : Greenwood Press ,1975) , chaps. 5,7 *passim*.

<sup>51</sup> Lannie and Diethorn, "For the Honor and Glory," 86. After blood had been spilled on both sides militia men from Philadelphia faced threats and intimidation: "They were threatened anonymously and publicly, hunted through the streets and driven from their homes". This would continue to be a problem for future militia and National Guardsmen when called to suppress their friends and neighbors.

<sup>52</sup> Harbersberger, *The First Hundred Years*, 41.

<sup>53</sup> Feldberg, *The Philadelphia Riots*, 159. "The new demand for order superseded old limitations and traditions, at least in the minds of the middle and upper classes."

militia.<sup>54</sup> The War Department looked upon the volunteer militias as integral units, ready to hand, and these were absorbed by the regular army “by enlisting companies and larger tactical formations of volunteer organized militia into federal service.”<sup>55</sup> By presidential order Pennsylvania was required to field two regiments, and given the large numbers of volunteers, the mobilization was completed in a short period of time and in an efficient manner. The two units, the First and Second Regiments of Pennsylvania Volunteers, entered federal service in the winter of 1846. Although originally slated for rear echelon duties, both regiments compiled outstanding combat records in the Mexican campaign.<sup>56</sup>

When President Lincoln issued a call for troops after the attack on Fort Sumter in April 1861, each state was given a quota based on the size of its enrolled militia. Theoretically, at least, the militia returns indicated (from those states that still bothered to report) that there were massive forces available to both the Union and the Confederacy.<sup>57</sup> But the enrolled militia in most states had decayed to such an extent that in most cases it merely consisted of enrollment lists. It was a paper force that could not be relied upon to place bodies in uniforms.<sup>58</sup> In lieu of the mostly fictitious enrolled militia, the enormous number of enthusiastic volunteers that came forward for immediate service met manpower requirements. The vast majority of state

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<sup>54</sup> There would be no repeat of the Canada disaster of 1812. In this conflict the constitutional constraints and statutory prescriptions pertaining to the uses of militia would be followed. This would also be the case in 1898 conflict with Spain.

<sup>55</sup> Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 183. The War Department would follow the same procedure in 1861 and 1898.

<sup>56</sup> Newland, *The Pennsylvania Militia*, 204-208.

<sup>57</sup> Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1955), Pamphlet no. 20-212, 91. Pennsylvania’s 1858 return indicates that its militia force numbered 350,000 officers and men- enough personnel for three Civil War department armies.

<sup>58</sup> James A. Killian notes that the Pennsylvania volunteer militia was a sizeable force on the eve of the war: “Pennsylvania in December of 1860 counted nearly 19,000 men and officers in 339 infantry, eighty-four artillery, and fifty-three cavalry units, a force also larger than the entire Regular Army.” ; Killian, *The First Hundred Years*, 46.

volunteer regiments were composed of men who had neither prior military training nor an association with a volunteer company. Volunteers had answered the call in such large numbers that Lincoln urged state governors to scale back their recruiting efforts.<sup>59</sup>

Many of the established volunteer companies answered the call, and several of the states built their new, untried regiments around them.<sup>60</sup> The volunteer militia units played a crucial role in Union mobilization and in its ability to weather one of the most critical periods of the war.<sup>61</sup> State governors were able to solidify their volunteer regiments with a leaven of volunteer militia companies whose members had some military training. The militia's immediate response also gave President Lincoln a period of time in which he could consider the broad range of strategic and political options open to him without interference and criticism from Congress.<sup>62</sup>

Pennsylvania volunteers served with distinction in the dozens of volunteer regiments raised by the state throughout the course of the war. The militia became a less attractive option for military age men. With so many men of military age off serving on the battlefronts, it was increasingly difficult to recruit and retain men for militia service.<sup>63</sup> Men who wanted to fight for the Union enlisted in one of Pennsylvania's numerous volunteer regiments. Militia companies were essentially made up of the men who, for one reason or another, stayed behind. Institutionally the Pennsylvania volunteer militia reached a low point in its numbers and quality,

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<sup>59</sup> Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol .1 (Washington, D.C. : Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005), 202.

<sup>60</sup> Mahon, *History of the Militia*, 99. Mahon states that Pennsylvania's mobilization was "expedited by the existence of old volunteer companies that volunteered intact." Mentioned prominently in this respect are the Ringgold Light Artillery of Reading and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry.

<sup>61</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 198. "Thanks to the existence of the organized volunteer companies, ... Lincoln could mobilize a fairly substantial army with some measure of equipment and training, quickly and without recourse to Congress."

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>63</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 21. "Continued demands for volunteers and conscripts stripped states of able men. Many men came to resent militia duty."

a predicament it shared with most of the other states. The quality of personnel declined during the war years. Militia troops tended to come from the opposite ends of the age spectrum, either the very young, or those considered too old to render service in one of the volunteer regiments. At this point the state militia had a peculiar status. It was a military force without much of a mission.

The militia had a peculiar status. It was a remnant, composed of those that were too old, too young, or disinclined to volunteer for service in a state volunteer regiment. Given these circumstances it is not difficult to see the reasons most militia companies became more like social clubs than military units. It must be noted, however, that the militia was still able to field a viable military force when the need arose. In the summer of 1863 Commonwealth militia quickly rushed to Gettysburg in answer Governor Curtin's call, and were among the first Union troops to offer resistance to the lead elements of the Army of Northern Virginia. In the early morning of July 1 General John Buford's 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Cavalry Division was mistaken for Pennsylvania militia by Confederate forces as they advanced on his positions across the Chambersburg Pike in the battle's first action.

During the war years Pennsylvania made serious provisions for the state's defense, in addition to its substantial role in the Union war effort. In 1861 the General Assembly, at the behest of Governor Curtin, apportioned \$500,000 for arms and equipment to create a Reserve Corps of volunteers.<sup>64</sup> The Reserve Corps gave enlistees rudimentary military training, a task heretofore delegated to the militia system. Unfortunately the Commonwealth's "real" militia did not share in this largesse. But the achievement of Pennsylvania and other northern states was

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<sup>64</sup> J.R. Sypher, *History of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps* (Lancaster, PA: Elias Barr and Co., 1865), 27. Curtin also raised a three million dollar bond issue to reinforce the Reserve Corps, an institution that served as a feeder system for the volunteer regiments.



impressive. With little direction and no financial assistance from the federal government, Pennsylvania and other states were able to maintain viable militias with their own financial means and bureaucratic structures.<sup>65</sup> Pennsylvania's 1864 Militia statutes were an attempt to invigorate the institution and to prepare it to meet any future threats to the lives and property of the Commonwealth's citizens. At war's end the nation and the Commonwealth entered into an age of rapid industrialization. It would also prove to be one of the most violent eras in all of American history.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid. "Each state did as it saw fit and according to its financial resources."

### III. “A Suitable Instrument”

The Pennsylvania militia entered the post war era with systemic structural and financial weaknesses that would prove to impair its ability to cope with the emerging threats to public order posed by the bitter struggles between capital and labor. There is little evidence to indicate that the civil authorities were even thinking about the militia. The annual reports of the adjutant general, posted in the years immediately following the end of the war, are little more than statistical summaries of available men and equipment. The militia was a military force without a military mission. Because the militia was a organization that could not articulate a reason for its very existence, the General Assembly scaled back its appropriations. There were some legislative initiatives that sought to maintain and organize the militia. At the very least, Pennsylvania had to have some kind of state military organization in order to continue to receive federal grants in arms.

The Militia Act of 1864 constructed a two-tiered militia system in the state of Pennsylvania. The new law continued to maintain the enrolled militia, that moribund institution of the *antebellum* period. All men aged eighteen to forty-five were to be enrolled (except volunteer militia, civil servants, politicians). In addition “idiots, lunatics, common drunkards, vagabonds, paupers, and persons convicted of any infamous crime,” were also exempt.<sup>66</sup> Those men enrolled under the provisions of the act were subject to “no active service,” except in the

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<sup>66</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session 1864*, No. 210, sec.1, 224. (Hereafter only section and page numbers will be used in citing the 1864 Militia Act).

direst of circumstances.<sup>67</sup> In the event of such a mobilization the Commonwealth would provide arms, equipment, and pay.

Each of Pennsylvania's sixty-seven counties was designated a brigade, except for Philadelphia which already had four brigade-sized units. The militia was then grouped into twenty divisions based on numbers of men and geographic location. Philadelphia County constituted the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, while Allegheny, Armstrong, Indiana, and Jefferson counties constituted the 18<sup>th</sup> Division. Each division was commanded by a Major General, assisted, over time, by an ever-increasing number of staff officers. The Pennsylvania division designation had no semblance to the division of the twentieth century Army, it was simply a way to organize, mobilize, and concentrate men in contiguous counties.

The act states unequivocally that the volunteers were the first line of the Commonwealth's defense. They were to be called into service immediately in the case of "war, invasion, and riots".<sup>68</sup> They functioned as a stop-gap force. If the volunteer militia could not handle the situation the state would muster the enrolled militia. Individuals desiring to serve together in a volunteer unit had to attest, through a written testimonial from a mayor or county commissioner, that they had the prescribed minimum number of personnel to constitute a company. The 1864 legislation required an infantry company to have at least sixty-four privates enrolled in the Company Book. There were slightly higher numbers for cavalry and artillery units. Once the governor was satisfied as to the veracity of the testimonials from county officials and the actual number of men on the rolls, the company was officially accepted for state service.

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<sup>67</sup> Sec.7, 224.

<sup>68</sup> Sec.10, 225.

<sup>69</sup> Sec.15, 226.

The entry of a man's name in the Company Book was taken as legal proof of enlistment. Recruitment tended to be quite casual. A man usually received an invitation to join a company. Albert Logan, who would eventually rise to general's rank in the National Guard, attended the drill night of Company "F", 18th Regiment, the famous *Duquesne Grays*. Logan was on vacation from Chester Military College in the fall of 1875. He had gone to the drill with a friend who was interested in joining the unit. The company's meeting place was actually the third floor of a dry goods store in Pittsburgh's East End. The company commander asked Logan to take part in the drill. He picked up a rifle and went to join the men in the ranks. When the exercise was concluded, "the Captain extended to me an invitation to become a member of the company."<sup>70</sup> Private Logan would quickly discover that he and other prospective privates, as well as noncommissioned officers, were obligated to five years of service unless honorably discharged beforehand.

Division commanders, who were appointed by the governor, held the rank of Major General. Brigade and company field officers elected brigadiers. Colonels of regiments and battalions were elected by all of the commissioned officers of the companies. And at the company level, the ballots cast by both officers and privates elected the company's Captain.<sup>71</sup> The electoral system would remain a standard feature of all later supplements and revisions of the 1864 Militia Act, until WW I.

The election of officers had long been an idiosyncratic aspect of the American militia system. Typically the officer candidate was an influential figure in the community who had

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<sup>70</sup> "A Memorandum of the Services of General Albert J. Logan In The Service Of The State and Federal Government", Albert J. Logan Papers: 1877-1932, MSS 0096, Folder 14 (The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania), Sen. John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center.

<sup>71</sup> Sec.14, 226.

played an essential role in organizing the local company.<sup>72</sup> This prerogative, like the governor's appointment of general and staff officers, was vigorously defended and stubbornly maintained by state troops until the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>73</sup> As a New York National Guard officer later stated: "The election of officers and noncommissioned officers in the National Guard, a right enjoyed by citizen soldiers since the formation of the republic, is essential to the welfare of a regiment or company."<sup>74</sup>

The Militia Act also addressed the problem of alcohol and its deleterious effect on military discipline and efficiency when volunteer units assembled for drill, parade, and other military functions. Drink-sodden militia muster and drill days had always been a source of public scandal and a detriment to the good order of the service. But alcohol was a ubiquitous feature of most fraternal and social organizations and the militia had long emulated their civilian counterparts in this respect. The easy availability of beer and liquor also attracted potential recruits. The 1864 legislation was emphatic in regard to the presence or use of alcohol at official functions: "No officer shall, on days of military duty, so treat [with spirituous liquors] persons performing such duty, under a penalty of twenty-five dollars, one-half to the informer and the other half to the brigade fund".<sup>75</sup> Sobriety was mandated as essential to both military efficiency

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<sup>72</sup> Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 68. The selection of such men in the company election was seen as "a fair return ... for the positions they occupied and the uses to which they had put [their] attached status".

<sup>73</sup> Even when mustered into federal service in 1898 National Guard units maintained their rights of election, much to the consternation of regular Army officers.

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 67.

<sup>75</sup> Sec. 40, 230.

and the creation of a serious sense of purpose.<sup>76</sup> At least one of the social fixtures of traditional militia culture was headed into oblivion- others would soon follow.

The new legislation also addressed the militia's financial needs to a greater degree than any previous legislation. Traditionally the General Assembly had treated the militia with parsimonious neglect. Federal grants in arms to the states had been a staple of support since the Uniform Act of 1792, and Pennsylvania had supplied the volunteer militia companies with arms and camp supplies since the 1840s. But no direct or indirect appropriations had ever been directed toward the militia, except for the federal grant in arms apportioned to all state militias. Some local units, acting in concert with sympathetic government officials, attempted to exploit other sources of funding beyond the traditional gifts, charity fund raisers, and company levies that, heretofore, had kept most of them solvent.<sup>77</sup>

Philadelphia County's First Division was able to muster enough political support to pass a municipal ordinance that required men on the enrolled militia lists, who did not attach themselves to a volunteer company, to pay, on an annual basis, a two-dollar fine that was directed into the First Division Fund. This local "tax" or commutation, collected by the county treasurer, eventually benefited all of the county's militia companies.<sup>78</sup> There were concerns among ranking members and local politicians that if the tax faced legal challenges the courts would find it unconstitutional. In order to preclude this possibility Philadelphia legislators introduced a special supplement to the Militia Act that would pass constitutional muster.

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<sup>76</sup> The Militia Act of 1878 would make alcohol consumption and/or intoxication while on duty a court-martial offense.

<sup>77</sup> Logan Papers, MSS 0096, Folder 14. Albert Logan attests to the fact that the company levies remained a fairly constant fixture of militia and National Guard life well into the 1870s. Soon after joining the Duquesne Grays, Logan was concerned that he would not be able to attend the yearly encampment because he did not have the ten-dollar company levy.

<sup>78</sup> Uzal W. Ent, *The First Hundred Years*, 66.

The membership of the First Division lobbied a number of representatives and senators from around the state when the special supplement was under consideration by the legislature. This appropriation was to be distributed to the militia based on proportionate numbers on the enrollment lists as well as the numbers serving in volunteer units. Based on this formula the First Division had a great deal to gain financially from this bill. An officer and historian of the *Washington Grays* Regiment stated that the Philadelphia militia “began to look to the exercise of its influence for the betterment of the improvident legislation then in operation.”<sup>79</sup> A grand military fete was organized by the officers, and prominent members of the General Assembly were in attendance in Philadelphia’s armory in March of 1867. Fun and frolic had but one object- to move the assembled legislators to “take into consideration the merits of the proposed

legislation.”<sup>80</sup>

The supplement that ultimately passed during that session granted the First Division the statutory protection that it required in order to continue collecting the tax. An 1870 legislative supplement extended a fifty-cent commutation tax on a statewide basis with the proceeds marked to support all militia units. This same supplement reduced the Philadelphia tax to one dollar. In his annual report submitted in 1882, Adjutant General James Latta questioned whether the tax was a practical means of supporting the National Guard. Latta was in an excellent position to assess the effectiveness of the tax. He had command of Philadelphia’s famed *Washington Grays* while the commutation tax was in effect. In his opinion, all such commutation- type taxes or fines were useless: “Odious, and its enforcement expensive, it was

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<sup>79</sup> James W. Latta, *History of the First Regiment of Infantry The Pennsylvania National Guard* (Philadelphia : J.B. Lippincott Company, 1912), 147. Latta notes that the tax, while it remained on the books, brought \$4,124.28 into the regimental fund.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

rarely collected. To be sure there were numerous fines imposed upon delinquent volunteer militiamen ... but no one ever heard of their [the fines] imposition or collection.<sup>81</sup>

Remuneration difficulties were not unique to the Pennsylvania militia, as militias throughout the Union struggled to keep themselves financially solvent in the first decade after the Civil War. As in other times in American history, taxpayers and state legislatures both dismissed the necessity of direct appropriations for military forces in a time of peace. And the clear absence of a foreign threat to the United States increased the influence of those who advocated greater economy in the armed forces. This marked “indifference” to the financial needs of state and regular forces had its foundation in the desire for peace induced by four years of the bloodiest war in the nation’s history. Most veterans felt little but disdain and loathing for the trappings and discipline required in military organizations. The militia remained an organization with little sense of purpose. Fraternal and social organizations abounded, men did not have to join militia units to find fellowship and social connections. In such an atmosphere the militia found itself starved for funds, recruits, and respect.<sup>82</sup>

The prospects for the Pennsylvania militia at this time were stark, but not without hope. Despite the lack of finances and a defined mission there was an increased interest in the militia, at least in the Commonwealth.<sup>83</sup> Despite the shortage of recruits in most state militias, Pennsylvania’s active militia numbers in the years between 1865 and 1877 were consistently

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<sup>81</sup> The Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, *The Annual Report of the Adjutant General of Pennsylvania for the Year 1882* (Hereafter cited as *AGR*), (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1883), 1.

<sup>82</sup> On post war malaise and its effects on the militia see: William H. Riker, *Soldiers of the States: The Role of the National Guard in American Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1957, 41-47. ; Holmes, “The National Guard of Pennsylvania”, 51-54.

<sup>83</sup> State militia’s were struggling everywhere: “The volunteer militia, which in many States [like] Pennsylvania and Ohio seems to have given its last kick, and to be lying, at present, in a hopelessly comatose state.” *The New York Times*, August 6, 1868.



high with a tendency to increase from year to year. The low point for the active militia was in the years 1865 - 1871 when the average annual strength was less than 2,225 officers and men.<sup>84</sup> In the half dozen years preceding the labor riots of 1877 the average increased to over 9,900 total personnel.

One way to gauge the general health of a militia organization in the years following the Civil War was to compare the amount of credit that states received from the War Department for the weapons and ammunition that had been issued to, and held by the states during the conflict. The equipment was typically stored and maintained in the state arsenals. Pennsylvania was one of the few states that received total credit, and Riker infers that states that did not secure and maintain military stores were “not in the least interested in maintaining a militia.”<sup>85</sup> Pennsylvania was one of the few states that received full credit. States that did not secure and maintain military stores “were not in the least bit interested in maintaining a militia.” Pennsylvania was among the one-third of the states that kept a militia going in this period with “permanent and regularly trained volunteer companies with some sort of coordinating organization however slight.”<sup>86</sup>

Pennsylvania would continue to make efforts to strengthen its militia even before the pivotal year of 1877. Structural changes and increased financial support are indications of the state’s commitment to its militia.<sup>87</sup> A supplement to the 1867 Militia Act provided direct

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<sup>84</sup> *AGR*, 1865-1871. This figure was taken from the recapitulations of the “Consolidated Field Returns” for each of the years 1865-1871.

<sup>85</sup> Riker, *Soldiers of the States*, 44-45.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 46. Riker lists: MN, MA, CT, NY, NJ, PA, TX, OH, MI, WI, KS, CA .

<sup>87</sup> A commitment sustained by the Civil War veteran, and two-term governor of Pennsylvania- John F. Hartranft. See Latta, *History of the First Regiment*, 149.

financial support to the newly rechristened Pennsylvania National Guard.<sup>88</sup> The militia had a new name, but still remained without a mission. In 1873 the General Assembly, in a more substantive move, responded to the initiative of Governor Hartranft, and passed an annual appropriation that gave each Guard company, that met prescribed standards in numbers, drill, and discipline, four hundred dollars for general purposes. An annual inspection regime conducted by the Adjutant General and the Inspector General determined unit fitness. Both measures tied local units more tightly to state control.

An additional supplement in 1874 gave Guard units a measure of relief from the chronic financial difficulties that many units faced in securing adequate armory facilities. The legislation created an annual \$40,000 allocation to companies for armory rent. Units that met established standards (as described above), and were located outside of cities, boroughs, and townships with less than 15,000 in population, received one hundred dollars per year. Units located in the more populous areas received two hundred dollars.<sup>89</sup>

This latest supplemental statute also adjusted the Guard's unwieldy and often disjointed division structure with its superfluous ranks of general and staff officers. The 1873 report by the Adjutant General noted that twenty-one divisions with an equal number of generals and staffs was unworkable given that even in the best of circumstances the state could not field a force with more than 20,000 men. There were simply not enough weapons, uniforms, and other material on hand to equip a force of that size. Some divisions numbered their personnel in the hundreds while some were well over one thousand. The General Assembly pared down the number of divisions to ten. Officers who were rendered supernumerary by the reduction were

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<sup>88</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session 1870*, no. 42, sec. 1, 62. "That the active militia of this commonwealth shall hereafter be styled the National Guard of Pennsylvania, ... ."

<sup>89</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1874*, no. 78, sec. 4, 144.

honorably discharged from state service.<sup>90</sup> A number of companies were struck from the state rolls on account of their remote locations. Other, more fortunate units were recombined in the new table of organization. Many of the independent companies, who had always resisted integration into larger units, were folded into the division structure. Those independent companies that balked at the move were released from state service. With an eye to logistical concerns, the governor was given the authorization to redistribute and redistrict the divisions “so that by lines of railway or contiguous localities the troops therein may be more speedily concentrated.”<sup>91</sup>

Despite the legislative efforts noted above to increase direct support from the state treasury, most Guard companies struggled to stay afloat financially. They relied upon the monthly dues and special levies paid by members and the largesse of wealthy benefactors to remain solvent. Some units, especially those that either owned or rented appropriate armory facilities became creative fund-raisers by hiring out their facilities or serving as sponsors for events that ran the gamut from amateur athletic exhibitions to professional theatrical performances. In addition to generating much needed income these public events served as valuable recruiting opportunities.<sup>92</sup>

The Pennsylvania General Assembly provided Guard units with several useful pieces of legislation that served to facilitate fund-raising and protect the assets such as gifts and bequests gleaned from private benefactors. Incorporation and tax exemptions were two such

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<sup>90</sup> The Adjutant General’s return for 1874 illustrates the immediate impact of the legislation. In 1873 there were 13,566 enlisted men and 1,126 officers. The next year’s return reports 8,261 enlisted and 738 officers.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 69. Cooper notes yet another purpose for these types of event as they “played a significant role in community social life by demonstrating that the unit included members of leading local families and contributed to the annual social calendar.”

tools that were made available to the Guard to protect such assets. An 1864 law granted the *Duquesne Grays*, a Pittsburgh infantry regiment, corporate status. The unit was permitted to own, rent, and lease property, and dispose of real assets provided income from the sales did not exceed \$25,000. All other income from gifts, bequests, and “other” sources was exempt from county and city (but not state) taxes. As a corporation the *Grays* could borrow money or issue bonds or certificates in twenty-five dollar shares bearing eight percent interest. All unit personnel and their successors were members of the corporation.<sup>93</sup> The only other piece of special legislation granted inheritance tax relief for a sizeable bequest that had been made to a Philadelphia unit.<sup>94</sup>

Notwithstanding some modest funding increases and some measured initiatives in the direction of organizational reform, the Pennsylvania National Guard in the mid 1870s was still very much an amateur, poorly organized military force with a number of additional weaknesses. The men still had to purchase their own uniforms and equipment.<sup>95</sup> Weapons were provided by federal and state grants, but the recipients were forced to pay shipping costs.<sup>96</sup> With each man responsible for the purchase of his own uniforms and equipment Guardsmen outfitted themselves as their finances and personal tastes dictated. This led to a disparity in the quality, and therefore, the durability of clothing and field gear; it certainly made the jobs of quartermasters and commissaries very difficult when the Guard was called into service.<sup>97</sup> Military training, when it

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<sup>93</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1864*, no. 284, 291-292.

<sup>94</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1870*, no. 515, sec.1, 537. The \$11,000 bequest was made to the illustrious *First City Troop* by a Civil War veteran.

<sup>95</sup> In his annual message to the General Assembly in 1871, Governor Geary stated that the state lacked cavalry units despite the number of applications to form troops. The state did not have the equipment to outfit them.

<sup>96</sup> Clarke, *Official History of the Militia*, vol.II, 107.

<sup>97</sup> Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, *Annual Reports*, 1865-1877, *passim*. The lack of equipment and clothing standardization was a constant complaint that can be found not only in

occurred, was limited to close-order drill and spit and polish inspections. Most officers trained their men according to the drill elaborated in the obsolete manual *Hardee's Tactics*. It was highly doubtful that officers could control movements of units above the company level. Companies drilled independently, and usually never maneuvered in larger units except during parades. There was certainly no training in crowd or riot control. A tactical doctrine for such duties did not exist, either in the Guard, or in the Regular Army.

Despite the efforts made toward reorganization and the establishment of a more coherent system of command, control, and mobilization, the Pennsylvania National Guard of the early and mid 1870s was still plagued by structural weaknesses and a pronounced parochialism that belied the efforts to centralize control at the state, or even the division, level. Companies seldom, if ever, drilled or maneuvered in their respective battalion, regimental, or brigade formations. Independent companies, according to the state regulations, were attached to specific regiments, but they usually refused to be folded into the larger formations when state authorities ordered them to deploy.<sup>98</sup> Troops of cavalry and batteries of artillery were seldom integrated with their infantry counterparts except in the occasional ceremonial parade. Whether or not commanders could exercise command and control of large formations composed of all arms, and the required support services, was certainly problematic.

Although state assistance for the National Guard was increasing, there were still impediments to command centralization. While local companies eagerly accepted federal and state aid, they still existed in a culture of independence and home rule. As we have seen companies were created and maintained by citizens who did so on a voluntary basis. They paid

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the annual report of the Adjutant General, but also in the reports of division, brigade, and regimental commanders. The lack of standard issue caliber rifles and pistols was a nightmare for ordnance officers.

<sup>98</sup> Clarke, *Official History of the Militia*, vol.1, 149-150.

their dues and other fees, purchased their own equipment, and elected their own officers, in short, they owned the company franchise.<sup>99</sup> In many ways the Pennsylvania National Guard still had much in common with its *ante bellum* predecessor. It remained a fraternal association or club with a military veneer in an amorphous relationship with state authority.

Prior to the calamities of 1877 the Pennsylvania National Guard, when it was called upon to mobilize and execute its constabulary duties, appeared adequate to the limited tasks entrusted to it. The Guard was mobilized and deployed for strike duty on four occasions in the years 1871-1876. A strike by anthracite coal miners against the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company near Scranton in 1871, took a violent and deadly turn when the company attempted to break the strike with miners disaffected by lost wages. Factional fighting within the ranks of the miners led to intimidation, physical assault, and murder.

Scranton's mayor appealed to Governor Hartranft for National Guard assistance in the restoration of order. Hartranft ordered Major General E.S. Osborne's Ninth Division, headquartered in Wilkes-Barre, to Scranton to suppress mob activity and restore the peace. Osborne's command, numbering about one thousand officers and men arrived on May 17, and began at once to patrol the pit access points which had been the scenes of the most recent violence. Those at work in the mines were given protective escorts and the company resumed operations. But on May 17, a very large crowd gathered to jeer at and otherwise intimidate the workers and their National Guard escorts. A cascade of stones pummeled the miners and the soldiers. Shots were fired at the protestors and two of their number fell dead. Soon after the

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<sup>99</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 37. Cooper notes the consequences of this relative autonomy: "As long as units supported themselves they would remain unstable, conducting their affairs largely as they saw fit and ignoring state needs."

shooting the strike ended and the Guard was quickly withdrawn.<sup>100</sup> The Ninth Division's tour of duty lasted a little over sixty days.<sup>101</sup> In his official report General Osborne stated that he regretted the use of troops and that "... no one can hope more sincerely than do I that such an occasion may never arise again."<sup>102</sup>

The following year lumber mill workers in Williamsport struck for a reduction in work hours. The operators attempted to keep the mills running with replacement workers. The predictable violence ensued, and the sheriff of Lycoming County advised the governor that he could no longer control the situation with the manpower he had at his disposal. Governor Geary sent General Jesse Merrill's Eleventh Division, a unit based in Schuylkill County, to Williamsport and within the week the situation was under control, once again without shots being fired. The troops involved in the Williamsport strike received praise from many quarters. But one unit, the *Taylor Guards* from Williamsport, was singled out in the Adjutant General's report. The *Taylor*s were an African-American company whose members lived and worked in the Williamsport area.<sup>103</sup> The 1872 returns lists one other such unit- the *Colored Company of Titusville*.<sup>104</sup>

Units of the Guard were again on active duty in 1874 when workers of the Erie Railroad struck over wages. Workers utilized a new tactic when they seized and occupied the

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<sup>100</sup> The shooting remained controversial. General Osbourne's report to the Adjutant General stated that a miner under escort fired in self-defense and was later acquitted. William Zierdt in his history of the 109<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery claims the shots were fired by the troops. William F. Zierdt, *A Narrative History of the 109<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery 1775-1930* (Wilkes Barre, PA : for the Society by E.B. Yordy co., 1932), 110.

<sup>101</sup> AGR, 1871, 12-15.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 12. General Osborne was also employed as general counsel for the Erie Railroad. His National Guard pay for strike duty was one thousand dollars.

<sup>103</sup> AGR, 1872, 14. The report praised "Their full ranks, their soldierly bearing, their excellent discipline and calm forbearance they exhibited, when marching through the excited mob that was jeering and hooting at them, excited the admiration of all."

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 76.

company's property at the Susquehanna Depot.<sup>105</sup> The sheriff of Susquehanna County requested the governor's assistance after the strikers refused to end their occupation and disperse. He had only a handful of constables in his employ and his call to form a posse was virtually ignored.<sup>106</sup> The sheriff then sent an urgent request for troops to the governor's office. Governor Geary turned to Major General Osborne's Ninth Division along with the First Regiment of the First Division in support. A total of eighteen hundred troops were concentrated in the affected areas. The Guard deployed in good order and the strikers quickly relinquished company property and dispersed without incident. The strike ended soon thereafter. Once again it seemed that the mere presence of National Guard troops was enough to overawe any potential resistance and stabilize the situation.<sup>107</sup>

In 1875 workers struck the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. The strike spread and soon encompassed most of Pennsylvania's anthracite region. In the middle of March company owners attempted to bring replacement workers to the region by rail. Striking miners fired on the trains and the idea was quickly abandoned. At the end of the month, after continued unrest, Governor John Hartranft ordered The Fourth Division to duty in Schuylkill County.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Perry K. Blatz, "Titanic Struggles 1873-1916," *Keystone of Democracy: A History of Pennsylvania's Workers*, ed. Howard Harris (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1999), 89.

<sup>106</sup> Law enforcement was problematic for most states. In Pennsylvania county sheriffs worked with a small number of deputies. If the sheriff's resources proved inadequate to the enforcement problem at hand he had the *posse comitatus*. But if this was not a viable option his only recourse was the request for state troops.

<sup>107</sup> *AGR for 1874*, 17-28. Pennsylvania Brigadier General A.L. Russell observed that the Guard was a deterrent against riot: "The *known existence* [sic] of an organized militia, in a community is the surest protection against the incipency of such an outbreak- or crushing it once begun."

<sup>108</sup> *AGR for 1875*, 32-49.



The governor's intervention in this instance was not without controversy. The coal operators were convinced that Hartranft was sympathetic towards the strikers, and that he was not prepared to take the necessary steps to counter alleged worker violence with degree of force the operators demanded. The operators demanded that the General Assembly pass a motion censuring the governor's apparent lack of decisiveness.<sup>109</sup> Hartranft quickly issued a proclamation condemning all criminal activity associated with the strike. He also reinforced the National Guard contingent with additional units. The presence of the troops combined with the efforts made by local law enforcement officials brought calm to the mines in the Wilkes-Barre area. But collateral eruptions of strike-related violence in the vicinity of Hazleton kept the Guard on duty until late June, at which point the last of the Guard contingent was withdrawn.

The Pennsylvania National Guard was tried, but not really tested, by the strikes of the early and mid 1870s. In those actions the Guard was able to deploy limited forces in good order and maintain them in the field for extended tours of duty. The troops (except, perhaps, on a single occasion in the Scranton strike) did not have to use their weapons to disperse mobs and restore order. It seemed as if the mere presence of uniformed men, marching in parade formation and manning skirmish lines, was enough to restore order. For the state of Pennsylvania the cost of deploying the National Guard for strike duty was acceptable, given the potential exhibited in each strike for the loss of life as well as damage to private, public, and corporate property.<sup>110</sup>

The centennial year of 1876 found the Pennsylvania National Guard encamped together for the first time in its history for the International Exhibition. Camp Anthony Wayne

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<sup>109</sup> Clarence E. Bonnett, *History of Employers' Associations in the United States* (New York: Vantage Press, 1956), 122-123.

<sup>110</sup> The cost of National Guard service in the strikes: 1871- \$37,867.36 ,1872- \$24,306.52 1874- \$2,992.80 ; 1875- \$34,516.00. Pennsylvania Executive Documents, *Annual Report of the Auditor General for: 1871,1872,1874,1875*.

in Fairmont Park Philadelphia was the scene of an endless round of inspections, guard mounts, banquets, visiting dignitaries, and parades. The Guard marched through Philadelphia's main concourses in the sweltering mid-summer heat in their usual eclectic mix of uniforms and furnishings. Philadelphia's own *State Fencibles* put on a dazzling display of close order drill and formation marching. An observant journalist noted that the performance was dazzling but it had no military purpose.<sup>111</sup>

The colorful display advertised not just the traditional proclivity for self-expression maintained by Guardsmen, but also as the state's inability or unwillingness to support its troops with standardized uniforms, weapons, and training. The Guard still did not have basic military equipment or a rudimentary logistical system. Many of the same troops that paraded in Philadelphia's Fairmont Park would be maneuvering on other city streets within the next year, but they would not be on parade- they would be fighting for their lives.

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<sup>111</sup> Thomas S. Lanard, *One Hundred Years with the State Fencibles* (Philadelphia: Nields Co., 1913), 189. "It is true these fancy movements excite the applause of the multitude, but experienced military men regard them as only fitted for showmen."

#### IV. "Urban Warfare: Pittsburgh, 1877"

An urgent message requesting immediate military assistance was wired to Governor Hartranft by R.H. Fife, sheriff of Allegheny County, on July 20, 1877, and it signals the beginning of Pittsburgh's role in the most violent and widespread labor unrest in American history. The trouble began in a location not far removed from Pittsburgh when trainmen of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad walked off the job at the company facilities in Martinsburg, West Virginia on July 16, 1877. The workers were responding to recently announced ten percent cut in wages.<sup>112</sup> This was just the latest in a series of reductions imposed by the B&O since the beginning of the panic of 1874. By the summer of 1877 trainmen's wages were fifty percent below pre-recession levels.<sup>113</sup>

The situation escalated when the strikers and hundreds of sympathizers seized control of tracks and company facilities along the B&O line in the Martinsburg vicinity. Over one thousand freight cars were stranded on the tracks as strikers refused to let any rail traffic through the depot. Governor Mathews ordered out units of the state militia when local authorities proved incapable of opening the lines and restoring order. The troops, arriving by rail, were shot at and quickly put to flight. Mathews ordered more militia to the area as the strike spread to Wheeling, Parkersburg, and all along the B&O line into Maryland. Citizens who lived along the line

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<sup>112</sup> *New York Times*, July 17, 1877. "The intention of the company to make the reduction had been announced some time previously, and there was no complaint, ... except that the reduction was a hardship to employees, which every one will admit."

<sup>113</sup> Foner, *The Great labor Uprising*, 33.

supported the strikers. The Guardsmen in West Virginia were not just dealing with strikers. The community itself had risen against the authority of the state. It is small wonder that those troops that bothered to answer the governor's call proved unreliable. They, too, either supported the workers, or feared for their lives.<sup>114</sup> Governor Mathews then made a request to President Hayes for federal troops.

The Pittsburgh troubles began on July 19, when trainmen of the Pennsylvania Railroad initiated a strike in reaction to a ten percent wage cut, and the company's recently announced plan to further cut costs by increasing the number of "double-header" trains running out of the Pittsburgh depot.<sup>115</sup> The workers followed the example of their counterparts on the B&O by seizing PRR facilities and blocking rail traffic at the Pittsburgh depot. Freight trains were unable to leave the city and the worker's ranks swelled with supporters from all over the city converging at the East Liberty yard near Twenty-eighth Street.<sup>116</sup> The rush of non-striking employees to the support of the trainmen might have been expected; the company and its corporate leadership aroused near universal enmity in the working people of Pittsburgh. Officials of the PRR demanded that the local authorities quell the disorder and reopen the rail lines.

But the demands of company officials fell on deaf ears. Mayor William C. McCarthy explained that the city had just nine police officers on the day shift and that the 122 officers that would come on the night turn "could not be spared to be sent to the scene of the disturbances as

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<sup>114</sup> *New York Times*, July 18, 1877. "The great trouble, however, is that the people along the line of the road are thoroughly in sympathy with the strikers and the military cannot be depended on to act against them in an emergency." A *Times* editorial on this same date accused the militia of "abject cowardice".

<sup>115</sup> Blatz, "Titanic Struggles," 93.

<sup>116</sup> *Pittsburgh Critic*, reprinted in Pennsylvania House and Senate, *Committee Appointed... to Investigate... the Railroad Riots*, 818. "They [people of Pittsburgh] are incensed beyond measure with ... the colder and more corrupt organization known as the Pennsylvania Railroad Company."

they must be kept in the thicker portions of the city.”<sup>117</sup> The mayor then stated that he would have nothing more to do with the situation and that he had to leave town to visit his ailing wife in Turtle Creek. But before he left he advised the PRR officials to request assistance from the county sheriff.<sup>118</sup>

Early in the morning on July 20, company supervisors, joined by PRR general solicitor John Scott and the commander of the Pennsylvania National Guard’s Sixth Division, A.L. Pearson, met with Sheriff Fife.<sup>119</sup> Fife agreed that the situation required his immediate attention. This group then proceeded on to Twenty-eighth street. Fife climbed up on a railroad car and informed the crowd “that under the law they were rioters and must disperse. At this the crowd laughed and began to jeer him. All his efforts were unavailing.”<sup>120</sup>

Sheriff Fife then made his request to the Governor Hartranft for National Guard troops to suppress the riot that seemed to be in progress. The governor was not present in Harrisburg—he was not even in the state. Hartranft was in the midst of a long planned trip to California.<sup>121</sup> In the absence of the governor, Adjutant General Latta was given the discretion to act “in case there was any trouble in my absence, and to issue orders by my authority.”<sup>122</sup> Latta immediately ordered General Pearson, who had command of the Pittsburgh region, to deploy at least one regiment from the Sixth Division, and to be prepared to use more troops if necessary.

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> General Pearson was there under orders from Adjutant General James Latta who wanted up to the minute reports on the situation. See: *AGR*, 1877, 2.

<sup>120</sup> *The Pittsburgh Daily Post*, July 21, 1877.

<sup>121</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... Railroad Riots*, 593-594. Foner claims that this junket was paid for by the PRR but offers no documentation. Foner, *The Great Labor Uprising*, 59.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 595.

Pearson ordered the Eighteenth Regiment, under the Command of Colonel P.N. Guthrie to assemble and march out and secure Torrens Station, a strategic rail juncture near Sharpsburg, that was then in the possession of a hostile crowd.<sup>123</sup> General Pearson also ordered the Fourteenth and Nineteenth regiments, both Allegheny county units, to the Twenty-eighth street crossing, the scene of Sheriff Fife's recent humiliation. Sheriff Fife accompanied General Pearson and the troops to the scene and again ordered the crowds to disperse, an order that was met with more derision and insult. The Guard troops were in a precarious position. Pearson later estimated that he had, at that early stage, only one-third of the Eighteenth Regiment, around 150 men, and the Nineteenth was similarly short of personnel when it arrived on the scene. Pearson ordered out the rest of Sixth Division "Thinking it better to overawe the mob by an appearance of strength, and thus avert bloodshed."<sup>124</sup> But the First Brigade commander, General Robert Brown, could not get his hesitant troops to assemble more quickly, and he would not get his under strength command (three or four companies at half strength) to the site for five more hours. They arrived at Union depot at 4:30 P.M. on the afternoon of July 21.<sup>125</sup>

When Brown and his depleted command finally appeared, Pearson ordered it to proceed to the twenty-Eighth Street crossing to reinforce the two regiments already in place. But soon after starting out, Brown received an order from Pearson to countermarch back to the Penn depot. Pearson later explained that the situation, like the agitated crowd, was growing more

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<sup>123</sup> Logan Papers, MSS 0096, Folder 14. Logan notes that his personal call-up was relatively informal given the circumstances: "I had read in the morning paper that the Regiment [18<sup>th</sup>] had been put on duty." According to Logan the crowd at Torrens simply melted away when the troops arrived.

<sup>124</sup> AGR, 1877, "Official Report of Major General A.L. Pearson, Commander, Sixth Division", 107. Pearson's every action was the target of both official and public criticism.

<sup>125</sup> The investigatory committee believed that this was deliberate on the part of the troops because they supported the strikers.

dangerous and that Brown “had not force sufficient to accomplish anything there.”<sup>126</sup> It was at this point that General Pearson decided that the majority of his men were unreliable in the present circumstances, and wired Latta that he “feared that many of the troops in some of the regiments were in sympathy with the strikers.”<sup>127</sup> Pearson was of the opinion that two thousand more troops would be required, and that they ought to come from Philadelphia.

Latta obviously concurred with this estimation. He wired Major General Robert M. Brinton, commander of the Philadelphia-based First Division, and ordered him get to get his command ready to move to Pittsburgh. Brinton reacted quickly and by the evening of July 20 he had six hundred men ready to entrain. At midnight he informed General Latta that he would have to make a stop in Harrisburg because there was “no place in Philadelphia where any ammunition could be stored, the division was without any.”<sup>128</sup>

Brinton picked up ammunition and two Gatling guns at the Harrisburg Arsenal and proceeded on to Pittsburgh where he and his command arrived just after noon on July 21.

After a quick meal, served to the men by the staff of the PRR, General Brinton and his officers held a conference with General Latta, who had recently arrived in Pittsburgh and had set up a headquarters at the Union Depot Hotel. General Pearson, with the concurrence of General Latta, ordered the Philadelphians to accompany him to the Twenty-Eighth Street crossing to join what was left of the two Pittsburgh regiments that had been positioned there for the last thirty-six hours. Pearson assured General Brinton that the Pittsburgh troops had taken possession of the

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<sup>126</sup> *Committee Appointed... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 8.

<sup>127</sup> *AGR*, 1877, 107. Pearson added that the PRR executives were getting impatient and that “they suggested that a Philadelphia Regiment be sent.”

<sup>128</sup> *AGR*, 1878, “Official Report of Major General R.M. Brinton, Commander, First Division,” 28.

bluffs that ran parallel to the tracks, the crossing, and the PRR facilities located in that vicinity.<sup>129</sup>

But the men of the Nineteenth and Fourteenth Regiments had not kept the crowds from the bluffs or the tracks and crossing. After two halfhearted attempts to clear the ground, the troops (those who had not yet gone home) had stacked their weapons and mingled freely with the crowd. When the Philadelphia troops marched up to the site around 4:00 P.M., they could see only a “dense crowd that filled the Twenty-eighth street crossing and vicinity, and was so mixed up with soldiers that no lines of regiments or companies could be observed.”<sup>130</sup> General Pearson also noted the apparent disappearance of his two regiments: “The Fourteenth regiment was very nearly hidden from view by the thousands of men, women, and children that lined the hillside ... some of the men had thrown down their arms and left the field”, others were throwing up their hats, shouting, and in favor of mob rule.”<sup>131</sup>

The arrival of the Philadelphia Guardsmen seemed to further infuriate an already agitated and volatile crowd. Huge crowds were out in the streets of Pittsburgh. The Philadelphia Guardsmen were not just confronting a group of disgruntled railroad employees. Throughout the city, the undermanned and poorly prepared troops confronted an aroused community in arms. John I. Nevin, editor of the *Pittsburgh Leader*, suggested that the long-standing rivalry between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia made the use of the First Division contributed to the high level of tension when the Philadelphia Guardsmen arrived on the scene. One local newspaper declared that the use of Philadelphia troops “to quell domestic quarrel is reprehensible beyond degree”.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>130</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 9.

<sup>131</sup> *AGR for 1877*, 110.

<sup>132</sup> *Pittsburgh Critic*, July 28, 1877. Quoted in *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 818.



The fact that Philadelphia was the corporate home of the hated PRR only made matters worse in the eyes of most Pittsburghers.<sup>133</sup>

A plan of action was hurriedly composed. Brinton's First Brigade, under General D. De. C. Loud, was ordered to get control of the track and standing freight cars at Twenty-sixth Street. The rest of the command, led by Brinton himself, was detailed to clear and hold the track and switches at Twenty-eighth Street. When these two objectives achieved the PRR men would then run locomotives down the track and pull away the freight cars. Inexplicably, as the action commenced, the overall commander, General Pearson, left the scene to telegraph Latta and ask for reinforcements that were supposedly en route to the city.<sup>134</sup> On order, at about 5:00 P.M., the Philadelphians moved forward in column and deployed into line as they neared the crowd. As they moved closer the crowd at first kept its distance as it moved back at a deliberate pace.

The men were ordered to fix their bayonets and drive forward at the quick step. The crowd was "supposed to be pushed back, but as usual in all crowds those in front were unable to move because of the pressure from the thousands behind them."<sup>135</sup> People in front of the troops began to tug at, and otherwise deflect, the bayonets. All the while stone, bricks, and other debris cascaded down on the troops from the bluffs.<sup>136</sup> Some pistol shots rang out from the general direction of the crowd, and at that point a few men positioned in the company on the extreme right of the skirmish line fired their weapons. The rest of the skirmish line then individually shouldered their weapons and fired into the crowd.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 822. "They [the PRR] have been systematically oppressing Pittsburgh."

<sup>134</sup> *AGR* 1878, 110-111.

<sup>135</sup> *National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), July 28, 1877. Report on the coroner's inquest.

<sup>136</sup> *AGR*, 1878. 31. Pearson claimed "Five *per centum* of my command fell from stones and bullets fired from the bluff."

General Brinton and his officers ran up and down the line ordering the men to cease their fire. Many newspapers mistakenly reported that the absent General Pearson had given the order to shoot and that the troops continued to load and fire at the crowd. Brinton later reported that the shooting was a spontaneous reaction, initiated by men who had reached their limit of abuse from the crowd.<sup>137</sup> A number of people lay dead and wounded in the street. Family members and friends carried some of the casualties away. Later official accounts fixed the number of dead at thirty with an untold number of wounded.<sup>138</sup> In response to the shooting the mob had cleared away from Twenty-eighth Street and the Philadelphia troops at last had sole possession of the “field”. General Pearson, suddenly on the scene after the shooting, ordered the men to move back down the tracks to the PRR machine shops and roundhouses in the vicinity of Twenty-sixth Street. Pearson then told Brinton to occupy the upper roundhouse so that the men could rest and eat. Those men that remained from the Fourteenth and Nineteenth Regiments were ordered off the bluffs and into the wooden-framed transfer sheds, some two hundred yards north of the roundhouse.<sup>139</sup>

Soon after a mob, more heavily armed than before, quickly formed in the vicinity of the recent shooting and moved down toward the roundhouse throwing stones and shooting all the while. General Pearson ordered the troops in the roundhouse not to fire at the advancing mob.<sup>140</sup> The lack of defensive fire seemed to have encouraged the mob and it surged around the

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., “Being obliged to act in self defense, some of the men fired a shot or two, which, before orders could be given, was followed by a volley along the line.”

<sup>138</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, August 20, 1877. On July 22, *The New York Times* initially reported that hundreds had been killed and wounded- including Sheriff Fife.

<sup>139</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 384. Pearson “believed that it would have been mere and utter foolishness to keep General Brinton’s troops standing on the tracks ... exposing that command to danger.”

<sup>140</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 33. Brinton reported that “he begged General Pearson to allow me to clear away the mob, but he persistently refused to permit a shot to be fired.”

roundhouse and machine shops. Brinton later testified that if he had been allowed to clear the streets with a few volleys the riots would have been ended: “our strict obedience to orders was mistaken by the mob for cowardice.”<sup>141</sup> At this critical juncture General Pearson left the roundhouse and made his way to the Union depot for the purpose of getting rations and ammunition for the besieged troops.

As the assault on the roundhouse intensified, General Brown, in command of the remnants of the Fourteenth and Nineteenth regiments, ordered his men to abandon the transfer sheds and disband. They immediately made for their homes and carried their weapons with them. Brown later testified that he had only one half of his men left at that point and his position was untenable and that they had to get out. He also believed that the presence of his men only aggravated the situation. He, too, believed that the majority of his men were in sympathy with the strikers and would be unreliable in action.<sup>142</sup>

Pearson arrived at the Union Depot Hotel about one half hour after he left Brinton’s command in the roundhouse. He told General Latta that the *Philadelphia* Guardsmen needed rations and ammunition and that the situation was getting more dangerous as time passed. He also informed Latta that the strikers and the rest of the public now “blamed him (Pearson) for the shooting and that for that reason he ought to go somewhere safe”<sup>143</sup>

Latta agreed and for all intents and purposes Pearson was relieved from command but no replacement was appointed. Pennsylvania’s Adjutant General took charge. Latta ordered an

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup><sup>142</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 12. Brown said that this was the best opinion of civilian and military experts who were on the scene. The *National Labor Tribune* reported that the “local militia, disgusted with the wanton destruction of the lives of their kindred, deserted their posts.”

<sup>143</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 114-115. Pearson later testified that Latta made this suggestion *to* him and that it was not his idea.

attempt to re-supply the Philadelphians by running an engine and some cars up the line from the Union depot, but fires that had broken out near the roundhouse frustrated this attempt.<sup>144</sup>

Brinton's situation in the roundhouse deteriorated even further in the early morning hours of July 22. His hungry and exhausted men endured an ever-increasing level of fire from the mob. Freight cars were set on fire and run down the tracks in an attempt to engulf the roundhouse. The troops were on constant alert for any signs of fire. Around 1:00 A.M. the mob, having somehow gotten possession of a twelve pound field piece, wheeled it up Liberty Avenue and attempted to bring the gun on line against the roundhouse. At that point Brinton ordered his men to shoot anyone who attempted to fire the cannon after first issuing a warning. Several men made attempts to fire the gun but were cut down by accurate fire from the besieged troops. One newspaper reported that the crowd remained undeterred by the fire from the roundhouse and made several more attempts to get the gun into action.<sup>145</sup>

Brinton, not having heard from General Pearson, decided to establish contact with the Union depot headquarters. About 2:00 A.M. , he sent one of his noncommissioned officers on this dangerous mission. The man, dressed in civilian clothing, made his way through the mob and down Liberty Avenue to the depot and reported to General Latta. Realizing the desperate straits of Brinton's men, Latta ordered the Eighteenth Regiment (at that point still holding Torrens station) to move to the Twenty-eighth street and link up with the Philadelphia Guardsmen. He sent a message back to Brinton "suggesting" that he "Hold on vigorously", and that Guthrie and the Eighteenth were on the way with ammunition and "certainly should reach

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<sup>144</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 624-624.

<sup>145</sup> *Pittsburgh Telegraph*, July 27, 1877. "The pertinacity and utter disregard of life displayed by the rioters in their attempts to fire that piece was astonishing."

you by five or six o'clock" in the morning.<sup>146</sup> It was further "suggested" that Brinton, if obliged to retreat, should move down Penn Street to Torrens Station.<sup>147</sup>

By eight o'clock on the morning of July 22, Brinton had no indication that Guthrie and the Eighteenth were anywhere in the vicinity. He ordered his men to draw up in column formation, made provisions for the wounded men to travel, and moved out of the roundhouse in good order with Gatling guns in tow. Brinton had decided to make for the U.S. Arsenal near Fortieth Street, rather than Penn depot. As the two Philadelphia brigades moved down Twenty-fifth Street and across to Penn Avenue, the mob held back. This lull was temporary, however, soon heavy fire was directed at the long column. A Pittsburgh reporter on the scene noted that the Guardsmen were cool and calm "under the heavy fire with steady and measured step, as on review, and colors flying."<sup>148</sup>

The intense gunfire began to take its effect on the column as it made its retreat as three men were killed and several were wounded. Snipers had taken positions in the upper stories of houses and businesses that lined Penn Avenue. Brinton later reported that, at certain points along the march, Pittsburgh police officers joined in and took shots at the troops.<sup>149</sup> The column was halted at several locations and the troops were ordered to return fire. After Brinton's command finally reached the reached the U.S. Arsenal, its commander, Major Thomas Buffington, U.S.A., told him that he could leave his wounded there, but the troops would have to leave the arsenal grounds. Buffington was obviously intimidated by the size and violent

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<sup>146</sup> *AGR, for 1878*, 35. Latta added: "Your indomitable pluck and spirit are certainly encouraging and commendable." There was still no plan to get rations to the men in the roundhouse.

<sup>147</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 969. Brinton testified that he perceived these, not as orders, but as suggestions.

<sup>148</sup> *The Pittsburgh Telegraph*, July 27, 1877. The reporter also noted that many people who lived along the line of retreat did not realize that these were the "hated Philadelphians."

<sup>149</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 38. Brinton stated: "That this will be vouched for by several men of my command ... whose word cannot be questioned."

intensity of the mob. If he gave shelter to Brinton's men he would have to contend with an aroused community. Brinton decided that he did not want an altercation with U.S. troops and he ordered the men to move out.<sup>150</sup>

Still having had no communication with General Latta, Brinton marched the men from the arsenal and across the Sharpsburg Bridge, onto the grounds of the Claremont Workhouse. There they received food and water from the workhouse stores. The officers ordered the men to make camp, and the troops spent an uneventful night. The next morning Brinton finally contacted General Latta. The Adjutant General ordered The Philadelphia Guardsmen to take the next available train to Altoona. Brinton's command entrained that morning at six o'clock and left Pittsburgh.

The situation in the city had deteriorated as the fires started back at the East Liberty yard destroyed more PRR facilities. At Torrens Station, Colonel Guthrie's Eighteenth Regiment, faced a large crowd that threatened the flow of rail traffic. Guthrie's men swept the area several times with lines of skirmishers and kept the tracks clear. On a few occasions he ordered the men to load their weapons "and this of itself dispersed them."<sup>151</sup>

General Latta gave Guthrie command of the Sixth Division and ordered him to march to the PRR property in East Liberty. Upon arrival, Guthrie decided that he was too late to do anything about the destruction and proceeded on to the division armory where they spent the night. The next morning the reformed Fourteenth and Nineteenth Regiments joined Guthrie. They were soon ordered to disturbances that had arisen in the anthracite region of the state.

Slowly law and order returned to Pittsburgh. After the arson and looting that took place on the weekend, the police department, assisted by citizens' vigilance committees,

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<sup>150</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 910.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

proceeded to patrol the streets and restore a degree of calm. But in other cities and towns in Pennsylvania the troubles continued unabated. Allegheny City was quite literally in the hands of strikers and their sympathizers. Upon the approach of Governor Hartranft's eastbound train, the leader of the strike issued the governor a welcome and a safe passage through the city and on to Harrisburg.<sup>152</sup> In Reading, Harrisburg, and Scranton- in "practically every town and city where the presence of the railroad was felt there were public gatherings in support of the strikers."<sup>153</sup> The problems in the Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Kingston areas were compounded when anthracite miners struck, and added their own weight to the disturbances.

Almost as soon as he arrived in Harrisburg, the governor sent a request to President Hayes for federal troops. Though he was reluctant to respond directly to calls for federal assistance, Hayes gave the necessary orders. Federal troops under General Winfield Scott Hancock marched to Harrisburg. There was some confusion over the issue of overall command of the operations. General Hancock eventually "Yielded to the doctrine of civil supremacy over the military."<sup>154</sup>

Hartranft, in collaboration with railroad officials and his military staff decided to open up the western rail lines by force, if necessary. The governor boarded a train on July 26, with three thousand U.S. regulars and six thousand National Guardsmen and moved west along the PRR line. Hartranft soon arrived in Pittsburgh and faced no opposition. Rail traffic returned to pre-strike levels as the trainmen went back to work. The governor used the same tactics to break worker resistance in the eastern mining region.

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<sup>152</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 23, 1877.

<sup>153</sup> Foner, *The Great Labor Uprising*, 70. Foner notes that most of this activity did not devolve into violence.

<sup>154</sup> Gerald C. Eggert, *Railroad Labor Disputes: The Beginning of Federal Strike Policy* (Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press , 1967), 32-33.

When the strikes began in the city of Reading the local National Guard unit, the *Reading Rifles*, refused to fire “on men who were workers just like themselves”.<sup>155</sup> Brigadier General Frank Reeder rushed to the city, from Lycoming County with his Fourth and Sixteenth regiments. The National Guard troops proved to be undisciplined and ineffectual. Federal troops were required to restore order. In Scranton, a vigilante group was formed and led into action by William Scranton, superintendent of the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company.<sup>156</sup> The violence intensified and many workers were killed and wounded in pitched battles with the vigilantes. The vigilante group held its own against the rioters until National Guard troops arrived and pacified the city.<sup>157</sup>

The troops of the Pennsylvania National Guard that served in the violent struggles of 1877 had never before seen such extensive and organized resistance. The logistical capacity of the Guard was stretched to the breaking point. Troops in many instances were undisciplined, insubordinate, and mutinous. Breakdowns in the chain of command were all too frequent as officers proved indecisive, cowardly and negligent. It was obvious that the Guard had failed the state just when it was needed the most. It was just as obvious that the Guard did not possess the manpower, resources, and training to handle the uprisings of 1877. The National Guard in Pennsylvania certainly bore no resemblance to the brutally efficient, paramilitary constabularies that were so often used to suppress popular protests and labor disturbances in Europe. The Guard never had (nor would it ever have) the men and material, or the mandate to serve as an instrument of social control. The National Guard was not even able to give the state adequate

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<sup>155</sup> Foner, *The Great Labor Uprising*, 72.

<sup>156</sup> Blatz, “Titanic Struggles,” 96.

<sup>157</sup> Samuel C. Logan, *A City's Danger and Defense*, (Scranton, PA: James Rodgers Co., 1887). The *Citizens' Corps* would eventually evolve into a Pennsylvania National Guard Regiment, the Thirteenth Regiment. Logan thoroughly covers its exploits throughout his massive work.



service during the uprising of 1877. It was apparent that the Guard in Pennsylvania needed significant reform.

## Chapter Two

The civil authorities, the media, and the public realized that the National Guard, for the most part, performed poorly during the disturbances of 1877. Modern histories of that event concur with the contemporary assessments of Guard performance. A special commission highlighted the breakdowns and offered suggestions for reform. Governor John F. Hartranft initiated a number of reforms that would markedly increase Guard efficiency and performance. Hartranft, and other like-minded legislators, viewed the Guard as a force of last resort. The improvements and ultimate use of the Guard have no relation to the community uprisings of 1877. Authorities insisted that it was county sheriffs, not the Guard, who had the duty to maintain law and order on the local level. Legal and constitutional parameters dictated that Commonwealth troops could only be employed if violence and lawlessness escalated above legally prescribed thresholds. It was the duty of sheriffs and their *posses* to prevent such escalations. Industrialists began to depend on private solutions to solve their labor problems. Corporations hired ever- greater numbers of Pinkerton detectives, Coal and Iron police, and Railroad police. Factory and mine owners had no control and very little influence in decisions to

deploy the Guard. They naturally turned to private security forces that they could control. For the twelve-year period following 1877 the National Guard was not mobilized for any purpose. This was one of the most important lessons of difficult events of 1877- the National Guard was intended to be a force of last resort, its deployment was a matter of grave consequence for all of the citizens of the Commonwealth.<sup>158</sup> It was certainly not at the beck and call of industrialists who wanted to break strikes, and it was not a mobile constabulary held in constant readiness for the use of jittery local authorities. It was during the period of “dormancy,” that the Guard was given the time to improve its efficiency in every possible way. When it was finally called out in 1889 for flood relief (not strike duty) it performed superbly.

## I. “Critics”

The failures of the Pennsylvania National Guard in 1877 were numerous and profound. Critical analyses of the actions taken by the governor, local civil authorities, and the Guard appeared in the pages of local and national newspapers even before the ruins in Pittsburgh’s East End had a chance to cool. Rather than apportion blame for individual acts of negligence or malfeasance, the *Times* of Philadelphia immediately focused on the need for

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<sup>158</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1878*, no.1, secs. 2,3. It certainly was expensive. This statute authorized the State Treasurer to pay \$380,000 to “the regimental staff, and commissioned line officers, and the non-commissioned officers and privates” for strike duty for the year 1877. A further \$330,000 was appropriated to pay for: “transportation, subsistence quartermaster stores, medical stores and incidental expenses.”

systemic changes within the National Guard. The *Times* urged a revitalization of an organization that had once flourished but had suffered, as events had indicated, a sharp decline.<sup>159</sup> The *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* charged that the Guard itself was to blame for the death and destruction in Pittsburgh because it had provoked much of the violence in a just workingman's strike that, as one editorial observed: "indeed, had much merit".<sup>160</sup>

The Guard's inefficiency was a theme that would appear frequently in the editorial pages of the popular press in the aftermath of the strike-related violence of 1877. Editors of local, regional, and national publications noted that Pennsylvanians (as well as the residents of other states) had placed too much confidence in the National Guard and that state forces had for the most part, betrayed this confidence by failing at the hour it was needed most.<sup>161</sup> The *Pittsburgh Post* noted the essential hollowness of the Pennsylvania National Guard despite the increases in public funding that had been lavished on an organization that failed the public in its hour of need. The pride that the people of Pennsylvania had felt in their "community forces" was misplaced; its power to protect life and property was an illusion.<sup>162</sup>

Another thread woven into both editorial and popular criticism was the inadequacy of the National Guard in comparison to the calm professionalism of the U.S. Army regulars who,

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<sup>159</sup> *Philadelphia Times*, July 23, 1877. "These events prove that rebellion can erupt suddenly, and the state soldiery must be able to meet any emergency. The National Guard's decline must be reversed."

<sup>160</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, July 23, 1877. While decrying the "looting and incendiarism", the *Commercial Gazette*, normally pro-business and an advocate of law and order, shared the deep antipathy felt by most Pittsburghers toward the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; not because of its labor policies, but on account of the company's aggressive business tactics.

<sup>161</sup> *Pittsburgh Daily Telegraph*, July 30, 1877. "Recent events have proved that the main reliance of the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other states to break up mob law was a frail and broken reed."

<sup>162</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 31, 1877. "Our state militia, of which this and other communities felt so proud, was not the potent engine of the civil authority that men thought it was."

many believed, saved the day in a number of states- including Pennsylvania.<sup>163</sup> Many Americans, who had formerly championed the cause of the citizen-soldiers of the states, now looked upon the regular Army with greater respect.<sup>164</sup> Many public opinion makers insisted that only the regulars could serve the nation and the states and maintain law and order in the face of a wave of insurrectionary violence that threatened to tear the social and political order of the United States to shreds.<sup>165</sup>

The editors of *The Nation* likened the recent spate of labor violence as a threat to the republic comparable to the War of Rebellion, and only the regular establishment, guided by the hand of a resolute national authority, was capable of stilling the violent tide.<sup>166</sup> The editors also noted that the National Guard was of little utility in the present crisis as it was at best “a clumsy substitute either for a military or a police establishment.”<sup>167</sup> The *New York Daily Tribune* contrasted the behavior of undisciplined bands of scarcely trained state militia with the calm, detached professionalism of the regulars who did fire indiscriminately into threatening crowds, but simply marched on in the face of mob provocation.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Contemporary scholarship tends to downplay the army’s role in the actual suppression of the violence in 1877. They contend that the National Guard units in several states had absorbed most of the initial shocks by the time federal troops arrived on the stage. See: Gerald C. Eggert, *Railroad Labor Disputes*, 75; Joseph John Holmes, “The Pennsylvania National Guard,” 88.

<sup>164</sup> Stephen Skowronek, *Building the New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities 1877-1920* (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1982), 100.

<sup>165</sup> Edward Coffman, *The Old Army* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 248. General Winfield Scott Hancock observed, “The officers’ caution and the discipline of the soldiers contributed to this but, as Hancock stated another factor- ‘the moral force of the United States government’ helped bring about that result.”

<sup>166</sup> *The Nation*, no. XXV, (August 9, 1877): 85. “The army is the only protection from a spirit of rapine capable of burning and plundering cities, confiscating property by the wholesale and throttling the entire commerce of the country.”

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>168</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, September 23, 1877. The editorial noted that unless profound reforms were forthcoming, “there can be no assurance that a State Militia will be much more superior to an unorganized mob. There must be a revival of interest in our Home Guards.”

No less an authority than the recently beleaguered (but unapologetic) president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Thomas Scott, opined that the present and future threats to the nation's security and prosperity, from the "idle, vicious, and criminal element", demanded federal military intervention.<sup>169</sup> Scott asserted that only five of thirty-seven states had adequate military forces at the disposal of the authorities, and if a state could not call upon the federal government for help, "there is no remedy for the protection of life and property within the limits of that Commonwealth".<sup>170</sup>

Scott proposed that U.S. regulars be at the disposal of regionally based federal marshals who could act peremptorily at the first sign of insurrection or rebellion. Furthermore, these troops could be readily housed in existing government installations such as mints, arsenals, and customs houses conveniently located in most large cities. Scott was certain that the federal military presence would prove to have a palliative effect, "for no rioter dared resist the power represented by the small, but admirable, disciplined detachments quartered near the scene of the recent troubles."<sup>171</sup> Scott's justification for such innovative (and unconstitutional) measures was his assertion that strikes and community uprisings, like that which took place in Pittsburgh, were a rebellion against the authority of the United States. It was, therefore, the responsibility of the federal government to suppress such incidents.

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<sup>169</sup> Thomas Scott, "The Recent Strikes," *The North American Review*, vol.125, issue 258, (Sept. 1877): 351-363. Scott was another who likened the recent labor violence to the Civil War: "This insurrection, which extended through fourteen States, and in many cases successfully defied the local authorities, presents a state of facts almost as serious as that which prevailed at the onset of the Civil War.", 357.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 358.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 359. Scott's prescription was echoed in the pages of *The Nation*: "With such a reserve force the city of Pittsburgh with its arsenal and government foundry, would have been the natural station for five or six hundred well-officered and disciplined soldiers." *The Nation*, August 9, 1877, 85.

In addition to the lack of training and discipline, critics of the Guard's poor showing in the 1877 strikes pointed to the difficulties inherent in the dual role that Guardsmen occupied- they were citizens as well as soldiers. The problem of dual loyalties was a consistent theme of much of the public discourse on the National Guard. The conflict, for the typical member of the Guard, was that he was a volunteer who could spare but a fraction of his time to devote to his military avocation. This limited time was spent toiling in a regimen of military training that most professionals dismissed as obsolete and tactically vacuous.<sup>172</sup> The *New York Times* noted that officers spent most of their time electioneering, and that most of the men never bothered to inform their employers about their service commitments. Employers subsequently refused to release men for duty after only a moment's notice. The *Times* noted the Guardsman was providing voluntary service, and he paid most of the costs of that service out of his own pocket. For the most part, the soldier was doing the state a favor and he balked at difficult or dangerous duty. Guardsmen expected that the sum of their military service was parade and frolic.<sup>173</sup>

The Guard's critics also observed that most of the men were "substantial" members of their community whose daily business and social contacts made him well acquainted with members of the community; these people were his customers, commercial associates and friends.<sup>174</sup> It was, therefore, only natural that the Guardsman would most likely fraternize with the very mobs that he was bound by oath to suppress. Ultimately, it was the soldier's friends and

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<sup>172</sup> *The New York Times*, July 26, 1877. "The 'citizen-soldier' never forgets that he is a good deal more citizen than soldier- soldier perhaps two weeks in the year, and citizen the other fifty."

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> *The Nation*, August 9, 1877, 86. "The militia man to be good for anything must be a businessman, a skilled artisan, a property-holder, someone having a stake in the county and performing useful service in his station ... he is as likely to fraternize with a mob as to fire at it." In addition to the issue of fraternization the article excused "men of substance" from the performance of militia duty based on their business concerns and subsequent contribution to the commonwealth.

neighbors that might appear at the business end of his Springfield musket.<sup>175</sup> This softness and lack of resolution was one defect echoed by the entire chorus of editorial criticism- the National Guard lacked the ability to act dispassionately and decisively in the face of civilian disorder.<sup>176</sup>

Modern historians have been no less sparing in their estimation of the Guard's performance in the 1877 riots. Louis Cantor observed that the near complete inability of the National Guard in any state to deal effectively with the outbreaks of violence and disorder forced the states to examine the deficiencies of their organizations and to "get their houses in order".<sup>177</sup> Stephen Skowronek noted that civil authorities demanded federal troops because they believed that they faced nothing less than the disintegration of their militia forces in the face of overwhelming mob violence.<sup>178</sup> Frederick Todd insisted that the Guard "did not accomplish what had been expected of it and had the mortification of seeing a handful of Regulars succeed where an entire State force had failed."<sup>179</sup> Jerry Cooper made the point that the poor condition of the state forces in the years preceding the riots of 1877 actually "enhanced the probabilities for

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<sup>175</sup> *Pittsburgh Daily Telegraph*, July 30, 1877. "When men were called upon to fight their friends and neighbors, and, in many instances their kindred, they naturally hesitated, and in hesitating permitted their feelings and sympathies to get the better of them and get in the way with their ideas of duty as sworn conservators of the peace."

<sup>176</sup> The *New York Times* compared the riot in Pittsburgh with a contemporaneous wave of anti-Chinese violence in San Francisco that was quickly squelched "by a more determined front than a Pennsylvania Militia regiment could have shown. There was no riot." The "squelchers" in this instance being the San Francisco Police: *New York Times*, July 26, 1877.

<sup>177</sup> Louis Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard: "The Dick Militia Act of 1903" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1963), 40. Cantor also makes the suggestion that "states' rights" sentiments was a further impetus to National Guard reforms- state legislators did not want to rely on federal troops.

<sup>178</sup> Skowronek, *Building the New American State*, 99.

<sup>179</sup> Frederick P. Todd, "Our National Guard: An Introduction to Its History," *Military Affairs* 5, no. 3, (Autumn, 1941): 152-155, 158.



violence.”<sup>180</sup> Jim Dan Hill accused the National Guard of “foot- dragging”, and the performance of “only nominal and certainly ineffective service” in the disorders in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.<sup>181</sup>

Although the established interpretation of National Guard failure or “debacle” in 1877 has dominated much of the general and specialized literature, some historians have taken a more nuanced approach. William Riker agreed that there were scattered incidents of fraternization and explicit displays of antipathy toward strike duty on the part of some Guardsmen. But in spite of these instances the Guard remained loyal and followed orders, even in the midst of the chaos and danger in Pittsburgh and St. Louis.<sup>182</sup> Riker mistakenly insisted that this loyalty was the principal reason why the state soldiery became the preferred “solution” to labor troubles in the period after 1877. Joseph John Holmes agreed with this assessment: “For every guardsman who proved disloyal, ten gave faithful, if inefficient service.”<sup>183</sup> In his survey history detailing National Guard’s emergence as an independent military force, Jerry Cooper explained the 1877 failures as the logical consequence of decades of state indifference and neglect.<sup>184</sup>

The appraisals, both contemporary and modern, of the National Guard’s role in the 1877 labor violence, are in agreement on the basic shortcomings and weaknesses that were

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<sup>180</sup> Jerry M. Cooper, *The Army and Civil Disorder: Federal Intervention in Labor Disputes, 1877-1900* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 11. “They [Guardsmen] were poorly trained, equipped, and organized for riot duty.”

<sup>181</sup> Jim Dan Hill, “The National Guard in Civil Disorders”, Robin Higham ed., *Bayonets in the Streets: The Use of Troops in Civil Disturbances* (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1969), 79.

<sup>182</sup> Riker, *Soldiers of the States*, 59. Riker insists that the voluntary nature of National Guard service made it much more reliable than the enrolled militia. Because units were self-selecting they were composed of men who had no aversion to this kind of duty.

<sup>183</sup> Holmes, “The Pennsylvania National Guard,” 90. Holmes points to 1877 as a Pennsylvania National Guard success because its objectives were achieved as “employers gained control of their property and the strikes came to an end substantially in the employers’ favor.”

<sup>184</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 49-50. Cooper asserted that the states received service from the Guard in proportion to the investment they had made.

revealed as the states mobilized and deployed their troops. Despite some indications that the Guard was able to do its duty, glaring defects were revealed. In Pennsylvania, the state that seemed to be at the epicenter of the crisis, a fundamental and far-reaching program of reform and revitalization began as soon as the worrisome events of the summer of 1877 subsided.

## II. “ Institutional Post Mortem”

“Hence it is that this Guard cannot always be relied upon to do its full  
in case of troubles at home , requiring the intervention of the military.”<sup>185</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of the summer’s tumultuous events, the General Assembly appointed a select investigatory committee to discern the causes, course, and consequences of the riots. Armed with the power of *subpoena*, the committee held hearings across the state and received testimony from dozens of witnesses. In its report on the conduct and effectiveness of the Pennsylvania National Guard, the committee was critical, but inclined to excuse most of the Guard’s faults. The critical committee stated that the Guard’s failures were inevitable and unavoidable. The committee pointed out that most of the difficulties that the Guard experienced

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<sup>185</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 32.

during the riots could be ascribed to poor training, lack of military discipline, and tactical errors made by untrained officers. Governor Hartranft echoed many of the committee's findings, and added a few of his own, in the course of his annual message to the General Assembly delivered at the end of year. Both reports bear close analysis due to their effect on subsequent reform legislation that was integrated into the Pennsylvania Military Code.<sup>186</sup>

The committee noted that even though the civil authorities in Pittsburgh had not exhausted their powers to effectively deal with the situation, the National Guard was hastily summoned to the city- called to duty without warning and with no preparation.<sup>187</sup> The troops and their officers had expected to assist local law enforcement in restoring the peace, but they were pitched into a war zone. There had been no intelligence gathered or offered by officers already on the scene. This experience was without historical precedent for the state troops because they met a "foe more formidable than they had any expectation of meeting."<sup>188</sup> The Guard had to contend an angry and aroused community in arms. The report emphasized that the task demanded of the National Guard might have been beyond the capacity of most U.S. Army regulars. Governor Hartranft agreed with the committee's assessment, when he noted that Pittsburgh at that time was a hostile city, whose population and press denounced and threatened the Guard during its entire tour of duty.<sup>189</sup>

Both the governor and the committee addressed the disturbing instances in which men in some units failed to do their duty, either by willful absence from their regiments, or by

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<sup>186</sup> In the analysis of primary sources that deal with the Guard one often sees references to the "Military Code" This is nothing more than the military legislation then in force.

<sup>187</sup> *Committee Appointed... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 31.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for the Year 1877*, "Annual Message of the Governor," 24. "That having been so long accustomed to peace, they were unable to comprehend at once the sudden condition of war."

outright disobedience to orders that would have placed them in confrontation with unruly crowds. Fraternization with the “locals” was also a matter of great concern. The committee noted that these displays of sympathy for, or fraternization with, the mobs that the soldiers were sent to suppress ought to have been expected. Men from every class were well represented in the ranks of the National Guard. It was a force composed of volunteers from the areas where units had been raised and sustained, and as such, were directly connected with their communities by ties of kinship and friendship. Many of the troops were either employers or employees. Parochial concerns and sympathies, therefore, often exerted a greater pull on the individual soldier’s sense of loyalty than the orders he received from his officers.<sup>190</sup>

Both the committee and the governor indicated that the election of officers was an impediment to the maintenance good order and discipline amongst the men in the ranks. On the company level recruits were selected by a vote of the membership, a practice that created a high degree of socio-economic homogeneity within the ranks. Men tended to vote for officer candidates who were close to them in fundamental ways. There could never be “the same relative distance” between officers and men that was a distinguishing feature of the regular Army. The company election system virtually demanded that officers and potential officer candidates socialize with the men. In such a system ties of friendship or even kinship could have made the difference in the company’s election of its commissioned and noncommissioned

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<sup>190</sup> *The Committee... Appointed to Investigate... the Railroad Riots*, 31-32. “the members of the military will naturally be impressed with all the feelings of the community in which they reside , and be infected with a spirit of resistance to constituted authority” ; “Governor’s Address for 1877,” 23. “No laws or codes can prevent common soldiers from imbibing the principles and the prejudices of the men they constantly associate with in their daily walks.”

officers. Electioneering guaranteed that National Guard officers could not have the kind of absolute authority “over the rank and file” as their regular army counterparts.”<sup>191</sup>

The committee also noted that the relationships between officers and men were much too close and led to that type of familiarity that bred contempt. The men in the ranks also tended to look upon their National Guard officers from a civilian perspective. Officers were their friends and neighbors whom they recognized as their military superiors only a few days out of the year.<sup>192</sup> The rest of the time officers and men mingled amicably in the course of their civilian pursuits. It must have been difficult for a man under fire to obey a potentially life threatening order from the neighborhood grocer.

The elections were just one aspect of the democratic and egalitarian spirit that pervaded the ranks of the National Guard and which had led, according to the committee’s report, “to resistance to orders that went against their inclinations.”<sup>193</sup> The committee further observed that civilian and democratic habits of mind contributed to the doubt and hesitation (if not outright insubordination) that was exhibited by some units when they their officers gave them particularly difficult or hazardous orders. Like all Americans in civil life, Guardsmen were accustomed to think for themselves and to express their opinions freely. Unlike the regulars, the civilian volunteer, in most cases, wanted explanations, justifications, and discussion before he would render his obedience to officers who had no more authority than he possessed himself in

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<sup>191</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1877*, “Annual Message of the Governor,” 24; Lloyd S. Bryce, “A Service of Love,” 226. Anecdotal evidence as to the precarious position of National Guard Officers appeared in an 1887 issue of the *North American Review*: “A friend told me he overheard the following dialogue between two members of the old State militia: Officer (*half-jokingly*)- ‘I guess I’ll have to report you for disrespect to your superior.’ Private (*sturdily*)- ‘Report and be hanged. When we get home I’ll discharge you.’ In civil life the relationship between the two was employee and employer.”

<sup>192</sup> *Committee Appointed... to Investigate... the Railroad Riots*, 32.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

civilian life. The committee noted that it should not have come as a surprise when some units refused to use deadly force against the civilian population during the riots.<sup>194</sup> The committee recommended that each active member of the Guard had to be taught that obedience to orders was his primary duty, and that the Guard was the first line of defense when mob violence overwhelmed the civilian authorities, even when that violence erupted in his own neighborhood.<sup>195</sup>

The committee and the governor's report also noted specific logistical and tactical failures that the Guard experienced during the riots. Governor Hartranft observed that of all the units mobilized, only two reported for duty that were fully equipped and uniformed. It was painfully obvious that the allotments that had been made by the state over the years were inadequate.<sup>196</sup> The experience of Albert Logan, then a private in the *Duquesne Grays* during the riots, serves as anecdotal testimony to the poor condition of Guard equipment and the lack of basic kit. Logan noted that when he reported for duty at the armory he was given a rifle but no ammunition. He later discovered that the firing pin in his "trapdoor" Springfield rifle was broken.<sup>197</sup> When the *Grays* were sent east to Shickshinny to keep order they had to endure an

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 32. "They are accustomed to do their own thinking, and have opinions on all matter that affect them. It is very hard to come down to the condition of executing orders without a why or wherefore, *even in ordinary cases*. (my italics)

<sup>195</sup> Ibid. A member of the Guard had to learn "that as a soldier it is his duty to obey the orders of his superior officers without question."

<sup>196</sup> "Annual Message of the Governor," 25. "... all of the equipments for active, continuous, and independent service, blankets, haversacks, canteens and etc., being in part or wholly wanting."

<sup>197</sup> *AGR for 1877*, 23. Adjutant General Charles Latta noted that the National Guard was armed with breech-loaders, but the rifles were of "mixed utility" due to age. The regulars were using .45 cal. ammunition, while the Guard utilized .50 cal.- a type no longer manufactured.

agonizingly slow train trip with little food except that given to them by citizens at several points along the way. The men detrained half-starved and without blankets or camping equipment.<sup>198</sup>

In its final report the committee pointed to a number of tactical errors made by negligent or incompetent officers. It must be noted, however, that neither the National Guard nor the Regular Army possessed a training doctrine or a tactical procedure for the problems posed by the events in Pittsburgh. The Army had little experience in urban combat. Its experiences in the New York City draft riots of 1863 had not been analyzed and evaluated. In the absence of sufficient training and experience the National Guard's errors were inevitable. In several instances these errors contributed to the intensity of the violence and ultimately jeopardized the safety of the troops. General Pearson and the brigade commanders of his Sixth Division in Pittsburgh were cited for numerous errors of judgment. The troops of the various commands should not have been broken up and portioned out to various locations around the city. Concentrated force could have broken up the mob before it attained the size and audacity to attack the troops. By dividing their forces the commanders negated any opportunity for mutual support. A *de facto* communications blackout existed because the various commands were operating in isolation. Time and space and the hostile environment prevented effective communication. Officers had little opportunity to transmit and receive timely situation reports, requests for assistance, and orders from the headquarters at the Penn hotel.<sup>199</sup>

Both senior and junior officers allowed the troops to fraternize with the crowd that had gathered at the Twenty-Eighth street crossing just prior to the shooting. This lapse of discipline

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<sup>198</sup> Logan Papers, MSS 0096, Folder 14. Logan also remembered the mismatched uniforms and civilian gear the men in his company wore for the duration of that summer's service. In the Pittsburgh riots, Colonel Brinton's starving Philadelphians escaped the roundhouse and marched to Sharpsville they were fed by the PRR., ch.1.

<sup>199</sup> *The Committee... Appointed to Investigate... Railroad Riots*, 33-34.

was especially egregious because it led to acts of insubordination on the part of the troops as well as to the encouragement of the “lawless elements.”<sup>200</sup>

General Pearson’s decision to move the troops into the roundhouse was ill considered as it placed them all under siege while cutting them off from any reasonable hope of relief from supporting elements. Furthermore, Pearson’s orders to hold fire simply emboldened the mob and made its assaults on the roundhouse more frequent and ferocious: “Emboldened by the inactivity of the soldiers in the roundhouse, nothing but the most severe measures would be sufficient to overawe and disperse them.”<sup>201</sup>

In addition to the Pittsburgh debacle, Governor Hartranft noted similar lapses of insubordination and leadership failures during the riots in Reading, Scranton, and Harrisburg. The governor, in his annual message concurred with many of the special committee’s findings. The governor acknowledged that the behavior of some of the troops and officers was inexcusable, but understandable given the weaknesses of the Guard. But the governor also believed that such conduct was forgivable, and cited historical precedent to justify his leniency towards units that had not done their duty. Hartarnft stated that the scattered incidents of absenteeism and insubordination were analogous to the mass defection of regular Army officers and troops at the beginning of the Civil War.<sup>202</sup> In the governors opinion these cases were very much the same, and their root causes had nothing to do with military oaths, enlistment

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 34 .

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 33. General Pearson explained to the committee that there was a vast difference between the conditions of war and the conditions during the strike. The strikers and the mob were not an enemy force. Soldiers were there to “preserve the peace, not to shoot down the strikers.” (This distinction was lost on the committee members), 385.

<sup>202</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1877*, “Annual Message of the Governor,” 25. “Was it any worse than the desertion of officers and men in the regular army, who, in 1861, abandoned their comrades in arms to join in the communities in which they were born and bred?”



obligations, and the maintenance of discipline.<sup>203</sup> He believed that an objective reading of the record revealed “that the conduct of the State troops during the late strike was, upon the whole, commendable and creditable.” And this was in spite of the fact that many of the men found strike duty distasteful or possessed a predisposition to sympathize with the motivations for the strike.<sup>204</sup>

But there were indeed cases where some officers and men shirked their duty, either out of a momentary fear, or a temporary inability to make unclouded judgments. Still others did not want to take life indiscriminately.<sup>205</sup> In the final analysis Hartranft noted that the National Guard, despite some glaring lapses, was able to do all that was required of it by the state. The governor also observed that an objective analysis of the record indicated that “that the conduct of the State troops was, on the whole, commendable and creditable.”<sup>206</sup> The men turned out for active duty in numbers that equaled the attendance at the 1876 Centennial camp, which was, in Hartranft’s analysis, an indication of the Guards fidelity and desire to serve the state.<sup>207</sup> Clearly, however, the 1877 riots lay bare many defects in the Pennsylvania National Guard. There were obvious problems in structure, training, equipment, discipline, and morale. If the Guard was to be both efficient and effective, the executive and the legislature, in partnership with the Adjutant

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<sup>203</sup> Ibid., “... such causes are not military, they are political or social.”

<sup>204</sup> Zierdt, *Narrative History of the 109<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery*, 90. “These tours of duty were exceedingly unpleasant, they hurt our popularity at home and discouraged recruiting.” ; *AGR for 1877*, “Report of Major General Siegfried, Commander of the Forth Division” , 92. Siegfried praised the performance of “his boys” and pointed out that “the troops in my command come from regions periodically disturbed by the same causes as the July riots- making the conduct of the men especially commendable.”

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., “It was the temporary excitement of unthinking men, carried away by the universal clamor around them.” Hartranft later reinstated some units that he deemed to have been “temporarily unmanned” by the events.

<sup>206</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1877*, “Annual Message of the Governor,” 25.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., “The fact that as many answered the call for a service likely to be long and dangerous, as had assembled in the pleasant encampment at the Centennial, is conclusive proof of the general zeal and fidelity of the troops.”

General and the senior commanders had to make a robust effort to reorganize and reform the military code of the state.

Major General Charles Latta, Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, reiterated many of the same points made by the governor and the special committee. Latta maintained that there was a need to reduce the size of the Guard.<sup>208</sup> The riots had revealed a fundamental organizational weakness in the Guard's multiple division structure. The multiple division system was "cumbersome and unwieldy", a defect which had led to divided responsibility among officers which, in turn, led to confusion in the ranks. There were too many generals, too many staff officers and line officers, and this division of responsibility impeded the flow of orders down the chain of command.<sup>209</sup> More than one "division" in the Guard was numerically equivalent to a standard regular Army regiment. Latta recommended that the National Guard adopt a single division structure.<sup>210</sup> In his opinion the standard infantry regiment ought to be the largest maneuver unit in the Guard. The regiment, according to Latta, was the "body that must be depended upon as the occasions requiring a larger body are rare."<sup>211</sup>

The Adjutant General seconded Governor Hartranft's call for the state to provide full financial support for the Guard. The Guard needed standard uniforms, weapons, and equipment. In addition to the material benefits, full state funding would have a positive impact on the morale

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<sup>208</sup> In 1876 the Table of Organization listed ten major generals and 194 companies indifferently organized into divisions, brigades, and regiments.

<sup>209</sup> This was evident in the doubt and hesitation seen in Pittsburgh. General Pearson appeared to have overall command, but General Latta, in a number of instances, countermanded his orders. Colonel Brinton took General Latta's orders to break out of East Liberty as suggestions.

<sup>210</sup> *AGR for 1877*, 21.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

of the National Guard.<sup>212</sup> Latta also predicted that the troops would have to endure long marches in the field due to a possible blockade of the rail lines. In the recent strike, many of the men were unable to join their units due to the lack of transport. In future actions, the troops, in all probability, would have to march cross-country to the scenes of future disturbances. Having arrived at their objective, they might have to operate as if they were in “enemy territory.” The Guard should have the resources to shelter and subsist itself as local authorities might prove to be uncooperative.<sup>213</sup> If the Guard had to make forced marches and endure extended time in the field they needed the full range of equipment and accoutrements. To allay the fears of a habitually frugal legislature, Latta gave assurances that all state issued military supplies would remain the property of the state, and be subject to rigid oversight and accounting at the regimental level.<sup>214</sup> Official forms, ledgers, and account books patterned after the U.S. Army supply requisition process would provide another layer of financial protection for the Commonwealth. In addition, the Inspector General of the National Guard would conduct annual audits of state issued military stores.

General Latta urged the legislature to give legal protection to both officers and men in order to protect them from criminal charges and law suits “for such acts as they may do in the lawful discharge of their duties as soldiers.”<sup>215</sup> The much-maligned General Pearson had been indicted and arrested by the local authorities for the July 21 shootings in Pittsburgh. Although

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 19. “The comparatively small investment by the state will be amply repaid in the readiness of the Guard for active and continuous duty, and its increased spirit, from a sense of efficiency and appreciation of a substantial recognition of its services.”

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., “Report of Major General Sigfried, Commander, Fourth Division,” 92. “The men need equipment and camping supplies to sustain themselves in hostile communities.”

<sup>214</sup> *AGR for 1877*, 22. “Regimental quartermasters will be under bond and held to a strict accountability for their charge.” Captains would have the responsibility for state property at the company level.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 22 .

freed on bond, his actions were the subject of a grand jury proceeding conducted by the city's district attorney. Criminal indictments were also issued in Scranton for leading members of the "City Guard", a unit that would soon be incorporated into the National Guard of Pennsylvania.<sup>216</sup>

The Adjutant General also proposed a service pay increase for state duty at Regular Army rates for enlisted men. He also urged that all pay be issued to the men in a timely manner because late payment discouraged a more energetic response to calls for active duty. Moreover, those recruits seeking enrollment in the Guard should have a medical examination to ascertain their "physical capacity" before they signed enlistment papers. Officer candidates would be required to submit to an examination of their fitness for a commission, mitigating to a great degree, the advancement of men based on popularity in their units or prominence in the community.<sup>217</sup> The legislators were also advised to adopt "a more rigid military law to punish desertion and insubordination." One division commander urged that the military code punish absence from drill as a form of desertion.<sup>218</sup>

The governor, the committee, and the adjutant general all noted that the mobs and the violence of 1877 could have been contained by the vigilance and timely action of local law enforcement officials.<sup>219</sup> In Pittsburgh especially, the county sheriff acted prematurely when he requested troops from the executive even before he had used all the means at his disposal to deal with the disturbances. Once the Guard had been committed the civil authorities and railroad

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 120-121. Pearson was released before the grand jury proceedings on \$10,000 bond. The grand jury returned a finding of *indictment ignoramus* on the charges. The case in Scranton did not progress to trial.

<sup>217</sup> *AGR for 1877*, 22-23 .

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 120-121. "Report of Major General Pearson, Commander, Sixth Division." "[this law] would materially lessen the labors of those officers who strive to do their duty."

<sup>219</sup> *Committee Appointed... to Investigate... the Railroad Riots*, 31.

personnel provided little cooperation and material support.<sup>220</sup> Similar lapses by law enforcement agencies had occurred in Scranton and Reading. There was a tendency for the local authorities to abandon their responsibilities and rely upon the state for immediate relief.<sup>221</sup> The county sheriffs, constables, and municipal police were really the first line of defense if strike related violence erupted, the National Guard was intended to be the force of last resort, to be used when local authorities were overwhelmed by forces beyond their capabilities to control. In Pennsylvania county sheriffs, deputies, and constables were intended to function as the “policemen of labor” in industrial disputes, a role that most historians believe was assumed by the National Guard.

Factory and mine owners increasingly turned to private police forces. Pinkerton detectives and the Coal and Iron police were employed in increasing numbers throughout the Commonwealth. Private police obeyed their employers and did not hesitate to bend or break the law to achieve the mandates they received from their employers. As far as the governors, legislators, and judges were concerned, the answer to the problem of strike-related violence was in the hands of the county sheriffs. An analysis of the sheriff’s powers and responsibilities will lead to a better understanding of the errors of 1877. Understanding the sheriff’s role in peacekeeping also helps to explain the lack of Guard deployments for strike-related violence throughout the decade of the 1880s, as well as the restrained use of state troops in the 1890s.

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<sup>220</sup> “Annual Message for 1877”, 24. Hartranft observed that one of the greatest contributors to the inefficiency of the state troops was “the want of cooperation of an adequate and competent police, and the desertion, at a critical moment, of the railroad employees.”

<sup>221</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1877*, “Annual message of the Governor,” 22.

### III. “Governors, Sheriffs, and Strikes”

Differences such as this, arising out of strikes, can and should be settled by the civil authority, and without appeal to military power. It is not according to the spirit of our institution, nor is it wise to make the soldiers the remedy, except in extreme cases of necessity, when liberty itself is at peril.<sup>222</sup>

- Major General R.M. Brinton  
Commander, First Division

“Go to hell you gray-headed old son of a bitch!”

- One citizen’s response after the sheriff  
read the “riot act”, Pittsburgh, 1877

Prior to, and in the aftermath of the troubles of 1877, Governor John F. Hartranft addressed many of the systemic weaknesses that would prevent state and local authorities from exercising an adequate response in the face of the pandemic of violence attendant to the railroad strike of 1877. A two-term governor, Hartranft served from 1872 to 1879. He either initiated or supported key reforms of the National Guard that so greatly improved its efficiency and national reputation. After his term as governor, Hartranft was appointed as the first division commander of the National Guard. Even prior to the turmoil of 1877, Hartranft warned of the coming danger. In his annual message to the General Assembly, delivered two years prior to the strikes,

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<sup>222</sup> “Annual Message of the Governor of Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1875*, 23.

Governor Hartranft referred to the violence and “lawless disposition” engendered by the labor disturbances that had occurred within the past few years, and which entailed the use of his executive authority to call out units of the National Guard to quell the violence and restore order.<sup>223</sup> He warned the legislature that such outbreaks might become more frequent, and “that to suppress them some remedy must be devised”. Hartranft indicated that it was incumbent upon the duly constituted state authority to devise a fixed and resolute response to any future ‘turbulent manifestations’ within the Commonwealth.<sup>224</sup>

Hartranft was in a unique position to assess the failings of the state’s response to the crisis of 1877. A veteran of the Civil War, Hartranft was regarded as one of Pennsylvania’s most distinguished soldiers. Prior to the initiation of hostilities in 1861, Hartranft was the “popularly elected” colonel of the Montgomery County militia that offered its services in response to Lincoln’s 1861 call for volunteers.<sup>225</sup> He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for conspicuous devotion to duty in the battle of First Manassas. Hartranft returned to Pennsylvania and organized the 51<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, which he commanded during Burnside’s aborted 1861 foray into North Carolina. In subsequent engagements, he was singled out in dispatches for “meritorious and conspicuous bravery” on the “Stone Bridge” at Antietam, and later at Fort Steadman during the siege of Petersburg. At the time of Lee’s surrender at Appomattox, Hartranft had risen to the rank of brevet Major General of Volunteers.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1875*, “Annual Message of the Governor,” 22-23.

“Tumult and riot at times have been so formidable, that the Executive power of the State had to be invoked to quell the disturbance.”, 22.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>225</sup> Harolf F. Alderfer, *The Seven Pennsylvania Governors, 1860-1899* (Mechanicsburg, P.A.: by the author, 1980), 10-11.

<sup>226</sup> Eugene A. Barrett, “The Civil War Services of John F. Hartranft,” *Pennsylvania History*, vol. XXXII, no. 2, (April, 1965):166-186, 168. Barrett note that Hartranft’s Medal of Honor was awarded less for bravery than for devotion to the cause – Hartranft stayed in camp after his

After his return to Pennsylvania, Hartranft resumed a career in politics that had been forestalled by the war. An engineer by training, he had been admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1859. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities he had been elected Montgomery county sheriff, and served a term on the county school board. After the war Hartranft re-entered the political arena. A faithful and energetic Republican, he rose within the ranks of the state party under the auspices of the dominant Simon Cameron machine. Hartranft served as Pennsylvania's Auditor General from 1866-1870, and his fealty was soon rewarded with the ultimate state plum- he was Cameron's hand-picked candidate in the gubernatorial election of 1872.<sup>227</sup> Hartranft won the election handily- he garnered a majority of 35,000 votes over his Democratic opponent Charles Buckalew. Taking office in January of 1873, Hartranft quickly paid off his political debts with choice appointments for Cameron loyalists.<sup>228</sup> Although he was a "machine made" politician, Hartranft harbored a number of progressive views that often placed him in the middle of many disputes over the issues of the times.<sup>229</sup>

With a vast store of military and political experience, Governor Hartranft approached the vexing problem of maintaining law and order within the context of the societal discords created by the rapid industrialization of the Pennsylvania economy. He understood the underlying motivations for the violence and was able to see beyond the fevered admonitions of

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militia regiment went home due to the expiration of its term of enlistment. Hartranft subsequently fought at Manassas.

<sup>227</sup> Frank B. Evans, *Pennsylvania Politics, 1872-1877: A Study in Political Leadership* (Harrisburg: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1966), chap. 2, *passim*. Evans couples Hartranft's rise to prominence within the Machiavellian labyrinth that was Pennsylvania party politics on the threshold of the "Gilded Age".

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, "Fully aware that he owed his position to the Cameron machine, Hartranft felt obligated to use his office to promote the interests of the organization.", 41.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, *passim*. Evans' study of Pennsylvania government places Hartranft in the forefront of Republican Party leadership, but he also notes instances when the governor "wandered from the range".



the popular press and corporate leaders when they urged the state authorities to use maximum applications of armed force to uphold the rights of capital when workers resorted to strikes. Hartranft insisted, and state law recognized, that workingmen's associations were legitimate organizations.<sup>230</sup>

In the 1877 message to the legislature, Hartranft insisted that times had changed and so had the worker: "Intelligence has spread itself among the laboring classes, they have learned to read and write, and to interchange their views, and form associations, according to their new lights, for their protection and advancement."<sup>231</sup> Hartranft understood that the continuous use of military power by the state could not be the ultimate "means by which the differences between labor and capital could be adjusted."<sup>232</sup> As a matter of principle Hartranft asserted the right of every working- man, regardless of nationality or race, to sell his labor for a fair price in the market place of employment.<sup>233</sup> This principle was perhaps best displayed in his aggressive inquiry into the conduct of the sheriffs in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties during the notorious Buena Vista ant-Italian riots.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1869*, no.1242, sec.1, 1260-1261. This statute legalized trade unions in the Commonwealth. Strikes, however, were still liable to prosecution in the criminal courts under the general statutes against "criminal conspiracies."

<sup>231</sup> "Annual Message of the Governor for 1877," 23.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.* 26. Hartranft proposed the creation of a state arbitration board made up of an equal number of judges, employers, and workers to "decide upon the merits of a controversy," and ultimately, "to do justice to those who were wronged."

<sup>233</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1875*, "Annual message of the Governor," 23. "Every man must be allowed to sell his labor at his own price, and his work must not be interrupted either by force or intimidation."

<sup>234</sup> Herbert Gutman, "The Buena Vista Affair, 1874-1875," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 88, no.3, (July, 1964): 251-293. The line between the "right to work" and "scabbing" was not so clearly drawn in the late nineteenth century. Italian miners who were used during the Armstrong Station Mine strike were clearly the victims of both union- inspired intimidation and nativist bigotry.

Despite an inclination to consider the broader implications of the clashes between capital and labor, Hartranft left no doubt that the rule of law and the peace of the Commonwealth would be maintained by swift and powerful state action.<sup>235</sup> But the governor insisted that military forces had to be the tool of last resort due to the expense to the state and the fact that the troops would eventually be withdrawn leaving “no security against similar and repeated outbreaks.”<sup>236</sup> Hartranft insisted that the primary means of remediation in the event of lawlessness and riot lay in the hands of the county authorities- the county sheriffs in particular.

The governor’s inference is clear- the National Guard would not have to be mobilized if local law enforcement performed its duty. He accused most of the county sheriffs of a chronic inability or unwillingness to do their duty and suppress local disturbances before they escalated to the point where the National Guard was the only recourse to restore order. The failure was on the local, rather than the state, level. Hartranft always insisted that he used his executive power in these matters only with the greatest reluctance. But sheriffs, he noted, would rather rely on the state power than utilize the resources that were already at their disposal.<sup>237</sup>

Having held the office of county sheriff himself, Hartranft certainly possessed a degree of practical knowledge about the powers and responsibilities of local law enforcement. According to the Pennsylvania Constitution, a sheriff was both a county officer and an officer of the state courts.<sup>238</sup> Sheriffs were chosen in county elections and held three-year terms of office.

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<sup>235</sup> “Annual Message of the Governor for 1875, 23. “Any violation of private rights or resistance to public officers when in the discharge of their duty, will be summarily dealt with ... the whole power of the Commonwealth shall be employed, if necessary, to compel respect for authority.”

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 23. Hartranft also believed that the constant use of troops in country like the United States was “inappropriate and would eventually lead to a civilian distrust of the military.”

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. Hartranft was referring to the strikes of early 1870s. He referred to this reliance on state authority as “one of the main sources of the evil [of recurrent strife].”

<sup>238</sup> *The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1838*, article VI, section I.

Qualifications for the office, beyond citizenship and municipal residency requirements, were never specified in the constitution. According to Pennsylvania statutes and case law precedents, the sheriff is the primary peace officer in his district, and he is vested with the ultimate power “to preserve the peace, quell disorders, and suppress riots; his power to do so is largely a discretionary one.”<sup>239</sup> Pennsylvania courts had always maintained that the sheriff ‘s discretionary power was quite expansive.<sup>240</sup> The Superior Court of Pennsylvania would later collate every Common Law precedent since the time of Henry VIII that was related to the “summary” power of county sheriffs in its 1898 ruling in *Commonwealth vs. Martin et. al.*<sup>241</sup>

The actions (or rather inactions) of R.H. Sheriff Fife in the Pittsburgh railroad riots validated much of Governor Hartranft’s criticism of local law enforcement and its reluctance to assert its authority in the face of mob activity. In sworn testimony before the General Assembly’s Committee appointed to investigate the riots, Sheriff Fife revealed that he had not used any of the powers at his disposal to contain the trouble in its earliest stages. After an aborted attempt to serve bench warrants and arrest the known ringleaders of the mob, Fife left the scene and later admitted that “I was useless and powerless and they were hunting me to murder me.”<sup>242</sup>

When questioned as to the course of events leading to his request for state troops Fife indicated that he had been led to that action by the continuous promptings and urgings of

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<sup>239</sup> *Pennsylvania Law Encyclopedia*, (Philadelphia PA: G.T. Bisel Co.,1957),Vol.33, 381.

<sup>240</sup> 1900 23 P.A., C.C. 667; *Commonwealth vs. Martin*, 1898 7<sup>th</sup> District 219, 9 Kulp 69 . “ In a time of great emergency or in a crisis of unusual danger the limits under which his discretion may be exercised have been held by the courts to be without fixed limits.”, 73.

<sup>241</sup> *Commonwealth vs. Martin et. al.*, 9 Luzerne Legal Register 69 (1898), 69-106 , 73-74 . The court affirmed the sheriff’s power to form a *posse comitatus*, deputize individual citizens, and use deadly force if necessary to deal with extreme situations.

<sup>242</sup> *Committee Appointed... to Investigate... the Railroad Riots*, 180. Fife added that his wife had also been threatened “and in the street where I lived she could not get any protection.”, 182.

Pennsylvania Railroad Company officials. Thomas Scott, General Solicitor for the PRR proved most effective in “helping” the sheriff to the decision in favor of telegraphing the governor and requesting the soldiers. On the morning of 20 July, before Fife had a chance to assess the size and disposition of the crowds at the various “hotspots” in East Liberty, Scott asserted to the sheriff that the Governor had to be contacted immediately.<sup>243</sup> This, of course was not the first, nor the last incidence, when PRR officials influenced the course of events by insinuating themselves into the decision making processes of both the local authorities and National Guard officers.

In the course of his testimony, Sheriff Fife was forcefully reminded that, in the event of riot or rebellion against constituted authority, county sheriffs were required to first form a *posse comitatus* before they could invoke the executive power for military assistance. The sheriff had the right and the obligation to summon the full power of the county and “command all able-bodied males over the age of fifteen years to attend him.”<sup>244</sup> Fife admitted that he had not done so personally, but had given this task to a deputy who was able to enjoin only a few men to assist the sheriff in East Liberty. When repeatedly pressed as to why he did not personally make the effort to form a *posse* before he requested assistance from the state authorities, Fife replied, “In fact, I considered the idea of a sheriff of any county calling out a *posse* almost as an obsolete piece of law today.”<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid., 180. Scott informed the sheriff that he had already made an assessment, and “that I [Fife] had not sufficient force to remove the crowd, that it would be my duty to call on the Governor for aid ... .”

<sup>244</sup> *Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Law*, 381. Ignoring the sheriff’s summons was a misdemeanor punishable by fines and imprisonment.

<sup>245</sup> *Committee Appointed ... to Investigate ... the Railroad Riots*, 181. To illustrate Hartranft’s contention that sheriffs were often too quick to transfer their obligations to the state, Fife stated that as soon as he telegraphed General Latta: “...that relieved me of the responsibility of calling a *posse*.”

The Governor was not the only branch of state government to find fault with local law enforcement in the Pittsburgh riots. The inaction, timidity, and gross negligence of the Allegheny County's Sheriff's Office was roundly criticized when the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court heard a damage liability case in the January and May term of 1879. Gibson's Son and Company of Philadelphia lost sixty barrels of whiskey at the PRR depot in East Liberty during the July 1877 labor riots. The loss was incurred when the mob set fire to freight cars that had been standing on the tracks due to the trainmen's work stoppage and the resultant halt of all traffic along the PRR line. According to an 1849 statute, county government could be held liable for damages in "cases where any dwelling-house or other building or property, real or personal," was destroyed due to the actions of a mob or riot".<sup>246</sup>

Gibson and Sons sued Allegheny County to recover its losses. On the request of the plaintiff, a change of venue was ordered and the suit was heard in the Beaver County Court of Common Pleas. The lower court decided in the county's favor because "the said outbreak, by reason of its nature and extent, was beyond the power of the local authorities to anticipate or subdue."<sup>247</sup> The events of 1877 in Pittsburgh were "a part of a widely extended and organized insurrection which broke out simultaneously in widely distant parts of the country."<sup>248</sup> The court also ruled that the PRR Company was actually culpable for the damage because of its "decision to forcibly run its trains and shoot strikers it thereby occasioned the mob and was responsible for

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<sup>246</sup> *Laws of the State of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1849*, Pennsylvania Law no. 184, secs. 7, 8. The law originally applied only to Philadelphia and Allegheny counties. It grew out of Philadelphia's anti-Catholic riots in the early 1840s.

<sup>247</sup> *County of Allegheny v. Gibson's Son & Co.*, *Pennsylvania State Reports*, vol. XC, (Philadelphia: Kay and Brother, 1881), 397-422.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 399-400.

the consequences, and was guilty of improper conduct within the meaning of the statute.”<sup>249</sup> Local authorities were also absolved because the National Guard troops were on duty before any property damage occurred, and it was the troops, in their attempt to suppress the riot, initiated the chain of events that had led to the damage in question. Gibson and Sons appealed this verdict to the Commonwealth’s Supreme Court

Chief Justice Paxson wrote the unanimous opinion of the Court that held for Gibson and Sons against Allegheny County. Paxson dismissed the county’s claim that the riot was too large in extent and numbers to be effectively contained by the county sheriff: “The inability of the county authorities to quell the mob, cannot limit the liability of the county.” Paxson noted that the events in Pittsburgh were not part of a general insurrection against the civil authorities- “It was a mob, and nothing more.”<sup>250</sup> The ruling maintains that if the sheriff had been vigilant and had taken the proper steps at the beginning of the affair, the mob would not have increased in either size or violence because “A mob is always cowardly, and usually of slow growth.”<sup>251</sup>

The Court was scathing in its estimation of the sheriff’s performance of his duty when it observed that: “We see no evidence of any serious attempt upon the part of the local authorities to suppress it at the time of its commencement.”<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 399. According to the statute culpability is assigned to the party whose improper actions led to the damage.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 417. “Calling upon the military authorities for aid does not relieve the city or county of its responsibility and liability.”

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 419. “It increases in size and courage just in proportion as the authorities evince hesitation or timidity.”

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 420. “A feeble attempt was made by the sheriff, resulting in the enrollment of some half-dozen deputies.” The Court also noted that the sheriff made no attempt to call “upon the body of the county to come to his assistance, in preserving the public peace. No one doubts at this day that if a proper effort had been made at the proper time, the mob could have been held in check.”

Both the governor's statements and the Supreme Court's ruling established a guideline for the future deployment of the Pennsylvania National Guard in labor disputes. It was incumbent upon local civil authorities to utilize all of the means at their disposal to quell breaches of the peace before they could expect the state executive to assist them with military forces.<sup>253</sup> A rigorous standard had to be met thus establishing a higher threshold for military intervention. It is no wonder that industrial corporations turned to the readily available and always malleable Pinkertons and Coal and Iron police. Only in the most extreme cases, where forces that were verifiably beyond their ability to control have truly overwhelmed local police officials, sheriffs, and constables, would the governor accede to requests for military aid.<sup>254</sup>

As noted above, Governor Hartranft wanted to find ways to contain disorders quickly and effectively on the local level so that the National Guard would not have to be mobilized. The sheriffs and their *posses* had proved unable, in so many instances in recent riots to maintain law and order in the face of strike violence. The moral authority of sheriffs, once very great, was at a very low point.<sup>255</sup> *Posses* had not proved to be of much use and needed to be replaced by a more stable force. In his 1876 message, the governor proposed that county sheriffs be given the power to organize a county constabulary "sufficient to quell the disturbance, and to maintain them under his direction and control until there is no longer need for their services."<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> *Commonwealth v. Martin*, 73. On the gravity of use of troops: "For this reason the military arm of the government is never raised to suppress civil disorder until the authority of the sheriff has been exhausted in an unsuccessful effort to maintain the peace."

<sup>254</sup> This is evident in the limited use that is made of the Guard in the years after 1877 in spite of the fact that these years were rife with labor unrest and strike activity in Pennsylvania. Close examination of Guard deployments and in the years 1877-1905 will be taken up in chapter 3.

<sup>255</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1878*, "Annual Message of the Governor," 22.

<sup>256</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for the Year 1876*, "Annual Message of the Governor of Pennsylvania 24-25.

The county constabulary was envisioned as a force that would have been sufficient to handle any disturbance that might erupt within the sheriff's jurisdiction. The constabulary was made up of ordinary citizens who would answer the call to duty immediately. Furthermore, the county, not the state, would be responsible for paying and subsisting this constabulary.<sup>257</sup> The sheriff moreover, would have to apply to the Court of Common Pleas in order to mobilize it and receive vouchers to pay wages and purchase supplies for the length of its service. This mechanism would inspire some accountability in local civic leaders because the taxpayers would ultimately hold them responsible for any unnecessary waste of public funds. The primary benefit to the state, of course, was that such county forces would hopefully make the use of the Guard superfluous.<sup>258</sup>

The county constabulary concept had several obvious weaknesses.<sup>259</sup> Local men would still be used against their friends and neighbors; the National Guard had experienced the dangers of this practice in 1877. The plan envisioned sixty-seven separate reserve military forces, with no formal system of command and control. These responsibilities would be in the hands of poorly compensated county sheriffs who had to live, work, and politic in the local community. Suppressing mob violence and keeping the peace, like so many of the sheriff's other duties, could not be separated from the constraints imposed by the ballot box. A sheriff had

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., "Annual Message of the Governor," 4.

<sup>258</sup> Joseph John Holmes stated that this was in actuality a proposal for a state constabulary, but it was intended as a county organization only, with no connection to the state government. Holmes, "The Pennsylvania National Guard", 115-152 .

<sup>259</sup> There was precedent for such a force : *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1867* , no.55, secs. 1-8, 77-78. This law authorized the governor to create police forces in the "mining regions" of the state if the citizens of the area petition him for such a force. "The governor is hereby authorized, to appoint a marshal of police, and a sufficient number of officers of police, to give adequate protection to the persons and property of the inhabitants of said county." The statute lapsed after a two years and was never revived.



to stand for election every three years and he needed the votes of every class of voter to carry an election.

In addition county constabularies would have been *ad hoc* forces, sent into confrontational situations without any training in crowd control or tactical procedure. The potential for misunderstanding and violence would have been enormous.<sup>260</sup> It is also peculiar that Hartranft really thought that untrained county *posses* would have been able to suppress or disperse potentially violent mobs in the detached, resolute manner that such duties demanded. After all, Pennsylvania Guardsmen had a modicum of tactical training and unit discipline-attributes that had already proved, in several notorious instances, quite inadequate during the 1877 riots.<sup>261</sup> County constabularies remained an idea whose time would never come. The push for a state, not a county constabulary, would gain momentum in the early 1900s after the disadvantages of using the National Guard or the Coal and Iron police became manifest to both the General Assembly and industrialists. But throughout the decade of the 1890s there National Guard, the force of last resort, would have to support county sheriffs.

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<sup>260</sup> Later, in 1902 a *posse comitatus* employed by the county sheriff was directly responsible for the massacre at Lattimer during the anthracite strike of 1897.

<sup>261</sup> The General Assembly never debated the merits of this proposal and the concept of county constabularies disappeared from the political landscape after 1877.

#### IV. “Reform and Renewal”

“The riots of 1877 brought strongly before the state authorities the necessity for a complete and thorough reorganization of the National Guard in order to put it on a substantial basis and make it an effective military force.”<sup>262</sup>

- Charles Hendler

“Never in the history of our National guard has there been such a common-sense basis for the improvement and development of such wise and comprehensive legislation under which to attain and insist upon a degree of excellence which has heretofore been unknown and impossible.”<sup>263</sup>

- Brigadier General James Beaver

The Pennsylvania General Assembly quickly responded to the various initiatives for reform that had arisen out of the 1877 riots.<sup>264</sup> An influential military journal advised state governors and legislators that they now had to choose between a greatly increased federal army and an effective National Guard.<sup>265</sup> Pennsylvania was not the only state affected by the

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<sup>262</sup> Hendler, *History of the National Guard*, vol. 1, 5.

<sup>263</sup> *AGR for 1881*, “Report of Brigadier General James Beaver, Commander Second Brigade”, 38.

<sup>264</sup> Skowronek, *Building the New American State*, 104. “In Pennsylvania, where the strike had been most violent and widespread, reform came earliest and was the most thorough.”

<sup>265</sup> Thomas F. Rodenbaugh, *United Service* 1, no.2, (1879): 434. “The choice had to be made, as to whether the people will support a regular Army of 75,000 men, or encourage in each state the

disturbances to launch efforts to reorganize and reform their state military forces.<sup>266</sup> The Assembly enacted a supplement to the 1864 and 1871 militia acts that created an entirely new organizational structure for the National Guard. The legislation also incorporated many of the recommendations that had been proposed by the special committee, Governor Hartranft, and Adjutant General Latta. Each of the reforms, in its own way, tended to reduce local autonomy and control over matters both large and small.

The revised military code increased the control of the state over the National Guard and centralized military authority at the highest level. At work in this process, of course, is a *quid pro quo*. The Commonwealth assumed a greater share of financial support for the Guard while it increased its control via the centralization and standardization of most aspects of the Guard's existence.<sup>267</sup> For noncompliant or non-responsive companies more was at stake than the mere loss of the state's largesse. Guard units were forced to conform to novel and constantly proliferating directives or be dropped from the ranks of "organized militia". In many ways this process resembles the later expropriation of the National Guard by the federal government. Incrementally perhaps, but unquestionably, the National Guard of Pennsylvania was coming to resemble, in many aspects of its existence, the regular Army.

The first section of the 1878 supplementary statute reconfigured the table of organization by reducing the number of companies from two hundred to one hundred and sixty

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organization of a well-selected, clothed, instructed, disciplined, armed and equipped body of volunteer militia."

<sup>266</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 30. New York and Pennsylvania "learned that large numbers of poorly financed, inadequately trained, and undermanned Guard units were a liability in times of trouble."

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., 37. "Consistent state financial support not only assured unit stability but gave state executives a means for imposing control over the historically independent volunteer companies."

companies of all arms.<sup>268</sup> The reorganization of the companies was left to the discretion of the governor who was given the power to combine them into divisions, brigades, and regiments. By June of 1878 all ten divisions had been disbanded, and reconstituted brigades began to appear throughout the month of September. The governor was also authorized to create new military districts within the state as “necessity required.” The number of line officers was also reduced to one major general and five brigadiers, thus rendering all of the division commanders and their multiple, and often redundant, layers of staff supernumerary.<sup>269</sup> Within two years a single tactical division had been formed composed of three brigades, each headquartered in one of the state’s three new military districts.<sup>270</sup>

While the legislation reduced the number of companies, it increased the minimum number of personnel in each company, from forty to fifty noncommissioned officers and privates. Many of the pre-1878 companies were forced to either recruit to required strength or disband.<sup>271</sup> Recruitment would no longer resemble the initiation rites of the “gentleman’s club” or a fraternal order. In a move toward greater centralization, precise accounting, and selectiveness, each recruit was required to sign two sets of enlistment papers so that a precise personnel record could be maintained at the company level as well as in the adjutant general’s

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<sup>268</sup> More was certainly not better. The movement was toward a leaner, more efficient force. Increased appropriations were not mean for personnel expansion. Ultimately the numbers would be capped in the vicinity of 8,500 officers and men by the mid 1890’s.

<sup>269</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1878*, no. 218, sec.1, 173 ; Uzal Ent, *The First Century*, 76. Ent claims that the although new act allowed for the maintenance of multiple divisions, “it also restricted the number of major generals to one, thereby dictating a single division.”

<sup>270</sup> The first commander of the division was none other than Major General John F. Hartranft, former governor and Guard patron.

<sup>271</sup> Frederick I. Hitchcock, *History 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment, National Guard of Pennsylvania 1877-1923* (Scranton, PA : International Textbook Press,1924), 12. Other companies were forced to disband because they were geographically isolated from “parent” regiments. Hitchcock noted that this was the fate of the *Teleford Zouaves*.

office. In addition, before enrollment, a prospective recruit had to undergo a physical examination given by the regimental surgeon, or a physician designated for that purpose by the company's commander.

The annual allotment to those units that met the prescribed standards in numbers, discipline, and drill was increased from four hundred to five hundred dollars annually for infantry companies, and one thousand dollars for each troop of cavalry and each battery of artillery.<sup>272</sup> As in previous legislation this sum was meant to defray the costs of armory construction or rent, but company commanders treated the allotment as a discretionary fund. The legislation included a special one time allotment that provided a standard uniform for each enlisted man and recruit. The men received a state issue uniform that was an exact duplicate of the U.S. Army fatigue pattern.<sup>273</sup>

The legislature also supplied all necessary equipment and accoutrements for field duty. Both the uniform and equipment were considered state property- worn and used only in drill and in the discharge of military duties.<sup>274</sup> The standardization of uniforms and equipment, while welcomed by most of the troops, (as well as commissaries, quartermasters, and ordnance officers) left no doubt that the unique, colorful, and often bizarre displays of idiosyncratic uniforms and personal gear were a thing of the past.<sup>275</sup> One Guard historian observed that an attachment to gaudy uniforms was an indication that a state force emphasized the social aspects

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid., sec.2, 331. The supplemental law maintained the 1864 stipulation that the Pennsylvania National Guard must conform itself as closely as was feasible to U.S. Army organization, exercise, and discipline.

<sup>273</sup> Logan Papers, MSS 0096, Folder 14. "We were supplied with a blue uniform of the type that was used by the regular army and given other better equipment." Logan also recalled that the men in his company saw the changes as progress toward a more "useful" National Guard.

<sup>274</sup> The statute also imposed fines and imprisonment "for any willful destruction of State property."

<sup>275</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 1. The adjutant general noted "the appearance of soldierly bearing and real solidity; the absence of all show and display; the business-like and presentable state uniforms."

of the service to the detriment of the military functions. If such be the case, the new regulation uniform was an indication that in Pennsylvania's National Guard the martial trumped the social.<sup>276</sup>

The election and appointment of officers was maintained in the 1878 legislation, but subject to oversight at the highest levels of command. A centralized bureaucratic structure was incorporated into the new military code to ensure that candidates were qualified and competent to hold commissions. While not completely eliminating the practice of favoritism and political cronyism, the newly empowered review boards had the final word on officer commissions.<sup>277</sup> Review boards were a part of the military code adopted in the Militia Act of 1864. They were designed to "examine the capacity, qualifications, propriety of conduct, and the efficiency of any officer."<sup>278</sup> But such boards were entirely *ad hoc*, and only convened when accusations of incompetence or malfeasance were made against a specific individual officer. In his 1878 report the adjutant general observed that many of the defects exposed in the Guard during the 1877 riots could be attributed to incompetent and irresolute leadership. He expressed optimism that the newly configured review boards would advance more suitable candidates to positions of authority at all levels of command.<sup>279</sup> The statute also mandated the establishment of a

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<sup>276</sup> Riker, *Soldiers of the States*, 58-59. In addition Riker cited a French observer at a South Carolina military review: "An unchecked imagination seemed to have presided over the accouterment of the militia. From Swiss guards to comic opera zouaves, everything laughable and improbable in the way of uniform that one could dream of, appeared to have been gathered together in the dusty streets of Charleston."

<sup>277</sup> Skowronek, *Building A New American State*, 106. "A compromise between politics and military quality was struck in many states by having political appointees and elected officers pass an examination. This system secured both local political interests and a minimum standard of quality control."

<sup>278</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1864*, no. 210, sec.11, 226.

<sup>279</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 2. "The boards of exam will be fruitful of results, and will check the the election of officers simply because of good fellowship, and secure those of capacity and character."

permanent brigade review board to scrutinize prospective officers. If the board rejected an elected company commander, a new election was ordered. If the company refused to hold the election, or acted tardily, the governor had the power to appoint a commander or disband the company.<sup>280</sup>

Another innovation in the 1878 reform legislation that contributed to increased state supervision over the Guard was the creation of an inspector general of rifle practice. This officer served on the adjutant general's staff with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He was given the responsibility of arranging a "system of rifle practice for the improvement of the National guard in the use of its weapons." He was also responsible for the appointment of brigade and independent company inspectors of rifle practice who performed "such duties as may, from time to time, be prescribed by the general inspector of rifle practice." Brigade and company inspectors were charged with instituting and maintaining the marksmanship training programs and standards that were established at the state level "for the improvement of the Guard."<sup>281</sup>

A program to teach the art and science of rifle shooting, or riflery, had been developed and disseminated by Colonel George Wingate, an officer in the New York National Guard. Wingate was the influential founder of the National Rifle Association, which took upon itself the mission of spreading the "gospel" of riflery.<sup>282</sup> His "Wingate System" was slowly and grudgingly incorporated into the training regimen of the regular Army, but state National Guard organizations, particularly those in the Northeast, were early, enthusiastic converts to Wingate's

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<sup>280</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1878*, no. 218, sec.11, 177.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>282</sup> Perry D. Jamieson, *Crossing Deadly Ground: United States Army Tactics, 1865-1899* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1994), 55; Michael D. Doubler, *Civilian in Peace*, 119.

program.<sup>283</sup> Wingate was certain that marksmanship would make citizen soldiers a more valuable commodity in the event that they were called upon for national service. The promotion of riflery and the adoption of the “Wingate System” were viewed as “cutting edge” and thoroughly modern innovations that were indicative of Pennsylvania’s progress toward establishing a more useful National Guard.<sup>284</sup>

An 1881 supplement to the military code institutionalized the recent innovation of holding encampments for the National Guard. Prior to this legislation, individual companies at had undertaken encampments at their own expense. The Thirteenth Regiment Infantry, based in Scranton, was the first regiment- sized unit to participate in a summer encampment. These independent unit encampments were a mixture of vacation, fellowship, and military field exercises.<sup>285</sup> The 1881 statute mandates an annual brigade or regimental encampment that was not to exceed eight days in length. It was during these encampments that the adjutant general would make his annual unit inspections. Troops were provided transportation at state expense to and from camp. In addition the men received subsistence and *per diem* pay for travel days as well as for the actual time spent in camp. Pay rates for officers and men were adjusted to mirror that of the regular Army.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Russell S. Gilmore, “Crackshots and Patriots: The National rifle Association and America’s Military-Sporting Tradition, 1871-1928” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Wisconsin, 1974), 93. (A more thorough examination of the role of “riflery” in Pennsylvania National Guard training will be found in chapter four).

<sup>284</sup> A supplementary act of the General Assembly in 1881 apportioned state funds for brigade rifle practice inspectors to purchase ammunition for target practice.

<sup>285</sup> Hitchcock, *History 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment*, 13. Held in Long Branch, NJ 1879. “Colonel Boies believed such a tour would not only be highly beneficial to the regiment as a lesson in actual military service in the field, but would be a fine outing for the men and some compensation for their hard work in fitting themselves out as soldiers.” (The relationship of encampments to the development of the Pennsylvania National Guard will be addressed in chapter four)

<sup>286</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 188*, no. 234, sec. 2, 57.



The bulk of the 1881 supplement dealt with matters of discipline and the dispensation of military justice. Again, the program of centralization and tighter state control is evident in the new procedures. Absenteeism had been a problem for unit commanders from the earliest days of the militia system. Captains had to bear the weight of this burden, as they were ultimately responsible for the maintenance of unit strength.<sup>287</sup> Prior to the 1881 legislation, they had virtually no means at their disposal to coerce attendance or punish recalcitrant absentees. The new code empowered brigade commanders to convene courts martial for men who were absent “upon any occasion of duty.” If convicted the soldier faced a fine of twenty-five dollars or a term of imprisonment in the county jail “not to exceed thirty days.”<sup>288</sup> The 1864 militia act had listed only a few offenses serious enough to punish or dismiss an offender. The new statute specified United States Army regulations and the articles of war as the controlling authority in all matters pertaining to National Guard discipline, thereby making Guardsmen liable to a court martial for a significantly expanded range of offenses. In its adoption of Army standards for military justice the state was taking a voluntary step toward federalization of its forces.

The Commonwealth continued with its overhaul of the National Guard. The General Assembly had written an entirely new military code by the time it had put the finishing touches to it in supplements added in 1887. All legislation enacted in the previous thirty years was thereby abrogated. The new code was an embodiment of the reform impulse that emerged after the 1877 riots. The state appropriation was increased from \$220,000 to \$300,000 per year in 1887.<sup>289</sup> This substantial increase testified to the confidence that the legislators had in the progress that the National Guard had made since 1877- despite the fact that the not a single unit

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<sup>287</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 77.

<sup>288</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1878*, no. 234, sec. 7, 58.

<sup>289</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1887*, no. 20, sec. 47, 33.

was employed in state service since the summer of the railroad riots.<sup>290</sup> The legislators were privy to the reports of the adjutant general, the inspector general, and regular Army officers who had been detailed by the War Department to observe the annual encampments. The dramatic increase in state funding was a testament to the Guard's current (and future) utility and efficiency.

The 1887 statute reduced a soldier's term of enlistment from five years to three years' duration. The reduction was meant to make the service more attractive to prospective recruits. Given the new requirements for maintaining minimum personnel levels in the companies, the attraction of quality recruits and their retention on the company rolls was a priority for company commanders. Commanders had complained that men typically left the service just as they were beginning to show real progress in drill and discipline. Along with absenteeism, the constant turnover of personnel was the bane of company commanders. The 1887 legislation provided them assistance in the form of reenlistment bonuses for noncommissioned officers and privates.<sup>291</sup> Privates made one dollar and fifty cents per day when in the service of the state. For each additional three-year enlistment the rate was increased by twenty-five cents per day. Officer and noncommissioned officer pay remained equal to the rates paid in the regular Army.

The efforts to reconstitute and reform the Pennsylvania National Guard in the years after the 1877 riots created, by the late 1880s, a force 'known throughout the nation as a no-nonsense outfit trained and equipped for field service.'<sup>292</sup> The salutary effects of increased appropriations, supplemental funding, and changes in the military code were detailed in the official reports made annually by the state adjutant general. These reports also contain the

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<sup>290</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 37. "The willingness of a state to spend money on their soldiery in the late nineteenth century proved crucial to the rise of the National Guard."

<sup>291</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1887*, no. 20, sec. 52, 33-34.

<sup>292</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 50.

observations of regular Army officers who were detailed to observe the Guard during annual encampments. The reforms also tied the local companies more firmly to the state. The Guard was modernized and became more efficient. The General Assembly increased funding as well. But all of this progress came at a price- the loss of autonomy and self-expression at the local level.

Observers noted that the Guard was, to a greater degree than ever before, imbued with an increased awareness that their service was highly valued by the citizens and government of the Commonwealth. In addition to a sense of pride, feelings of solidarity and camaraderie were evident in both officers and men as they began to cooperate more closely than ever before. Most Guardsmen had always taken a great degree of pride in their local company or troop. They jealously protected the interests and prerogatives of their local units at the expense of the requirements of the National Guard as a whole. They looked upon integration in larger tactical formations as a submergence of their distinctive unit character. But as the effects of the reform legislation reverberated throughout the Guard, men began to identify with their regiment, battalion, brigade, and ultimately with the Guard as a whole.<sup>293</sup> The new spirit of organizational pride and solidarity increased both morale and unit cohesion.<sup>294</sup> But despite all of the effort at modernization and efficiency the Guard was not used even once in the decade following the 1877 uprising.

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<sup>293</sup> *AGR for 1879*, 6. "That among the officers and men there prevails a sentiment of cordial support and amity, as a well as a spirit of generous rivalry that advances the tone and morale of the service."

<sup>294</sup> Martha Derthick, *The National Guard in Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 17-21. Derthick noted that the National Guard revival actually pre-dated the 1877 labor riots. A number of social and cultural factors combined to make militia service popular throughout the United States.

In 1881 a Pennsylvania delegation of twelve companies was sent to Yorktown, Virginia to represent the state in the centennial celebration of the American victory.

They set up camp, marched in parades, and participated in displays of close order drill that were attended by the public. The Pennsylvania men received a great deal of praise from the assembled dignitaries and foreign military observers. The officer in command of the delegation, Colonel P.N. Guthrie, looked upon the success of the event as proof that a new spirit of solidarity and cooperation was energizing the Guard. That the men performed their tasks in such an exemplary manner was an indication that training and discipline were much improved.<sup>295</sup>

The revamped review boards also made a significant contribution to increased competence and efficiency within the Guard's officer corps. In 1881 a brigade commander noted that the examinations and the reviews boards were working to good effect by advancing competent candidates and weeding out the deadwood that had accrued over the years.<sup>296</sup> Officer review boards were convened during the annual brigade inspections. But shortly after their institution at the brigade level, review boards were set up within each regiment. A number of officers resigned their commissions rather than take their chances before the boards, and unsuitable candidates had their company elections invalidated.<sup>297</sup> By 1890, in an effort to raise officer qualifications to a higher level, the boards incorporated an even greater degree of rigor

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<sup>295</sup> *AGR for 1881*, 5. "Report of Colonel P.N. Guthrie on the Yorktown Centennial." "These companies were hurriedly brought together, from different parts of the State, with no acquaintance with each other and no knowledge of their commanding officers."

<sup>296</sup> *AGR for 1881*, "Report of Brigadier General George R. Snowden, Commander First Brigade," 30-31. "The wisdom of establishing the board, and thus giving a check upon the election of incompetent persons as officers, and the power to recommend the discharge of any officer, who, for reasons arising out of his appointment or election, may have become inefficient or incapable, is every year more apparent."

<sup>297</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 21. Some men "have been found not fit for the position in which they were elected, while a number resigned, it is said, because they doubted their ability to stand the requisite examination."

and thoroughness into the annual examinations.<sup>298</sup> Review boards and testing filtered down into the noncommissioned ranks. On their own initiative a number of regiments instituted examinations for noncommissioned officers.<sup>299</sup>

The increased levels of state funding and the elevation of National Guard service in the public eye helped company commanders to recruit and retain enlisted personnel. An increasing number of men were attracted to the service. The burden of recruitment, which weighed most heavily on the company commanders, was lightened. The influx of recruits served as an incentive to the men already in the service to achieve a greater level of efficiency due to the limited number of available “spaces” in the Guard. Every man was keenly aware that there were a number of men who wanted to take his place in the company ranks.<sup>300</sup> The required physical examinations weeded out men who were incapable of enduring the rigors of active service in the field. In addition to increased numbers of qualified recruits, Brigadier General Frank Reeder noted that the service was now attracting men from all classes of society, a phenomenon noted by Lieutenant John Bean, a regular Army observer at a Second Brigade encampment in 1890.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> *AGR for 1886*, 2. “Inexperienced officers can’t be good instructors of their men –better examinations- or more rigorous are needed.”

<sup>299</sup> *AGR for 1890*, 7. “In some regiments no warrant is issued to a non-commissioned officer until he has passed a satisfactory examination, as required by the commanding officer.”

<sup>300</sup> *AGR for 1885*, 14. “The increased interest of the general public in the National Guard and the desire of so many young men to enter the service are excellent incentives to the officers and enlisted men to perform their duties.”

<sup>301</sup> *AGR for 1878*, “Report of Brigadier General Frank Reeder, Commander Second Brigade,” 17. “The recognition of the National Guard, recently shown by the State, has tended to elevate and dignify the service, and we are now commanding the respect of, and making enlistments from classes, which until recently, had furnished no recruits.” ; *AGR for 1890*, “Report of Lieutenant John Bean, Second U.S. Cavalry”, 218. “The Personnel of the Pennsylvania National Guard are a general representation of the people. It includes a variety of trades, professions, and occupations. Many are quite young-under twenty-one years.”

The reenlistment bonuses instituted in the 1887 legislation proved instrumental in increasing the retention of good men in the ranks.<sup>302</sup>

The imposition greater discipline, mandated by the reform of the military code, was instrumental in revamping and renewing the National Guard. The adjutant general was of the opinion that the institution of a more rigorous code of discipline along the lines of the regular Army attracted men of a “martial spirit” to the ranks of the Guard.<sup>303</sup> Stricter penalties for absences from duty also did their part to increase unit efficiency. Brigadier General Snowden reported that he sent an armed guard to escort men who were absent without leave to his brigade encampment in 1881. He was of the opinion such displays served *pour encourager les autres*.<sup>304</sup> In 1885 the inspector general observed that in the interests of increased efficiency, the punishment for absence from the annual encampments should be extended to absences from weekly company drills.<sup>305</sup> The judge advocate cautioned that such public displays of martial discipline and punishment, such as marching into a private workplace and pulling out an absent citizen soldier, could work to the detriment of the National Guard. It was imperative that officers had to exercise good judgment when they disciplined military offenders.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> *AGR for 1890*, 6. “The 1887 act providing increased pay for each reenlistment has worked so well that another appropriation is needed to meet the payroll.”

<sup>303</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 12. “The good effects of enforcing orderly conduct are seen in the fact, that it is now a source of pride to belong to a militia, wherein discipline and good order are enforced, and that the service is more inviting to that class of men desirable for recruits, who are now joining in greater numbers the various organizations.”

<sup>304</sup> *AGR for 1881*, “Report of General John Snowden, Commander First Brigade,” 33. “In some instances a guard was sent for men absent without leave and they were brought forcibly to camp. This is likely to fortify the men’s sense of duty and obligation to the oath of enlistment voluntarily assumed.”

<sup>305</sup> *AGR for 1885*, “Report of the Inspector General,” 33. “If officers and men are to be punished for absence at the annual encampment then this should extend to company drills during the rest of the year.”

<sup>306</sup> *AGR for 1886*, “Report of the Judge Advocate General,” 5-6. “certainly the appearance of a squad of armed soldiers marching into an accounting room or workshop, and dragging from the

By 1890, after more than a decade of reform, the Pennsylvania National Guard had been transformed by the efforts of governors and legislators, as well as the men of the Guard themselves, into a “formidable force”. A report authored by William J. Volkmar, Assistant Adjutant General of the United States, commended the state for the dramatic results that had been obtained in the time since the “mournful experience of 1877.”<sup>307</sup> In 1887 Colonel E.S. Otis, a regular Army observer reported that he was greatly impressed by the overall high level of physical fitness, intelligence and efficiency of the Guard. He was also of the opinion that the troops were more than adequate to preserve law and order in the state, and would certainly be of great use to the United States in the event of a national emergency.<sup>308</sup> Another regular Army observer stated that the Pennsylvania National Guard had reached such a high level of organization, training, and preparedness that perhaps only the state of New York could match it.<sup>309</sup> The same officer reported to the War Department that Pennsylvania was capable of quickly mobilizing and concentrating a well-trained, well-equipped force that could handle any exigency arising from any domestic or foreign threat.<sup>310</sup>

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avocations of peace and through the streets of a city, a comrade in civilian attire, could scarcely be a spectacle to encourage recruiting or popularize the National Guard in the eyes of the community... .”

<sup>307</sup> Volkmar MSS, *RG 168*, National Archives and Record Administration. “The lessons taught by the railway riots of 1877 betrayed the uselessness of the State forces existing at that time, and the Legislature was not slow to profit by a costly and mournful experience in which the lives of valued citizens were lost.”

<sup>308</sup> *AGR for 1887*, 6. “One is convinced that the internal affairs of the State will not be greatly disturbed by forcible resistance to law while this force is efficiently maintained. It would be of use to the U.S. government in the event of national emergency- of great advantage to it in furnishing trained soldiers should it become necessary to augment its army.”

<sup>309</sup> *AGR for 1890*, 217.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.* “The state can with forty-eight hours’ notice, put into the field at almost any point within its limits, a division of eight thousand men, well-armed, fairly equipped, and properly organized, which, on taking the field, will be superior to any volunteer brigade or division that took the field in 1861, after two months’ service.”

1877 revealed the weakness of the Guard, while the 1880s were a decade of significant improvement. But throughout the 1880's the National Guard was never tried or tested in state service. Ceremonies, parades, and summer encampments had been the limit of the Guard's official duties. There had been no insurrections, riots, or calls to police strikes. Guard officers noted that such disturbances had erupted in other parts of the nation. Certainly Pennsylvania had its share of the same kinds of lawless elements that were responsible for the troubles in other states. Why had the Commonwealth been spared thus far? The answer, according to Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, was that the "turbulent elements" were kept in awe and deterred by the efficiency and might of Pennsylvania's National Guard. The excellent state of the Guard seemed to justify all of the effort and expense that had been made to reconstitute it. General Gobin concluded his report by noting "that the high efficiency of our Guard, in itself, affords safety and security to the citizens and the State."<sup>311</sup> The 1880's had been marked by a truce of sorts between labor and capital in Pennsylvania, but this truce was about to end as the new decade began. The Pennsylvania National Guard would indeed be tried and tested in the years to come.

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<sup>311</sup> *AGR for 1886*, "Report of Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, Commander Third Brigade", 115.



### Chapter Three

Commissions, committees, and the General Assembly were all instrumental in the process of refashioning the Pennsylvania military code. The statutes mandated the structural and disciplinary reforms that were, in turn, going to make for a more modern, efficient, and disciplined National Guard. The reform legislation cannot be judged by its intentions; the legislature, governor, and the ranking officers of the Guard certainly intended to fashion a legislative initiative that would make for a greatly improved National Guard. But what were the effects of the statutory changes on the organization? This chapter will describe what the Guard was actually doing after the reforms were instituted. Far from making themselves over into a more effective constabulary, the Guard was in the process of becoming more of a military force. Officers and men were following the patterns established by the Regular Army in drill, military exercises, and marksmanship. There was increased contact and cooperation with the Regulars through the War Department's program that detailed officers to serve as advisors and observers to those state National Guard units that requested them. In effect, the National Guard of Pennsylvania was gradually taking on a new role- it was becoming the "elementary school of the Army." Instead of preparing themselves to be the "policemen of industry," they were training to

be the nation's reserve force. The Guard increasingly adopted Regular Army standards in unit organization, training, and discipline. The Guard followed Army unit organization, tactical doctrine, and individual marksmanship criteria as they delineated the in official Army manuals. The evidence indicates that they did not spend any of their time training to be more effective riot police or better instruments of crowd control. They were training to be soldiers, not constables.

### I. "Camping"

The progress made by the Pennsylvania National Guard over the years since the 1877 railroad riots can be attributed to many causes. One of the fundamental training devices was the annual encampment, held during the summer months. In the late nineteenth century the summer camp was a rather recent innovation. Very few states had taken steps to institutionalize training camps prior to the Civil War.<sup>312</sup> Training was theoretically the object of the monthly muster days and the voluntary drill nights held during the week at the company level. The training camps were expensive, typically involving an additional appropriation, and very few state legislatures were willing to shoulder the increased financial burden.<sup>313</sup> The federal government, in response to an intense lobbying effort on the part of the National Guard Association, helped defray the

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<sup>312</sup> Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard," 50. "Before the Civil war, only Massachusetts had attempted to hold a summer camp, and this was done only for a brief period of time."

<sup>313</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 38. "Only Massachusetts and Connecticut regularly mustered their volunteers for annual training and inspection in the antebellum years. Until the early 1880s, few states provided the funds to bring the Guard into camp each year."

cost somewhat by supplying tentage.<sup>314</sup> Pennsylvania most likely refused this bit of government *largesse* probably because of its proud self-sufficiency in this particular area of supply. Many Pennsylvania units acted independently, by organizing and paying for their own training camps.<sup>315</sup> Typically a company would include the cost of the camp in the annual dues or make a provision for a special levy that the men would have to meet themselves. In 1875, then private Albert Logan, a newly accepted member of the *Duquesne Grays* was concerned over the steep ten-dollar levy that he would have to pay in order to go off with the rest of the unit to Chautauqua, New York.<sup>316</sup>

Scranton's Thirteenth Regiment encamped at Long Branch New Jersey in 1879 and relied upon members' contributions and a successful subscription conducted by the members of individual companies. The single greatest expense, rail transportation, was provided free of charge by carriers in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Thirteenth was also given a weeks' use of the Long Branch fair grounds free of charge.<sup>317</sup> One can only imagine the keen sense of anticipation that must have been felt by the local merchants and saloonkeepers as week of the encampment drew near. This was a unique experience for the men of this unit.

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<sup>314</sup> Riker, *Soldiers of the States*, 60. "Nearly every state that asked for it received Congressional permission to borrow army tents for their summer camps."

<sup>315</sup> Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard," 51. "Initially most militia outfits met their expense at camp, either by footing the bill themselves, or by using the money received from the fines from the general militia. ... In most cases, however, the camps worked a financial burden on the majority of the men who attended."

<sup>316</sup> *Logan MSS 0096*, Folder 14. "I felt very much that I would like to have the opportunity of participating in the encampment, but there was an assessment of \$10.00 to help pay the expenses of the camp that I had to consider."

<sup>317</sup> Hitchcock, *History 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment*, 13. "This was made possible by the D.L. & W.R.R. and the C.R.R. of New Jersey furnishing us free transportation both ways, and a contribution from citizens and members of the regiment towards a fund for incidental expenses, the chief of which was the Commissariat." Hitchcock noted that the unit needed special permission to come into New Jersey, as it was a "foreign" military force.

Encampments, especially out of state encampments at this point in the Guard's history, were quite uncommon in the Pennsylvania National Guard

Pennsylvania's adjutant general cautiously promoted the idea of an annual camp in his 1879 report. He noted that many companies and some regiments had been conducting summer camps at their own expense in scattered locations throughout the Commonwealth and in bordering states. He also observed that many of the units that did have such an exercise tended to be more efficient and generally received higher ratings in the annual inspections. Although generally supportive of the encampment concept, he believed that the company-sized encampments were of doubtful utility given that the regiment was the basic maneuver unit of the Guard.<sup>318</sup>

In 1879 and 1880 encampments for the entire National Guard of Pennsylvania were initiated on an experimental basis. The division was divided into two separate commands, eastern and western, and the troops went into camp for one week. Camp discipline and routine, which had been voluntarily enforced in previous individual unit encampments, was now under the purview of camp officers.<sup>319</sup> During the day the men worked almost exclusively on the "school of the soldier"- close order drill, guard mounts, and military courtesy. The culminating event of the week was a thorough inspection by the division inspector general and his staff, an annual event that was traditionally done in the spring.

Attendance at the 1880 "experimental" camps was problematic because the men were not paid for their service, except on the day of inspection. The adjutant general reported that the average attendance was sixty-seven percent of all troops currently enrolled and, not surprisingly,

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<sup>318</sup> *AGR for 1879*, 3.

<sup>319</sup> Hitchcock, *History of the 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment*, 17. "The tour of duty at Fairmont Park-now under actual State service-was no more severe in the way of discipline than was that of the year before voluntarily enforced in the 13<sup>th</sup> at Long Branch ..."

the highest attendance was noted on inspection day. The state refused to provide an allocation for rations and other forms of subsistence, a disability that further lowered camp attendance.<sup>320</sup> Undeterred, the state Military Board negotiated a rate reduction with those railroad companies that provided transportation for the men and equipment to the campsites. The savings were used to establish a commissary fund that was more than adequate to feed and sustain the men for the week.<sup>321</sup> In order to preclude any emergency expenditure, the division's encampment order repeatedly and methodically listed the items that were supposed to be in each man's kit.<sup>322</sup>

Adjutant General John Snowden, former commander of the Second Brigade, believed that the camps were a great opportunity to train every department in the National Guard—from the staff officers to the infantrymen. He noted that all the personnel who participated derived multiple benefits from the training opportunities in the military environment fostered by encampments. In a contribution to the National Guard Association's annual *Proceedings*, General Snowden urged state legislatures to pay the men for service during encampments. Love for the service and a spirit of sacrifice was not enough to ensure that the men would return summer after summer.<sup>323</sup>

In 1881 the General Assembly institutionalized the summer encampment by making it a part of the state's military code. The encampment was not to exceed eight days' duration and

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<sup>320</sup> *AGR for 1880*, 1. "The proposed law which provided for the payment and maintenance of the troops, while in camp, failed in its passage at the last session of the Legislature."

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>322</sup> Beyer, *A History of the Sheridan Troop*, 14. "The order [encampment order] said rations would be available at camp at not more than 30c per day, or the men could take their own supplies. Each man was to take a knife, fork, spoon, cup and plate, and a blanket. Men could take overcoats if desired."

<sup>323</sup> National Guard Association, *Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the National Guard Association of the United States, 1881*, 28. "I think, that in order to make encampments a success hereafter, the officers and men ought to be paid. You ought not to require the men to leave their homes unless you pay them. It is a duty they are performing for the State, and no amount of love for it is sufficient to compensate a man for his absence from home and loss of wages."

would be held at a time and place mandated by the adjutant general. Under the provisions of the supplementary legislation, the Commonwealth provided transportation, subsistence, and *per diem* pay (not to exceed five days) for the troops. The expenses would not come out of the annual Guard appropriation but would be payable to the adjutant general on a warrant from the state treasury after expense statements had been reviewed and approved by the state military board. The law also mandated an inspection of all participating units during the encampment. Section seven of the supplement provided for the payment of a fine, not to exceed twenty-five dollars, if a soldier failed to report for camp or any other state duty without a verifiable excuse for the absence.<sup>324</sup>

The Guard thus began a yearly training period that had them gathering by regiment, brigade, and division in alternate years. The summer camps were crucial to the continued progress of the National Guard in the areas of efficiency, professionalism and modernization. The training programs were of vital importance in the transformation of the Guard, so they bear close scrutiny. The legislatures of the various states that provided an appropriation for encampments viewed the summer drill and exercises as a means to increase the efficiency of their state troops. Voluntary drilling in armories, or what passed for armories, was hardly an adequate training regimen for the state's first line of defense in the event of invasion, riot, and rebellion. Nor was the limited time that was spent in the armories adequate to the task of transforming the Guard into an adjunct of the Army.

The first encampments revealed a number of fundamental weaknesses and indicated that the officers and men had a great deal of serious work ahead of them if the Guard was to progress and establish itself as an efficient, disciplined, and thoroughly modern military

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<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, Sec.7, 58.

instrument. Training and education became the bywords for summer camp. The encampment of 1881 served notice that the Guard was no longer treating the summer exercises as occasions of fun and frolic.<sup>325</sup> Now that public money was invested the troops had to take the camps seriously and be about the business of becoming better soldiers. The adjutant general noted, with a sense of satisfaction, that, for the most part in 1881, the men adopted a serious work ethic.<sup>326</sup>

Unlike other states, such as New York and Connecticut, the Commonwealth did not establish permanent facilities for National Guard summer encampments.<sup>327</sup> Locations varied from year to year as the final authority in the designation of a campsite was the camp commander. In addition, the size of the unit encamping in any given year, whether division, brigade, or regiment, dictated the location and type of facilities that would be required. The basic requirements for a campsite included: proximity to a rail line, suitable size for camp facilities, drills and exercises, and a source of potable water. In the early encampments the lack of good water in some of the camps, and subsequent health problems for the troops, prompted

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<sup>325</sup> *AGR for 1882*, "Report of Brigadier General J.K. Sigfried, Commander, Third Brigade," 48. "While it was *work* and not *play* [italics in original], all entered into it with the true spirit of soldiers, and I never saw a body of men more cheerful and ready to obey, and to discharge the onerous duties of a camp than was here exhibited."

<sup>326</sup> *AGR for 1881*, 3. "The camp was not looked to as a season for pleasure and amusement, but as a time when the exacting requirement's of a soldier's life should be faithfully discharged."

<sup>327</sup> New York had Peekskill and Connecticut utilized a permanent facility at Niantic. In his report of 1882, Brigadier General James Beaver, with an eye toward economy, proposed that the Pennsylvania Guard secure a permanent campsite: *AGR for 1882*, "Report of Brigadier General James Beaver, Commander, Third Brigade", 46. "... would it not be well to extend some inquiry in the direction of the expediency of securing, either by lease or purchase, a tract of well-watered waste land on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, on the Allegheny Mountains, suitable for encamping the division."

the chief medical officer of the Guard to insist that natural sources of clean water be available near campsites.<sup>328</sup>

Once the ground was chosen, division, brigade, or regimental staff officers laid out the camps. Each regiment, in the case of a brigade or division encampment, sent an advance work detail to set up the tents that would be used by the rest of the men in the unit. Rations and stores arrived by rail and were transported by the wagons of private contractors. The supplies were typically housed in a temporary warehouse especially constructed for the camp. When the encampment commenced, all the troops had to do was march into camp, have their quarter masters and commissaries make requisitions for supplies, and then settle into their assigned section of the camp.<sup>329</sup>

The men subsisted on the regular Army ration supplemented by fresh meat and produce. It was a superior ration than that given to the Regular Army, but its cost was relatively the same- twenty-eight cents per ration. Commissary officers purchased fresh food and produce from local suppliers and relied on local merchants for the rest of the components of the ration. These merchants and farmers realized considerable profits when the National Guard arrived in their vicinity for an encampment.<sup>330</sup> Other businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and independent concessions, prospered during an encampment as it drew hundreds, even thousands

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<sup>328</sup> *AGR for 1883*, "Report of the Surgeon General," 20. "It is a question for consideration whether it is desirable to select, as a position for a camp, one not possessing natural water facilities, such as springs or streams from which portable water can be obtained."

<sup>329</sup> *AGR for 1886*, 1. This report provides the details of the work involved in camp preparation.

<sup>330</sup> *The Indiana Gazette*, July 11, 1914. "LaMantia and Bros., of Indiana, have been awarded the contract by the Commissary Department of the Second Brigade, N.G.P., for the furnishing of 140 barrels of potatoes and 30 barrels of onions, as part of the rations for the citizen soldiery, who will be with us this time next week. The Johnstown Sanitary Dairy Co. has been given the contract for 100 tons of ice (the soldiers are going to be cool at any rate)."; *Erie Daily Times*, June 29, 1913. The headline blared that "Food By the Carload Is Ordered For State Militia". The article that follows happily reported "The majority of contracts have been awarded to Erie merchants."



of spectators from the region, who wanted to observe the various exercises, drills, parades, and formal reviews. The first and the last day of an encampment usually drew the most visitors. During the Second Brigade encampment in Indiana County, special trains were scheduled to bring in spectators from Kittanning and Greensburg as Indiana experienced the “largest crowd in her history”.<sup>331</sup> In addition to curious citizens, the ceremonial and parade days held during the encampments typically drew local, state, and national politicians. But at least one high-ranking National Guard officer saw the steady stream of visitors as a nuisance and detrimental to good order and camp discipline. He recommended that all future encampments should take place far from cities and towns.<sup>332</sup>

Given the financial benefits, it is not surprising that many communities fortunate enough to host an encampment provided a number of services to the Guard free of charge. As a water supply was always a priority for Guard quartermasters, a number of towns allowed the Guard camp to tap into the municipal water system. In 1883 the citizens of Phoenixville granted the First Brigade the use of its substantial fairgrounds and constructed a piping system to carry water to the camp from the town reservoir. The community also supplied building materials and hired contractors who constructed sheds to house quartermaster and commissary stores and to quarter the horses of the mounted troops.<sup>333</sup> Local civic and fraternal organizations, or *ad hoc*

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<sup>331</sup> Ibid. , July 16, 1914. “Sunday with everything in running order will be the biggest day of the Encampment. Six special trains will arrive over the P.R.R. and four over the B., R. &P., besides which there will be hundreds of automobile and buggy parties and Indiana is expecting the largest crowd in her history.”

<sup>332</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 116. “Report of Brigadier General J.K. Sigfried, Commander, Third Brigade,” 116. “In this connection I would recommend the location of our camps in the future away from the neighborhood of large towns and cities. The attractions and disruptions of thickly-settled communities make the ordinary routine of camp life very difficult.”

<sup>333</sup> *AGR for 1883*, “Report of General Snowden, Commander, First Brigade,” 106. “Through the public spirit and liberality of the citizens of Phoenixville, thanks to whom are due for this and many other favors, the site was procured for the disposal of the troops free of expense to them

citizens' committees, also pitched in, doing their share to make the Guard encampment a success, with the hope that the brigade or regiment, or perhaps even the entire division, would return in summers to come. Even individual landowners made contributions. Prior to the division encampment at Mount Gretna in 1887, Robert Coleman prepared a large tract of his own land, at his own expense for the use of the Guard.<sup>334</sup>

The railroad companies offered the National Guard special rates to transport the men to the encampments. The railroad was the most efficient mode of transportation for moving large numbers of men, equipment, and supplies long distances according to strict timetables. National Guard brigade headquarters were always located near railroad hubs so as to facilitate the rapid movement of troops in any direction. Civilian crews received valuable training themselves during the summer encampments that would prepare them for actual mobilizations. Commissaries and quartermasters learned combat loading techniques that would prove to be of great value in the Homestead and Hazleton deployments of the 1890s. The Guard and the railroads, particularly the Pennsylvania Railroad, developed a partnership that benefited both organizations.

Once the men arrived in camp the daily routine of drill, meals, inspections, and more drill was established. Attendance at the encampments continued to increase, but for a number of reasons increased attendance was often a mixed blessing. Camp attendance was an important criterion in the annual inspection regime. Companies were rated on the number of men who showed up for camp. With this standard in mind, as the annual encampment drew near, many

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and the State. Water of excellent quality-abundant in quantity-was brought in pipes from the water-works of the town, and carried through the camp by the force of gravity."

<sup>334</sup> *AGR for 1887*, 8. "The grounds occupied by the division were greatly improved by the owner, Mr. Robert H. Coleman, who, with great liberality and public spirit, expended a large amount of money in clearing portions of the territory, the erection of a large reservoir, and by a system of pipes, supplying an abundance of excellent water, all without cost to the State."

company commanders discharged men who could not attend camp due to employment or family concerns. Such discharges were a great loss to the Guard as these were men who usually had significant time in the ranks a degree of training.<sup>335</sup> Company commanders would then recruit new men who would fill out the company muster rolls and guarantee a high rating for camp attendance. Often these new men did not have a chance to learn how to wear the uniform correctly, much less the opportunity to learn the manual of arms.

The influx of raw recruits around the time of summer encampments swelled numbers and attendance ratings, but these men were usually useless, and often posed a danger to themselves and others during drills and exercises. This problem became so acute that in 1887 the inspector general suggested that no recruitment be allowed in the three months prior to the annual encampments.<sup>336</sup> The pressure to achieve high attendance marks also led company commanders to bring the sick and disabled to camp, a practice that the surgeon general condemned as a kind of criminal negligence in his 1882 report.<sup>337</sup> Despite continued annual protests from many quarters in the Guard this abuse continued well into the 1890s.<sup>338</sup> But despite the influx of recruits, discipline at encampments was tight. Incidents of drunkenness, assault, and other infractions lesser or greater infractions of the Articles of War were few. The men took the camp experience in a serious and sober light.

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<sup>335</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 3. "For the purpose of full ranks in camp the captain, finding the trained soldier not able to go discharges him, and the work of years is lost."

<sup>336</sup> *AGR for 1887*, 15. "Enlisting men close to the annual camp is a bad idea. It brings into camp a large number of untrained and undrilled men, prevents the regiment from receiving the full benefit of the encampment, slurs its movements ... these same recruits soon leave the service after camp and after significant cost to the State, and zero benefit to the National Guard."

<sup>337</sup> *AGR for 1882*, 20-21. "In connection with the occurrence of sickness in the camp, I desire to call attention to the custom which prevails among many officers of bringing into camp men who are invalids, unfit for duty, and who appear on the rolls as present, but sick."

<sup>338</sup> See the *AGRs* for 1892, 1894, 1897.

Whether a division, brigade, or regimental camp offered the best opportunity for training was a perennial controversy among the Guard's general officers. Supporters of smaller sized unit encampments promoted them on the basis of cost. The eight-day division encampments were very expensive to set up and run. Division Commander, Major General John Hartranft, stated that the purpose of the camp was to prepare the Guard for service in the field, and that as state troops were so frequently called out in emergencies, assembling in different places in the state at various levels of troop strength prepared the Guard for practical service in the field.<sup>339</sup> Hartranft noted that when the troops were assembled together and trained together in the encampments, a spirit of friendly rivalry and emulation tended to increase unit pride and efficiency. He refused to become an advocate for a particular sized encampment and believed that all provided valuable practice for the men.<sup>340</sup>

General George Snowden of the Second Brigade made the case for yearly division-sized camps. He discounted the argument that brigade and regimental camps made better economic sense because division encampments were much more expensive. The practical advantages alone justified the greater expense. Division encampments also gave field officers an opportunity to maneuver the division, and its brigades, regiments through the tactical evolutions that they had only read about in the manuals. In this respect they had more experience than most Regular officers who never worked with units larger than a regiment. In addition, the division encampments made men realize that they were part of something much more substantial than their local company or regiment, a factor that increased the pride the men took in their service to the state. They also had an opportunity to compare their level of efficiency in drill and discipline

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<sup>339</sup> *AGR for 1884*, "Report of Major General John Hartranft, Commander, Division," 89.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.* "In all these practice makes perfect, and practice can only be had when the troops are brought together in the annual encampments, and the general emulation between brigades, regiments, and companies increases the soldierly pride of individuals and organizations."

with other units from around the Commonwealth. A division encampment also placed the power of the state front and center as a kind of lesson for the edification of the law abiding and the lawless elements amongst the state population.<sup>341</sup> Finally, he dismissed the complaints of junior officers who claimed that encampments by division gave them little time to give their men individual instruction. From Snowden's point of view, small unit instruction was best left to the drill nights in the home armories.

By 1893 General Snowden had become the division commander and he remained a staunch advocate of divisional encampments. He stated that the large-scale operations in Homestead in the summer and fall of 1892 would have been much more problematic without the experience gained in the division encampments. He also noted that the armies of the major European powers engaged in maneuvers with massive bodies of troops, and the Europeans knew a thing or two about war.<sup>342</sup> General Snowden also believed that the inability of the small unit to operate within a larger tactical organization was an important factor in the defeats suffered by the Union army in the opening engagements of the Civil War.<sup>343</sup>

Regimental and battalion officers were convinced that the larger unit encampments provided few opportunities to exercise the prerogatives of command.<sup>344</sup> They were given little

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<sup>341</sup> *AGR for 1882*, "Report of Major General George Snowden, Commander, Second Brigade," 45. "The show of force which the State can command in an emergency, is not the least to be derived from a division encampment."

<sup>342</sup> *AGR for 1893*, "Report of Major general George R. Snowden, Commander, Division," 70. *Ibid.* "The advantage to be derived from bringing the troops together in large bodies are so well recognized in Europe, where the art of war attains its highest development, that this year, in the several countries, armies were assembled in varying strength from 18,000 in Holland to 250,000 in Austria."

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>344</sup> The battalion organization in the Pennsylvania National Guard was controversial. The regular Army was experimenting with the unit structure in infantry regiments the 1880s. Pennsylvania followed suit. By 1891 the Army adopted the idea, and Pennsylvania quickly followed the Army's lead.

latitude to exercise independent judgment or display the fruit of their training and experience. Either the brigade or division staff officers did camp planning and setup for the regiment. Once they arrived at the brigade or division encampments the commanders of regiments and battalion leaders saw their units folded into the larger unit organizations.<sup>345</sup> They saw the brigade encampment as an opportunity to assume responsibility for an independent operation as well as a chance to drill and educate their men. They had precisely these opportunities in the 1886 regimental encampments, which, according to the adjutant general, completely vindicated the concept.<sup>346</sup>

The brigade camps were repeated in 1888 with an imaginative innovation. In order to give the men practical military experience, any company that was located within twenty-five miles of the regimental campground was given permission to march to or from the site. The Guard leadership valued the training elements of this exercise to such a high degree that those units that chose the march received an extra two-days' pay. Wagon transportation of camp equipment and personal baggage was paid out of the amount the company saved by declining movement by rail.<sup>347</sup>

The upper echelons believed that the men who engaged in the marches would gain valuable military experience of a practical, rather than a theoretical nature. They would learn how to pitch and strike camp, bivouac, and picket duty. The exercise also called for units to move about the countryside as if they were in enemy country, a training device that called for the

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<sup>345</sup> *AGR for 1886*, 1. "This left very little for the judgment and experiences of commanding officers of battalions, and has created on their part a desire for regimental camp, where the entire responsibility would be with them."

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.* "All details necessary to this movement was under the control and supervision of the battalion commanders and has demonstrated their ability to handle their commands in any emergency."

<sup>347</sup> *AGR for 1887*, 9.

use of such security measures as scouts, flankers and rearguards.<sup>348</sup> The adjutant general's annual report for 1888 notes, with considerable satisfaction, the success of these marches. A number of company's and their commanders were mentioned for efficiency and speed of their movements. The report also indicated that the experiment had proved beneficial and ought to be continued.<sup>349</sup>

Many historians of the National Guard erroneously contend that the legislators who had initially voted to appropriate state funds for annual encampments did so as an investment in the National Guard as a constabulary force. William Riker made the case for a *quid pro quo* relationship between state National Guard organizations and state governments when he asserted that state funding of summer camps (among other benefits) was directly related to the role of the Guard in policing industrial disputes.<sup>350</sup> Joseph John Holmes made a similar argument in regard to the post 1877 Pennsylvania National Guard. Holmes emphatically declared that the efforts made to reform the Guard after 1877-increased appropriations, new uniforms, armory assistance, and summer encampments-were rewards for the Guard's acceptance of its labor police role.<sup>351</sup> But if this was the case, then the General Assembly received very little return on their considerable investment.

During the post 1877 decade and beyond the National Guard moved ever closer to regular Army standards and practice. The officers and men certainly seemed to have believed that were training to be soldiers in the summer encampments, not policemen. They were, in fact, using the annual exercises to become more like the regular Army in theory, practice, and

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<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.* "This plan would enable troops to gain some knowledge of actual campaigning. Their march would be as through an enemy's country, with advance and rear guards, and, when formation of the country admitted, flankers and patrols would be thrown out. They would learn ... many of the every day duties of a soldier's life, which can be gained only in the actual field of service."

<sup>349</sup> *AGR for 1888*, 1-3.

<sup>350</sup> Riker, *Soldiers of the States*, 51-55.

<sup>351</sup> Holmes, "The National Guard of Pennsylvania," 170-179.

appearance. Michael Doubler notes that this process, which began in the 1880s, was an important element in a concerted campaign to make the National Guard the national reserve for the regular Army.<sup>352</sup> Doubler also observes that it was Pennsylvania's Guard that became the "personification" of the new orientation and mission.<sup>353</sup> In his 1883 report the adjutant general promoted closer ties and increased conformity with the regular Army so that the transition of Guard units from state to national service could be more easily accomplished in the event of war.<sup>354</sup>

In 1884 Major General John Hartranft emphasized the reserve role of the National Guard when he advised regimental commanders to move slowly in adopting the multiple battalion system that was, at that time, only under discussion in the War Department. Hartranft noted that the Guard existed primarily as reserve to the regular Army, and therefore it should wait for its "prototype", the active military force, to take the initiative in the business of tactical restructuring.<sup>355</sup> Hartranft sought even closer ties to the "active military force" and the War Department when he proposed that the state inspector general's position should be held by a

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<sup>352</sup> Doubler, *Civilian in Peace*, 118. "One the way the National Guard promoted itself as a national reserve was by taking an appearance more like that of the Regular Army."

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 119. "Pennsylvania's citizen-soldiers became the personification of the Guard's new orientation."

<sup>354</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 5. "The National Guard of all States should be brought into closer relations with the United States Army, and should be uniformed in every particular with the United States Army."

<sup>355</sup> *AGR for 1884*, "Report of Major General John Hartranft, Commander, Division," 90. "But the primary design of a militia is to form a reserve for the regular army, and is, in fact, the only form of national military organization compatible with republican institutions. ... It should therefore wait for the initiative to be taken by the active military force of the country, which is its prototype."



regular Army officer as a way of preparing the Guard for service and obtaining greater federal assistance for state troops.<sup>356</sup>

The annual summer encampments certainly contributed to the preparedness, efficiency, and professionalism of the Pennsylvania National Guard.<sup>357</sup> The evidence indicates that the Guard was not using the camps in order to train as a paramilitary police force. The officers and men of the Pennsylvania National Guard certainly believed that they were doing military training that would prepare them for eventual service in the nation's defense. The type of training that occupied the time and efforts of the Guard during the summer encampments and the weekly drill nights is an excellent indicator of the Guard's own sense of purpose, and overwhelmingly the men were working hard to become better soldiers.<sup>358</sup> The type of training that was done in the camps and on drill nights in the armories is indicative of the Guard's increasing orientation towards a military, rather than a constabulary mission.

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<sup>356</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 5. "Through him (the I.G.) reports and returns could be made to the War Department, the same as would be required were the National Guard in active service. This would make the National Guard of all the States available to the general Government for immediate service, and would enable it to receive more substantial aid from Congress."

<sup>357</sup> Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard," 67. "Pennsylvania probably developed the best and most efficient National Guard unit in the country. It took on a more military air than most units and strove always to emulate the Regular Army in organization, equipment, and manpower."

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 51. "... the summer camps, by their very nature, tended to emphasize military training... almost from the beginning, the Guardsmen tended to think of themselves as adjuncts of the Regular Army."

## II. “Training”

During the last quarter of the twentieth century drill and tactical training in the Pennsylvania National Guard was done according to the specifications elaborated in the official manuals that had been authorized by the War Department and adopted by the regular Army in 1874. This manual was the work of Lieutenant Colonel Emory Upton and was a reissue of an earlier work that he published independently in 1867. After some slight revisions had been made by a board of senior officers, Upton’s *A New System of Infantry Tactics, Double and Single Rank*, was distributed for the use of the infantry, cavalry, and artillery units of the Army.<sup>359</sup> Although it still relied on the firepower and shock action of the traditional double-rank linear formations, Upton’s *Infantry Tactics* introduced a new system of single rank battlefield maneuver based on flexibility, speed, and the independent advance of small units in open, as opposed to closed, order.<sup>360</sup> All of which, Upton believed, would be necessary to mitigate the

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<sup>359</sup> Stephen Ambrose, *Upton and the Army* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 71-84. Ambrose follows the complicated evolution of Upton’s manual from manuscript to official Army doctrine.

<sup>360</sup> Paddy Griffith, *Forward into Battle: Infantry Tactics from Waterloo to the Near Future* (Novato CA: Presidio Press, 1991), 80. “In his [Upton’s] drill manual written after the war, on the basis of the war’s lessons, he still expects troops to fight mainly in double ranks, reserving fire to ‘deadly range’ in a distinctly Napoleonic manner.”

effects on advancing infantry of the increased firepower from improved breech-loading weapons.<sup>361</sup>

Upton's *Tactics* is a progressive work in that it proceeds from the instruction of the individual soldier, in the aptly named "school of the soldier", and proceeds to teach the movements and maneuvers required of the section, company, battalion, brigade, and division when in contact with the enemy. Supplemental chapters dealt with camping, parades, and ceremonies. A simplified form of the manual adapted for use of private paramilitary organizations appeared in 1870.<sup>362</sup> Through this publication Upton's principles were soon assimilated into the training programs of all military and civilian organizations that had the need to parade in formation or execute the rudiments of ceremonial drill.<sup>363</sup>

The Pennsylvania National Guard trained according to the principles laid out in the *Tactics*. Every version of the state military code mandated that the Pennsylvania National Guard use the system of discipline and "exercise" that generally conformed to that in use by the Army of the United States.<sup>364</sup> The legislation of 1879 provided for an expenditure of state funds to

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<sup>361</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 10. "Upton's other significant innovation was his introduction of single-rank tactics. He expected breechloaders, and repeating breechloaders in particular to increase the firepower of an infantry regiment so greatly that in some cases it could be deployed in a single, rather than a two-line formation."; and John A. English, *On Infantry* (New York: Praeger Special Studies, 1984), 128. "Battle experiences as a regimental commander in the Civil War were responsible for prompting General Upton to produce, in 1867, a new system of loose-order infantry tactics based on movement and organization by two ranks of fours."

<sup>362</sup> *Tactics for Non-Military Bodies, Adapted to the Instruction of Political Associations, Police Forces, Fire Organizations, Masonic, Odd-Fellows, and Other Civic Societies*.

<sup>363</sup> Ambrose, *Upton and the Army*, 82-83. "The head of the Grand Army of the Republic, General John A. Logan, ordered all departmental commanders of the GAR to adopt Upton's system for parades and public receptions."

<sup>364</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1822, 1823*, no. 214, sec. 52, 163. This is a typical example, but similar examples appear in all of the statutory provisions for the Pennsylvania National Guard until the present time.

purchase drill manuals for each officer of the Guard.<sup>365</sup> A new recruit's first introduction to military training would be in the set of prescribed movements as detailed in the first part of Upton's manual- the "School of the Soldier". In company drills captains and noncommissioned officers emphasized individual and progressive instruction adjusted to the abilities of men with average intelligence. Constant repetition of the basic commands and movements was essential before more complicated material was introduced to the training program.<sup>366</sup> Upton's system placed the burden of teaching on officers who were expected to have mastered the drill sequences thoroughly enough that they would be able to show the men the correct form.<sup>367</sup>

Upton's system of drill and maneuver was complicated, a veritable storehouse of arcana. The intricacies detailed in most of the nineteenth century tactical and training manuals can easily confound even the most assiduous researcher.<sup>368</sup> The individualized drill sequence found in the "School of the Soldier" contains three distinct parts. Each of the parts is divided into sequential lessons. The lessons are further divided into multiple commands and corresponding movements, for example:

Part I.

Lesson 1. Position of the soldier without arms: setting up, eyes right, left and front.

1. Heels on the same line.

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<sup>365</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1879*, no.120, sec.4, 102. "That the Adjutant General shall purchase at the expense of the Commonwealth, ... and supply to all officers of the National Guard copies of the tactics prescribed for the use of the United States Army."

<sup>366</sup> Emory Upton, *A New System of Infantry Tactics, Double and Single Rank: Adapted to American Topography and Improved Firearms* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), 8. "The object of this school being the individual and progressive instruction of the recruits. Each movement shall be understood before passing on to another."

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.* "Every commanding officer is responsible for the instruction of his command. Captains will be responsible for the theoretical and practical instruction of their noncommissioned officers."

<sup>368</sup> Ambrose, *Upton and the Army*, 181. "It is extremely difficult for anyone except a professional soldier to understand modern military tactics; it is close to impossible for anyone to comprehend nineteenth-century tactics."

2. Feet turned out equally.
3. Knees straight without stiffness.
4. Body erect on hips, including a little forward.
5. Shoulders square.
6. The arms hanging naturally.
7. The elbows near the body.
8. The head erect.
9. The palm of the hand turned a little to the front.
10. The head erect and turned a little to the front.
11. Chin near the stock.
12. Eyes fixed straight to the front.<sup>369</sup>

Lesson two proceeded to the proper form of the military salute and facings. The salute was an exercise that required the recruit to render a precise sequence of four motions, while facings, whether right, left, or about face, required a further four movements.<sup>370</sup> By the time the soldier finally had a rifle in his hands to commence the manual of arms in lesson two of part two of the “School of the Soldier,” he had to have memorized twenty small, but precisely ordered and gauged, movements. The various lessons in the remainder of part two taught the loading and firing sequences, and firing the rifle from the kneeling and prone positions.<sup>371</sup> The six lessons of part three taught the alignments and movements for eight and twelve man fronts based on Upton’s innovative system of “fours,” which he proposed as away to move troops about the battlefield with greater facility than earlier drill and tactical systems.<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Upton, *A New System of Infantry Tactics*, 10.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-29.

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-29. Loading and firing on command required an exact sequence of twelve movements from “handle cartridge”, to “fire”.

<sup>372</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 10-11. “Looking for more flexibility than he found in Hardee and Casey, Upton made groups of four men, “fours”, the basic units of his infantry system, using them to replace the platoons and sections of earlier drill books. Upton’s scheme

After the “School of the Soldier” had been mastered, the men proceeded to the “School of the Company” which contained one preliminary lesson on forming the company, then three graduated lessons that called for the men to work together to accomplish a variety of battlefield maneuvers including: march in line of battle, firing by company and rank, oblique march, and moving from column into line. All of the lessons in the “School of the Company” were just as thorough, and complicated, as the prior drills for individual soldiers and Upton’s group of “fours”. The exercises would have obviously required a great deal of time and considerable effort on the part of the troops and their officers if it was to be learned properly and executed with the speed and precision required on the battlefield.

Upton’s tactics proved to be a formidable enough curriculum in the ranks of the regular Army where the troops could be instructed and drilled on a daily basis.<sup>373</sup> But the citizen-soldiers of the National Guard had only the weekly drill nights and the annual week of summer camp available for drill and instruction. Learning and executing even the elementary progressions of the “School of the Soldier”, much less the advanced larger tactical unit maneuvers of Upton’s system, proved to be a daunting task for most of the men of the Pennsylvania National Guard. Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, decrying the constant turnover in tactical theories and drill systems emanating from the War Department, later remarked that

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allowed foot soldiers to march in columns composed of “fours,” deploy from column into fighting line by “fours,” and use this same primary unit to march by the flank, to wheel, or to perform other movements before or during contact with the enemy.” (Upton’s system assumed a regiment composed of ten companies.)

<sup>373</sup> David J. Fitzpatrick, “Emory Upton and the Citizen Soldier,” *The Journal of Military History* 65, no.2 (April, 2001): 355-389, 368. Fitzpatrick notes that Upton’s simplified drill for civic and fraternal organizations (see n. 48) proved to be tough going, even for the veterans in the GAR. “... Upton’s tactics were so revolutionary that even the most experienced of Civil War veterans would have required time to become proficient in them. Marching in a Decoration Day parade was one thing; performing new and complex tactical maneuvers on a battlefield was quite another.”

Upton's manual and those that followed were too complicated. The drills demanded too much of the citizen soldier's time outside of the irregular training sessions in the local armory, and might prove to be more trouble to the Guard than they were worth.<sup>374</sup>

The annual reports of regimental, brigade, and division commanders were a constant litany of complaint concerning the inability of most of the companies in the Guard to master the simplest components of Upton's drill. In his 1881 report the adjutant general noted that recruits were rushed into the "School of the Company" without proper training in the basic exercises, such as the setting up drill and the facings from the "School of the Soldier". He urged company commanders to use the time set aside for weekly drills to school the men in singly or in small groups.<sup>375</sup> He advocated a testing program for all recruits before they would be allowed to participate in company-sized exercises in the annual encampment.<sup>376</sup> Despite this, and similar protests, from the highest echelons of the Guard leadership the problem was never successfully addressed. In his 1886 report the adjutant general once again criticized the practice of schooling the men in company drill with little or no instruction in the basics.<sup>377</sup>

The chronic lack of proficiency in the basics of the drill manual was often blamed on the fact that men who had gained proficiency in the basics of drill, guard mounts, and military

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<sup>374</sup> *AGR for 1891*, "Report of Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, Commander, Third Brigade," 117. "Perhaps it is the memory of the old touch of the elbow that disinclines me to a change, or it may be a vivid recollection of efforts to master successively Scott, Hardee, Casey, Upton, creates an indisposition to extend the list. ... It will necessitate drilling outside of the armories to an extent hitherto unnecessary, and will require greater care and circumspection in the selection of non-commissioned officer."

<sup>375</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 3. "The greatest deficiency in the companies is the imperfect instruction of the recruit in the setting up and in the school of the soldier. The recruit is almost immediately placed in the company, and there he receives all of the primary instruction he ever obtains."

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.* "No recruit should pass from the school of the soldier to the school of the company without examination."

<sup>377</sup> *AGR for 1886*, 2. "Company commanders still continue to send the recruits to the school of the company for instruction, neglecting entirely the instruction in the in the first principles of the school of the soldier."

courtesy were leaving the service while flocks of new recruits were mustered in. But the inspector general's report from 1886 notes that discharge rates were decreasing every year and that, for the most part, the ranks were filled with veteran troops who ought to know the basics. The blame for poor marks in drills and exercises during the annual encampment was once again placed on the incomplete or careless instruction given to the men.<sup>378</sup> The lack of proper instruction moved the Adjutant General William McClelland to publish an abbreviated manual of instruction for the proper performance of sentry duties in 1891. Each officer and enlisted man in the Guard was given a copy, and McClelland expected each man in the ranks to memorize the "five general orders" for sentinels.<sup>379</sup> Despite the constant flow of criticism and suggestion, schooling the Guard in drill and battlefield maneuver was a continuing challenge throughout the 1880s.

The publication and subsequent adoption of the Leavenworth Board manuals in 1891 marked a significant evolution in the tactical doctrine of the U.S. Army. The new system superseded Upton's *Tactics*, and was in use in the regular Army and the National Guard until well after the Spanish-American War. Upton's use of the single rank, or single line of battle with its greater reliance on forward skirmishers had opened up the dense linear formations that had proved so vulnerable to the firepower of modern weapons. The 1891 manual called for the greater use of extended order when units were near the enemy or actually under enemy fire. In this new scheme close order would only be used to train raw recruits, and extended or open order

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid. "The positive neglect in the Guard is in the instruction of sentinels and skirmish drill. The percentage of discharges is decreasing every year, this last year not being over ten percent. This ought to send into camp well-instructed men in all the duties of a soldier, but in many of these duties they are so carelessly instructed that in practical application they are deficient."

<sup>379</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 283. "It is the duty of the commanding officers of companies to see that the members of their commands are thoroughly instructed before going on guard. The sentry represents his company, and he should take pride in performing his duties strictly, thereby showing the manner his company has been instructed."



formations would advance against the enemy. Eight man squads became the basic unit of extended order firing lines. The groups of eight would move forward against enemy fire in short rushes, seeking available cover and the opportunity to direct their own fire on the enemy position. Large unit tactics covered advances by a single company as well as the role of the company in a battalion movement.<sup>380</sup> It seemed to be the case that even before the adoption of the Leavenworth manuals that the Guard focused on the kind of training that would facilitate their mission as soldiers rather than state constabularies.

In its continuing effort to maintain the same standards of drill and tactical training as the regular Army, and its desire to “fit” into the Regular Army, the Pennsylvania National Guard immediately abandoned Upton’s *Tactics* and adopted the new Leavenworth infantry, cavalry, and artillery manuals in 1891.<sup>381</sup> The new infantry manual assumed that the regiment would be divided into three battalions with six companies per battalion. This was an innovation that had long been debated at the higher echelons of the War Department, the Army officer corps, and the Pennsylvania National Guard. Pennsylvania’s Adjutant General, George R. Snowden believed that the Guard would have to reorganize immediately in order to adhere to the new regular Army organizational model.<sup>382</sup> The reorganization would require the disbandment of three regiments to form eight regiments of twelve companies and four regiments of eight companies.<sup>383</sup> Snowden thought the battalion arrangement would be of greater advantage to Guard units that

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<sup>380</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 104-106.

<sup>381</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 2. Adjutant General George R. Snowden moved quickly to get the new manuals into circulation before the end of the year ... “thus ensuring the adoption of the new system in the National Guard of this state at the same time as in the U.S. Army.”

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.* “Heretofore this state has always in its National Guard followed the organization of the army, and it would probably not be well to depart from it now.”

<sup>383</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 82-83. “Guard leaders in Pennsylvania recognized the tactical value of the three-battalion, twelve-company regiment, but a statewide reorganization required the disbandment of three regiments and the reassignment of their companies to other regiments.”

were in scattered locations as battalions were easier to bring together than a regiment.<sup>384</sup> Although the battalion system was vigorously supported by a number of senior officers it ultimately failed to materialize due to the protests from those communities whose companies would have been reassigned to other regiments. The army itself would not adopt the three-battalion system until after the war with Spain.

Other officers in the Pennsylvania Guard gave the reorganization serious consideration, and revealed that interest in tactical theory and practice was not limited to the adjutant general's office. Colonel Wendell Bowman of the First Regiment noted that the number of men per company would have to be increased given the casualties that would be inflicted in a real battle. Colonel Bowman showed a sophisticated grasp of tactical problems and even quoted foreign military authorities.<sup>385</sup> Although the reorganization was delayed until after the War with Spain, it is important to note that even at this early date, the Pennsylvania National Guard was willing to adopt profound, and expensive structural modifications that would have been required to keep the organization current with Regular Army practice.<sup>386</sup>

The new open order tactics placed a greater demand on the time and abilities of the officers and men of the Pennsylvania Guard. Company movements in extended order and skirmishing tactics could not be practiced in the limited space afforded by most armories and the inclement conditions created by the weather during the winter months. Training in open order

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<sup>384</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 70.

<sup>385</sup> *AGR for 1893*, 86-87. Bowman observed that the new open order system barely worked with standard one hundred man companies, what would happen after one-third of men became casualties? He proposed a company of 250 men along the German model.

<sup>386</sup> General Snowden went so far as to lobby the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation to vote on a bill to permit the War Department adopt the preferred battalion system and provide the necessary appropriation for the increase in regular Army personnel that would be required: *AGR for 1894*, LIX. "I earnestly recommend that Congress enact the legislation necessary to establish in the army the battalion formation, now adopted by the armies of every other civilized nation."

tactics and skirmishing required large open spaces with a diverse assortment of topographical features. Some officers took the initiative and introduced two-day mini maneuvers in the spring months, which were reinforced by close order drill in the armory.<sup>387</sup> Adjutant General Snowden argued that the number of days in the annual encampment had to be increased in order to train the troops in the new tactics. In making his case for longer encampments, Snowden insisted that the National Guard was primarily training for war, and not for constabulary duty.<sup>388</sup>

If the maintenance of the rights of capital by the suppression of domestic labor violence was the primary mission of the Pennsylvania National Guard, one would be hard-pressed to find evidence that the Guard trained, or even devoted any thought to this mission. The annual summer camps and weekly armory drill nights were devoted to absorbing the labyrinthine intricacies of Upton's *Tactics* and, after 1891, the complexities of open order combat prescribed in the Leavenworth manuals. Neither type of training would have been of much use in the close confines of the streets of Pittsburgh, Scranton, or Philadelphia during strikes and riots.

Upton's single and double lines, and the fire and maneuver of independent battalions espoused by the 1891 manual, were not practicable, or even possible, in an urban environment. Training for urban companies would have been difficult as company commanders had to have the expressed permission of the adjutant general's office to parade or train their men outside of

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<sup>387</sup> *AGR for 1894*, 93. A Colonel Edward Morrell of the Third Regiment began the practice but it quickly spread to other commands. "During the spring months battalion drills were frequently at the armory and several expeditions of two days were made by the various companies into the country with a view to perfecting themselves in the new open order drill."

<sup>388</sup> *Ibid.* "Experience seems to show that existing drill regulations applying to extended order are not well adapted to troops with no more time than the Guard is able to apply to them. This is a very serious matter when it is considered that the armies of the country in future war, as in the past, will of necessity consist largely of volunteers who will have little time for instruction before engaging in battle."

the confines of the armories. In addition, the various reports compiled by the adjutant general of Pennsylvania make no mention of cavalry training for riot service. All of the riot control manuals of the time insist that cavalry was the most valuable arm of the service for the purposes of street control and the suppression of hostile mobs. The records indicate that the horse soldiers of Pennsylvania trained in the wide-open spaces in rural areas according to the tactical doctrine contained in the Leavenworth manuals during the summer encampments.<sup>389</sup> If riot duty was the overarching mission of the Pennsylvania National Guard in the period after 1877 it possessed very little in the form of a doctrine for such employment, and even less in the form of training.

The riot control “experts” of the time insisted that smaller units were required to do the work of riot suppression and crowd control.<sup>390</sup> But the trend in the Pennsylvania Guard was for encampments in which the larger units, the brigade and the division, engaged in battlefield exercises, parades, and reviews. Even the adoption of the battalion system was not conducive to the requirements of riot suppression due to the erosion of centralized command once the battalions dispersed for forward maneuver against an enemy position. The tactics that were advocated in the riot control manuals were certainly beyond the limited abilities of most National Guard units. The complex company deployments required in Ordway’s *Drill Regulations for Street Riot Duty* make the drills in Upton’s *Tactics* seem almost elementary in comparison. Ordway’s drill for the formation of a “street square”, the basic street fighting formation of the

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<sup>389</sup> Cavalry troops, artillery batteries, and infantry regiments sent detailed narratives of their yearly activities to the adjutant general. These were subsequently published in the annual reports (AGRs).

<sup>390</sup> Major Winthrop Alexander, “Ten Years of Riot Duty,” *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 19, no. 82, (July, 1896), 1-62, 30. “*Brigade drills* (italics in original), parades and reviews are of very little, if any, value in preparation for riot duty. No case can be found where a brigade maneuvered as such while on that kind of service. Troops have been in brigade and divisional camps while on such duty, but the active work has been done by smaller bodies.”

time, required eleven separate movements and just as many precise commands to break a company down from marching order into the square. After the mob had been dispersed, the unit required the same number movements to reform into column and move out in pursuit or to the next city block.<sup>391</sup>

Given the difficulty that Pennsylvania Guard units had with the relatively simple requirements of the “setting up drill”, facings, and guard mounts it is almost inconceivable that the troops would be able to form a fighting square or any of the other tactical formations that were found in the myriad of riot duty manuals of the late nineteenth century, even if they had, in fact, devoted their time and energy to the required training regimen.<sup>392</sup> There is no indication in either the official reports of the Guard, or the small number of unit histories, that riot suppression or crowd control was ever the focus of theoretical study or practical training. There was, however, at least one low-level initiative to institute some form of systematic street-firing drill on the brigade level in 1881, but there is no indication that any division-wide system emerged from this experiment, and no further mention is made of it in subsequent reports.<sup>393</sup> Aside from this limited, and quickly abandoned, effort all of the sources agree that the Pennsylvania National Guard devoted the limited amount of training time available, during the weekly drill nights and the annual encampments, to the drill and exercises that that were established for the regular

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<sup>391</sup> Robert Ordway, *Drill Regulations for Street Riot Duty* (Washington, D.C.: n.p. 1891), 3-7.

<sup>392</sup> Eugene E. Leach, “The Literature of Riot Duty: Managing Class Conflict in the Streets, 1877-1927,” *Radical History Review* 56 (Spring, 1993): 23-50, 28. “Along with the expansion of the National Guard went a proliferation of riot duty manuals and other military writings advising officers on how to handle working-class disorders. Most of this literature was technical, narrowly focused on tactics, and formulaic.”

<sup>393</sup> *AGR for 1881*, 34. During the annual encampment the First Brigade’s First Regiment went through a street-fighting drill based on a system developed by Brigade Adjutant Barnes that “promises a solution of the problem of operating in the streets of a city.”

Army.<sup>394</sup> And in the late nineteenth century the regulars were being trained to contend against external, not internal threats to the national security of the United States.

### III. "Shooting"

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Pennsylvania National Guard moved toward a greater uniformity with the regular military establishment. The Guard had adopted the field uniform, unit organization, discipline, and training program of the regular Army. The enthusiastic response of the Pennsylvania Guard to the new program of "scientific" marksmanship is a further indication that the organization was focused on training that would allow the troops of the Commonwealth to serve as an adjunct to the regular military establishment. The National Rifle Association, formed in 1871, was responsible for the dissemination of the principles and maintaining the standards of modern rifle shooting. The NRA worked with the regular Army, but its primary objective was the instruction of National Guard units for their future deployment in the event of war.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> There is no indication in the tactical or training literature that the Army considered the problem of urban warfare. Certainly there had been limited fighting in the urban environment during the Civil War, but the Army did not devote any tactical doctrine based on these experiences. Federal troops were employed to suppress the New York City draft riot of 1863, but the scholarship devoted to this event indicates that the New York City police, rather than the federal troops, were the most effective agents of riot control in this instance. See: Adrian Cook, *Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1974), 84-133.

<sup>395</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 88. "Most important, the NRA sought to improve the marksmanship of the citizen soldiery, as organized in the state militia forces, for wartime service."

The principal founder of the NRA, Colonel George Wingate, himself a New York National Guard officer, was a leader in the movement to modernize the National Guard and make it the first line reserve for the small regular Army. In short, instructing National Guardsmen in the intricacies of modern marksmanship techniques was an integral part of the evolving mission of the “new”, post 1877, National Guard. The NRA sponsored shooting program was designed to prepare the National Guard for war service. In promoting the interests of both the NRA and the National Guard, Wingate gladly accepted the cooperation of wealthy businessmen and the increased appropriations of the state legislature, both of which were frightened by militant labor and the specter of domestic insurrection.<sup>396</sup> In this respect Wingate was mirroring the thoughts and intentions of progressive National Guard officers in Pennsylvania and other states. They promoted themselves as the bulwark of state authority and the guarantors of civic order, but increasingly they were positioning themselves as national military force.

The post 1877 National Guard reform was a highly centralized movement within the Commonwealth. In most cases, either the governor or the adjutant general promoted particular reforms and the General Assembly enacted them in subsequent legislation. But the introduction of rifle practice was a progressive reform that was initiated at the grassroots level. Major Henry Boies, commander of Scranton’s *City Guard*, was a member and one of the first directors of the NRA. He had taken an avid interest in the practice of scientific shooting, and made rifle training an important part of his unit’s training program under the guidelines established in Colonel Wingate’s manual. In 1877 Major Boies appointed his own inspector of rifle practice, secured a

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<sup>396</sup> Gilmore, “Crackshots and Patriots,” 84-85. “Wingate received generous funding from a legislature scared anew in 1877, the cooperation of businessmen, pleased now to release their Guard employees for target practice, and recognition as the nation’s expert in his specialty, popularly viewed as a technique for honing anti-riot forces. Yet he used each advantage to further restructuring of the organized militia as a reserve army, which ought someday to surrender its police function altogether in the interests of recruitment.”

rifle range, and zealously promoted the art of accurate shooting within the *City Guard*. As the state supplied little in the way of extra ammunition for target practice, the men in the companies had to assume this expense themselves.<sup>397</sup> The Scranton troops were also the first representatives of the Pennsylvania National Guard to participate in the annual Creedmoor National interstate shooting matches that were held in New York.<sup>398</sup> Prior to the summer match the state legislature had refused to provide financial assistance for either rifle practice or team competition. The team members who traveled from Scranton to Creedmoor paid their own expenses and turned in an admirable performance.<sup>399</sup> The great public interest in match shooting, and the success of Guard units in the matches have been cited as a factor in both the increase in the amount of public support for the National Guard and the increase in the number of recruits.<sup>400</sup>

The New York National Guard was the first among the state Guard units to establish an inspector general of rifle practice, an officer who had control over all of the theoretical aspects of marksmanship instruction.<sup>401</sup> Pennsylvania soon followed the New York initiative and established a similar position within the body of legislation that initiated the reform and renewal of the Pennsylvania National Guard in 1878. The statute established an inspector general of rifle practice, and placed the officer in this position on the staff of the adjutant general.

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<sup>397</sup> Hitchcock, *History 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment*, 10-11. "The difficulty of prosecuting this branch of our military education will be appreciated when it is remembered that we had to supply nearly all our ammunition at the beginning. That supplied by the State was for use in active service, except a meager amount allowed to be expended in practice."

<sup>398</sup> Russell Gilmore, "The New Courage: Rifles and Soldier Individualism, 1876-1918", *Military Affairs*, vol. 40, no. 3 (Oct., 1976): 97-102, 97. "The National Rifle Association also presided over a major sporting activity, international match shooting, which became spectacularly popular after Americans, coached by Wingate upset a champion Irish team in 1874."

<sup>399</sup> *AGR for 1878*, 4.

<sup>400</sup> Gilmore, "The New Courage," 97.

<sup>401</sup> Gilmore, "Crackshots and Patriots," 83.



The Guard adopted the Wingate manual and his scoring system for both match and qualification shooting.<sup>402</sup> In addition to providing the necessary instruction in marksmanship, the inspector general of rifle practice established the standards for qualification at the various levels of achievement and made annual reports based on consolidated returns from each brigade. Eventually inspectors of rifle practice would be appointed within each regiment. The General Assembly provided some financial support for rifle practice in the form of an allowance for the purchase of ammunition that would be distributed by the division adjutant upon the request of individual unit commanders.<sup>403</sup>

In the early years the task of the inspectors of rifle practice proved difficult in the extreme. Although the new military code demanded that officers devote time to shooting drills and target practice, very few actually did so. As a result the inspectors reported near universal ignorance among the troops in the care and use of the rifle. The ignorance among the troops in this regard was so profound that they could barely discern shoulder stock from barrel.<sup>404</sup> The inspector concluded that, for the most part, the problem was due to the inattention of officers who possessed little or no motivation to instruct their men in rifle practice. The men not only shot poorly, but they no knowledge of the proper handling of their weapons outside of the firing range. The report indicated that many weapons in the Guard were in poor condition; dirt, rust, and the lack of proper lubrication were ubiquitous. The inspector general urged company commanders to teach their men the proper handling and storage of their weapons during armory

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<sup>402</sup> *AGR for 1880*, "Circular # 1," 271. "Wingate's Manual for rifle practice is announced as the manual for use by the Pennsylvania National Guard."

<sup>403</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1881*, no.66, sec.6, 58.

<sup>404</sup> *AGR for 1881*, "Report of the Inspector General of Rifle Practice," 18. "Most of the men who came under my observation were ignorant as to the proper use of the sights, and fired with no elevation at all."; *AGR for 1883*, 3. "Experience has proved that a large number of the men know little or nothing about the rifle, except that it is an instrument of warfare."

drill sessions. He also stressed the benefit of dry firing drills that emphasized proper position, breathing, and aiming.<sup>405</sup>

Some of the staunchest resistance to modern shooting techniques came from conservative National Guard officers who could see no use for individual marksmanship in the Guard's primary mission- the suppression of domestic insurrection and labor violence. One of the leading critics, and personal nemesis of Wingate and his marksmanship program, was Colonel J. Howard Copperthwaite of the New York National Guard. He, and like-minded officers, eschewed the Wingate system in any of its forms. The critics relegated distance shooting to the regulars fighting the elusive Indian bands out in the west. The conservative officers saw a clear line of demarcation between the respective missions of the National Guard and the regular Army. To their way of thinking the National Guard had no use for the training methods of the regulars because it no standing within the national military establishment, it was a state force that was maintained and trained for constabulary duties.<sup>406</sup> Long distance shooting and the independent delivery of fire were best left to the regulars battling the elusive Indian tribes of the west. Riot control, on the other hand was the province of the Guard and relied on the proven "fire by volley" type of shooting that was integral to the old linear, closed order tactics. In action against a hostile mob, firing on command at two hundred yards or less was the proper corrective.<sup>407</sup>

Copperthwaite's conservative position had supporters within the Pennsylvania National Guard. In his 1883 report Adjutant General Presley N. Guthrie expressed his own

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

<sup>406</sup> Gilmore, "Crackshots and Patriots," 77. "J. Howard Copperthwaite was "more concerned with 'the volcano of communism burning angrily beneath the crust of civil law', than the national military policy."

<sup>407</sup> Ibid. "New York's enemy was the mob, and the state did the Army's work, not its own, in training soldiers in riflery."

doubts about marksmanship as a necessary skill for the state soldier. He noted that marksmanship might possibly lead to the loss of soldierly identity because it stressed individual initiative rather than obedience to command. State duty had always stressed the time-honored principle of firing volleys in ranks on the expressed commands of superior officers.<sup>408</sup>

In 1894 General J.P.S. Gobin, commander of the Third Brigade, expressed the same position during the discussions on the Guard's adoption of the Krag-Jorgensen rifle. The regular Army was making a swift transition to the high-powered, box-magazine Krag, and officers in the Pennsylvania Guard were lobbying the General Assembly to make an appropriation for the purchase of the new rifle. Gobin expressed the opinion that the rifle would be of little use in state service due to its greater range and smaller caliber. The Guard, according to Gobin, ought to maintain tried and true weapons with heavier loads and shorter range.<sup>409</sup> The conservative elements mounted a spirited defense, but eventually lost the argument over both technique and weaponry.

Despite the doubts and misgivings of conservatives, the Pennsylvania National Guard proceeded to institute a marksmanship program based on the application of Wingate's "scientific principles" of modern riflery. Pennsylvania's inspectors of rifle practice repeatedly emphasized the practical benefits of marksmanship. One of the greatest advantages of modern rifle training was that the skills it imparted were so easily integrated into the regular Army's emphasis on the

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<sup>408</sup> *AGR for 1883*, 3. "Whether the State derives any benefit from target practice as now conducted, is not so clear. The soldier is lost in the marksman. The various exercises in firing in the ranks, particularly by volleys, will do the work required by the State."

<sup>409</sup> *AGR for 1894*, "Report of Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, Commander, Third Brigade," xciv. "It is a grave question in my mind, whether it would be to the advantage of the Guard to be armed with a rifle of any greater range than we now possess. In fact for the purposes of quelling riots or dealing with mobs, a return to the old 'Buck and Ball' would seem to be more desirable. For mob services, as State troops are more especially desired, short range guns would seem to be more capable of doing the job."

development of the new open order tactics that were instituted to contend with the dangers posed by the lethality of modern weapons' technology. During the 1880s the regular Army, despite the resistance of some obstructionist conservative officers, eagerly seized on Wingate's system of rifle practice, and shooting from open order formations.<sup>410</sup>

The firepower of modern weapons essentially dictated the use of open order tactics and the development of soldiers skilled in the principles of marksmanship. Success in the new mode of warfare required that the individual soldier be a skilled and resourceful soldier, and riflery was the most essential of these skills.<sup>411</sup> This position was often reiterated in the annual reports of the inspectors of rifle practice in the Pennsylvania National Guard who emphasized the importance of marksmanship. In his 1891 report Colonel Herman Osthause, reiterating the position of the regular Army theorists, noted that the skill of the individual soldier with the rifle was the only solution to the problems posed by the weapons and tactics that dominated the modern battlefield.<sup>412</sup> Marksmanship training, in effect, was schooling the Guard to operate in the dangerous conditions that it would face in modern warfare as opposed to exigencies required in the suppression of riots.

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<sup>410</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 56. "During the 1880s soldiers spent more time on the rifle range, and their target practice became more sophisticated. In 1885 commanding general Philip Sheridan gave his infantrymen more realistic targets, profiles of soldiers representing an enemy skirmish line, and commanders tried to improve the marksmanship of their men from loose formations."

<sup>411</sup> Gilmore, "Crackshots and Patriots," 102. "Progressives saw an accelerating tendency toward 'individualization' (which apparently sounded less heretical than 'individualism' to the military ear) and dependence on even smaller units. More efficient weapons would drive men into open order for survival and as the rattle of musketry changed to the roar of repeaters, even drown out the commands of officers."

<sup>412</sup> *AGR for 1891*, "Report of Colonel Herman Osthause, Inspector General of Rifle Practice", 77. "There is nothing more important in the training of the soldier of today, than a thorough knowledge of the use of his rifle. In this age of smokeless powder, wonderfully effective arms, and open order lines of battle, the individual soldier will be thrown again upon his own resources."

Pennsylvania Guardsmen made outstanding progress in marksmanship in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Despite the slow start engendered by the resistance, ignorance, and neglect of some commands, marksmanship made steady progress in the ranks and the officer corps of the Guard. In addition to the impetus stemming from tactical applications, some credit for the new enthusiasm for rifle practice could also be attributed to the sensational showing of the Pennsylvania team in the 1885 Creedmoor matches. A team composed of the best shooters from Scranton's Thirteenth Regiment took first place by besting the previously unbeatable New York and Massachusetts National Guard teams.<sup>413</sup>

The Pennsylvania Guard established statewide matches at the regimental, brigade, and division level. It soon seemed that every soldier in the Guard was participating in a match of some sort, shooting for individual medals, unit trophies, and cash prizes.<sup>414</sup> In 1891 Adjutant General W.W. Greenland and Governor Pattison jointly issued "General Orders number 10", a mandate requiring all officers to motivate their men to strive for "greater excellence" in marksmanship. The order provided a drastic penalty for units that refused to meet the standards. Any infantry or cavalry company that failed to qualify at least thirty of its personnel as marksmen would find itself subject to disbandment.<sup>415</sup> In an admirable display of the principle

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<sup>413</sup> *AGR for 1885*, 34.

<sup>414</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 117. The "Coleman Prize Match" became a fixture during the division matches at the state range at Mount Gretna. Coleman, an eastern Pennsylvania businessman, annually contributed five thousand dollars in prize money for the various match categories.

<sup>415</sup> *AGR for 1891*, "General Orders, No. 10.," 257. "Every soldier of Pennsylvania is expected to become a marksman, for no soldier is effective unless he is able to qualify. If any company in the infantry or cavalry arms of the service fails to qualify as marksmen at least thirty men, unless satisfactory reasons are shown for such failure, it shall be considered so lacking in discipline as to warrant its disbandment."

of leadership by example, both the governor and the adjutant general qualified on the range as marksmen.<sup>416</sup>

The 1894 returns reflected the spectacular progress of rifle practice in the Pennsylvania National Guard. The tabulations revealed that 95.4 percent, or 8,745 officers and men of the Guard had qualified as marksmen. The totals are impressive given that the returns of 1883 showed that only 705 men had qualified.<sup>417</sup> The inspector

general of rifle practice attributed the outstanding progress to the increase in the allowances given to each company for the purchase of ammunition for training that, in his opinion, was money well spent given the value of the return.<sup>418</sup>

In one additional way the National Guard's efforts in the area marksmanship proved beneficial to both the Guard and the regular military establishment. The Guard's emphasis on a system of rifle shooting that been modeled on that of the regular Army was a significant example of the movement of both organizations towards mutual cooperation that had been gathering momentum from since the early 1880s. An increase in federal appropriations for state Guard units in 1887 was but a further indication that both the War Department and the regular Army were increasingly interested in a closer relationship with the National Guard. Regular Army officers who had been detailed to assist in the training of state troops typically focused their efforts in the area of marksmanship, a field that was of mutual interest to both organizations.<sup>419</sup> Cooperation between the regulars and the National Guard, especially in the area of training, was

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<sup>416</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>417</sup> *AGR for 1894*, vii.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid., xxxvii. "It has required tireless effort and the expenditure of much money to accomplish these results, but it is effort and money well expended if we have succeeded in bringing home to ourselves and to the people at large, the conviction that every soldier of Pennsylvania can shoot to hit."

<sup>419</sup> Gilmore, "Crackshots and Patriots," 128. "Army officers appeared as teachers at Guard training sessions and summer camps. Instructors in rifle practice appeared first."

an important development that established an even closer relationship between the two organizations.

#### IV. “Cooperating”

In developing closer ties through increased appropriations and mutual cooperation in training, the War Department laid the foundation for the assimilation of the Guard into the national defense structure. A program, initiated in 1880 by Adjutant General R.C. Drum, brought regular Army officers and state National Guard units into direct contact. Upon the request of state governors, regular Army officers were detailed to Guard summer encampments to inspect and offer advice and assistance in matters pertaining to training, discipline, weapons, and ordnance. The written orders from the adjutant general to the observers asked for a compilation of specific information about the National Guard unit that the officer was detailed to inspect.<sup>420</sup> These reports were forwarded to the adjutant general’s office and the state governors.<sup>421</sup> Beginning in 1893 the War Department took a more systematic approach to the

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<sup>420</sup> Records of the National Guard Bureau, Adjutant General’s Office, RG 168, Record # 723, Box 78, National Archives and Record Administration. “The Secretary of War directs me to inform you that this detail is made primarily on account of the interest felt by the War Department in the Militia forces of this nation, and with the special object of securing such exact information regarding organization, equipment, instruction and discipline of troops you may see assembled as close personal observation and the facilities afforded will enable you to obtain.”

<sup>421</sup> This work relies on the versions published in the Pennsylvania Adjutant General’s annual reports. A comparison with the original manuscript versions in RG 168, housed in the National Archives, revealed no textual discrepancies.

collection of National Guard information. The reports of officer-inspectors were processed in the adjutant general's Military Information Division and published annually.<sup>422</sup>

The War Department looked upon the "visitations" as an opportunity to instruct the National Guard and bring the state troops into greater conformity with the regular Army. Cooptation of the National Guard as a ready reserve was the driving force the War Department's newly found desire to mentor the Guard.<sup>423</sup> As early as 1885 Commanding General of the Army, William T. Sherman, noted that the point of observing and advising the Guard was to transform it into trained reserve that could support the small force of regulars in the event of war.<sup>424</sup> It is important to note, however, that most Guard officers and state governors were not passive participants in the new arrangement. For the most part they eagerly accepted advisors and appropriations from the War Department, and constantly lobbied for more. In his commentary on Sherman's article, General Rodenbaugh, a member of the *Journal's* editorial board, observed that the states were increasingly more open to federal overtures despite "theoretical" Constitutional difficulties that might have impeded a closer relationship.<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>422</sup> Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 89.

<sup>423</sup> RG 168, Record # 723, Box 78. War Department orders to the inspectors clearly stated the rationale for their tours of duty: "In doing this you should appreciate the desirability of cultivating cordial relations between the Regular Army and the Volunteer Militia, remembering that upon the latter our country must largely rely in the hour of a general call to arms."; *AGR for 1887*, "Report of Colonel E.S. Otis, Twentieth Infantry, USA," 6. Most officers evaluated the Guard according to its usefulness as a component in national defense, rather than in view of its utility to the state. Colonel Otis thought that the PA Guard was composed of the finest material and would be able to provide the regular establishment with "trained soldiers should it become necessary to quickly augment the Army."

<sup>424</sup> William T. Sherman, "The Militia", *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States*, vol. vi. , no. xxi., March, 1885): 1-14, 12. "Enough of the old captains and sergeants yet remain to impart the necessary instruction, and this knowledge will be repeated and perpetuated, so that, when the Militia is called into service by the State or by the United States, it will be an intelligent force, that will soon command respect."

<sup>425</sup> It is claimed by some that the federal government can accomplish no appreciable good under the authority quoted: (militia clause of the Constitution) the facts do not seem to justify this



Pennsylvania received its first regular Army inspection in 1884 when Colonel H.M. Black, Twenty-Third U.S. Infantry, toured the division encampment at Gettysburg with Governor Pattison. Black offered no critical analysis of the Guard in his report. His comments were filled with unconditional praise, almost to the point of sycophancy. Pennsylvania's National Guard, according to Colonel Black, had established standards that all state troops ought to meet. Black also observed how closely the officers and men followed the discipline and drill of the regular Army and that such practices were a clear benefit to both the Guard and the regular Army.<sup>426</sup> Black's laudatory comments might be attributed to that section of his orders, issued by the War Department, that encouraged inspectors to temper their critical faculties with the knowledge that the Guard was, after all, an amateur, part-time military force. One simply could not judge the Guard with the same criteria that were applied to regular troops.<sup>427</sup>

The Army's Assistant Adjutant General, William Volkmar, attended the brigade encampments in 1886. While he observed proper form in giving the Guard a good deal of praise, Volkmar's report was decidedly more circumspect than that of Colonel Black. He observed much in the encampments that was praiseworthy, but he also dealt realistically with the Guard's shortcomings. Volkmar was especially critical of Guard customs and practices that were entirely contrary to the discipline and good order found amongst regulars. He disagreed with the practice

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conclusion. The plan of our compact Regular Army has been copied by most militia organizations; the annual appropriation for arms has been for seventy-six years eagerly accepted by all of the States; and the Army regulations and tactics are now generally adopted for purposes of discipline by all State forces."

<sup>426</sup> *AGR for 1884*, "Report of Colonel H.M. Black, Twenty-Third United States Infantry, On Camp 'Gettysburg'," 122-126.

<sup>427</sup> RG 168, Record # 723, Box 78. "In any criticism you may feel obliged to make, you should bear in mind the limited opportunities such troops have to perfect themselves in their duties, and that whatever proficiency they may have attained has been reached chiefly through their voluntary efforts and at their own expense. It would be manifestly unfair to apply to them the usual standard for troops accustomed to daily exercise in the duties of a soldier."

of holding regimental encampments near their home communities due to the inordinate number of friends, neighbors, and well-wishers who were constantly streaming into camp and interrupting the training schedule.<sup>428</sup> The fraternization between officers and men and the casual attitudes toward military courtesy were intolerable violations of the discipline demanded in all military organizations.<sup>429</sup> Major Volkmar closed his report by suggesting a program that would create an even tighter bond between the regulars and the National Guard troops. He proposed that the younger members of the Army's officer corps should be detailed to visit the annual Guard encampments as a means of familiarizing themselves with the citizen-soldiers that they might ultimately have to command in the event of war.<sup>430</sup>

In 1887 Major General John Hartranft proposed that Pennsylvania participate in a regional inter-state encampment planned by the War Department for the fall of 1888. The premise behind the exercise was to bring together Guard units from several of the northeastern states to camp, drill, and maneuver with the regulars. The response of the Pennsylvania Guard's brigade and regimental commanders was less than enthusiastic due to the inability of most of the men to obtain more time away from their careers and occupations than that required for the annual summer encampment. Hartranft's suggestion that Pennsylvania's contingent be composed of volunteers who could secure the necessary time off for the exercises from their employers was rebuffed, and Pennsylvania's National Guard did not participate.

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<sup>428</sup> *AGR for 1886*, "Report of Major William Volkmar, Assistant Adjutant General, United States Army," 216. "A serious objection to encamping the guard by regiment, near home, is the host of interested people who thus find convenient opportunity for visiting their friends in regimental camps, the presence of which spectators at times becomes an obstacle to satisfactory performance of military duty."

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid.*, 217. "Discipline and prompt obedience to orders cannot be obtained so long as enlisted men mingle upon equal and perhaps convivial footing in camp."

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, 219. "They will thus learn that the Regular Army is but a small component factor of the National military strength, and they will familiarize themselves with troops with whom many of them will doubtless be called to serve hereafter should our country be called to arms."

But joint encampments involving the Guard and the regular Army would soon materialize. In 1890 the Guard encamped by division at Mount Gretna, and the War Department sent a contingent of regulars from all three arms of the service- infantry, cavalry, and artillery- to drill with the Pennsylvania troops. The adjutant general observed that the benefit of such cooperation lay in the practical instruction that the regulars could impart to the Guard. The regulars provided the state troops with a military model and provided motivation for greater achievements in drill, discipline, and military professionalism.<sup>431</sup> The joint encampment was repeated again in 1894 with the participation of a larger number of federal troops. The Army Medical Corps sent a contingent that was of particular benefit to the medical department of the Guard.<sup>432</sup> Pennsylvania officers all seemed to agree that the regular military establishment was taking the Guard more seriously. The Army appeared to have a vested interest in its improvement and modernization.

Most of the senior officers of the Guard recognized the importance of a closer relationship with the regular Army. Along with the increase in the arms allowance passed by Congress in 1887, the first since 1810, the new spirit of cooperation was proof that the federal government valued the Guard's service and capabilities. The National Guard was justly being given its due by a federal establishment that had all but ignored it for the better part of a century. In his 1894 report, Pennsylvania's adjutant general observed that the Guard, a well-trained and disciplined body of volunteer troops, had assumed its rightful place in the nation's defense

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<sup>431</sup> *AGR for 1894*, lvii. "A practical display of this kind, bordering on perfection, affords a fine example to the Guard and an inspiring incentive to greater efficiency."; "The regular troops, by their soldierly conduct, as well as by their splendid drill, made for the National Guard an object lesson of great value."

<sup>432</sup> *AGR for 1894*, "Report of Alex McCandless, Surgeon in Chief," xxxv. "We were particularly fortunate in having with us my personal friend Captain Cabell, Surgeon and Army Hospital Corps Instructor, U.S. army, stationed at Washington Barracks. He was particularly kind, and aided and spent most of his leisure time witnessing our drills and imparting instruction."

policy.<sup>433</sup> Cooperative efforts between the Guard and the regulars had many benefits, but at least one senior Guard officer observed that distance between the Guard and the regulars had to be maintained for practical, as well as for legal, reasons. Each organization had its own mission and methods and the two ought not to be mingled or confused.<sup>434</sup> But the lines had been crossed, and even greater efforts at mutual cooperation between the Pennsylvania National Guard and the regulars would be in the offing in the years to come.

We turn now to scrutinize how this reformed, revamped, and retooled National Guard performed in the arena of state service. For all of its emphasis on military training and greater military efficiency the first test for the Guard was a humanitarian mission mounted in the wake of the Johnstown flood of 1889. There had, of course, been many confrontations, both large and small, between labor and industry during the 1880s. But the Guard was not mobilized once, even on a small scale, for strike duty. State authorities insisted that the protection of property and the maintenance of law and order were the concern of local law enforcement. Corporate interests preferred to rely on their private, paid police forces such as the Coal and Iron police that were completely under their control.

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<sup>433</sup> *AGR for 1890*, 199. "The presence of so large a representation of the regular army was gratifying, as showing the interest of the general government in the improvement of the militia and a sense of the importance in war put upon well organized and disciplined volunteers."

<sup>434</sup> *AGR for 1894*, "Report of Major General J.P.S. Gobin, Commander, Third Brigade," lvii. "It is doubtful if any closer relation to the regular army would be desirable, or indeed consistent with the law. My thought is that it would be a mistake to create any link whatever between the regular army and state troops beyond that what at present exists- mutual respect."

## Chapter Four

The state authorities had not mobilized the Pennsylvania National Guard for any purpose since the 1877 uprisings. Its relatively poor showing during the riots led the Guard's leadership and the General Assembly to initiate a reform program that subsequently improved the organization's structure, material resources, quality of personnel, and morale. As we have just observed in chapter three, the National Guard devoted the citizen-soldier's limited training time to the drills and exercises of the Regular Army. Summer encampments gave experience to commissary and quartermaster personnel in moving, housing, and sustaining large numbers of troops in the field. Guard partnership with railroad carriers permitted the rapid delivery of troops, equipment, and their supplies any point in the state.

It was in its logistic capacity that the "new look" National Guard was first tested. The city of Johnstown was almost totally destroyed by a massive flood in the spring of 1889. Adjutant General John Hastings of the Pennsylvania National Guard was the first state official on the scene. He had one regiment of infantry on the streets within twenty-four hours of his first inspection of the devastated city. But the Guard deployment in Johnstown went well beyond guard duty and security details. The Guard initiated the largest disaster relief effort in the nation's history. As Pennsylvania had no disaster relief agency or program, the National Guard

mounted an unprecedented and heroic campaign that was praised for its energy and efficiency. The Guard fed the hungry and sheltered the homeless. It also dispensed relief money to disaster victims. The diligence and hard work of Guard sanitation officers circumvented any threat from disease, and made the environment tolerable in a relatively short period of time.

In 1891 and 1892 the Guard was called into deal with serious outbreaks of violence that threatened public order. Strikes in Connellsville and Homestead became deadly and reluctant Pennsylvania authorities finally employed the Guard in both locations. Homestead appeared to have many of the disquieting elements of the 1877 troubles. Like Pittsburgh in 1877, Homestead in 1892 was a community driven to *de facto* insurrection in reaction to corporate injustices. The Guard's rapid response and professional conduct secured the peace returned control of the town to legitimate authority. Its conduct in Homestead brought the Pennsylvania National Guard national attention for its superb performance in a volatile environment. The Guard's accomplishment in disaster relief and peacekeeping indicated that it had improved in every way since the dark days of 1877.

## I. "Flood"

On May 31, 1889, the city of Johnstown and a number of smaller communities situated in the Conemaugh Valley were overwhelmed by floodwaters unleashed by days of torrential rainfall and the collapse of an earthen dam on the South Fork tributary of the Conemaugh River. Although most of the journalistic accounts of the flood and its immediate aftermath are inherently sensationalistic and unreliable, the *New York Times*' preliminary assessment of the damage and casualties was sobering: "the city of 25,000 inhabitants has been practically wiped out of existence and that hundreds if not thousands of lives have been lost."<sup>435</sup> For the first few days after the disaster Johnstown was effectively cut off from the rest of the world on account of the destruction of railroad and telegraph facilities. The need for immediate relief was great.

One of the first state officials to arrive in the vicinity was Adjutant General D. H. Hastings of the Pennsylvania National Guard, but he was able to proceed no further than the town of Millville where he telegraphed an urgent message to the Quartermaster General of the Second Brigade in Pittsburgh.<sup>436</sup> Hastings informed the officers of the Second Brigade that communications with the eastern part of the state were completely gone, and that Johnstown would have to depend upon Pittsburgh for food and other critically needed supplies. He

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<sup>435</sup> *The New York Times*, June 1, 1889.

<sup>436</sup> Pennsylvania, *Report of the Secretary of the Flood Relief Commission* (Harrisburg: Meyers Printing and Publishing House, 1890), 21.; John Bach McMaster, "The Johnstown Flood II," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 58, no.1, (1933): 316-354, 331. "Happening to be in the neighborhood when the flood occurred, hearing of it early on Saturday, he went with all the speed he could to Johnstown, and before night reached the signal tower of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Millville."

estimated that there were at least ten thousand dead and that the brigade quartermaster should consign two thousand coffins for immediate delivery.<sup>437</sup> Within hours the Second Brigade quartermaster and two hundred civilian workers proceeded to Johnstown with rations and tools supplied by the hastily assembled, but energetic, Pittsburgh Relief Commission. Upon arrival in Johnstown the relief force set to work immediately under the direction of General Hastings who had set up a temporary command post at Millville.<sup>438</sup>

The issue of security and the maintenance of law and public order soon became of paramount importance in Johnstown. Lurid newspaper accounts of the nefarious activities of brigands, ghouls, and “Hungarian” corpse-robbers, filled both the daily press accounts and the numerous popular books that were dashed off and published in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. The *New York Times* erroneously reported that Johnstown had been placed under martial law and that vigilantism was the order of the day as outraged deputies and civilian volunteers issued summary justice to various types of marauders.<sup>439</sup> Some preliminary tales of murder, rapine, looting, and desecration of the dead (listed among other indicators of widespread anarchy) that were received in Pittsburgh, moved a number of Second Brigade Guardsmen to

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<sup>437</sup> Ibid., 331-332.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid., 333.

<sup>439</sup> *New York Times*, June 3, 1889. “Attempts at disorder and violence by small gangs of tramps have been vigorously suppressed and several marauders have been lynched and shot to death.” Sensationalism abounds in the contemporary accounts of the flood, rendering them all but useless as sources for those who would research the flood. The following are illustrative of the genre: Frank Connelly and George Jenks, *Official History of the Johnstown Flood* (1889) ; Fletcher W. Johnson, *History of the Johnstown Flood*, (1889) ; David J. Beale, *Through the Johnstown Flood*, (1890). The modern “definitive” history of the flood, David McCullough’s *Johnstown Flood*, relies, to a great extent, on contemporary newspaper accounts and anecdotal survivor narratives, a body of evidence that makes his work of dubious value to the researcher. Official state sources lack detail and offer meager reportage.



proceed on their own authority to the disaster zone. General Hastings immediately ordered these earnest and eager volunteers to return to Pittsburgh, as their services were not yet required.<sup>440</sup>

Despite the excessive accounts that focused on a veritable wave of lawlessness, incidents of criminal behavior organized or otherwise, were so few as to be of no concern to the authorities on the scene.<sup>441</sup> The Johnstown police force and the Cambria County sheriff's department patrolled the streets and provided adequate security for the abandoned businesses and private residences that were left standing after the water subsided. But the need for increased security was soon evident as thousands of workmen and sightseers entered the valley, in conjunction with the hourly arrival of trainloads of relief supplies that were valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars- "consigned to no one in particular, but to the people of Johnstown in general."<sup>442</sup> Acting in the belief that so much valuable property and the influx of workers and tourists made for too great an opportunity for crime, the Cambria County sheriff called upon General Hastings for National Guard troops to augment his vigorous, but thinly-stretched force of deputies and civilian volunteers.

Hastings forwarded this request along with his own approval to Governor James Beaver who promptly mobilized the Fourteenth Regiment out of Pittsburgh and Company H of

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<sup>440</sup> McMaster, "The Johnstown Flood II," 337. "Yet the stories were firmly believed and, alarmed for the safety of the people, some militia left Pittsburgh without orders and hurried to Johnstown only to be promptly sent back by General Hastings."

<sup>441</sup> James B. Scott, Chairman, Citizens' Relief Committee, *Johnstown Flood Report* (Pittsburgh: Myers, Schinkle and Co. Printers, 1890), 15. "It is proper to refer to the fact that police control of the entire district was so effective that not a single case of assault or injury occurred, nor was there the slightest foundation for the many wild stories of hangings and lynching, or of the mutilation of dead bodies. Life in the Conemaugh Valley was as secure as in any city in the land." (One is reminded of the media's histrionic initial coverage of events in hurricane-ravaged New Orleans in early September 2005).

<sup>442</sup> McMaster, "The Johnstown Flood II", 333.

the Twelfth Regiment, based in Cambria County.<sup>443</sup> The troops were immediately divided into squad-sized units that mounted continuous patrols through the streets of Johnstown and guarded the various depots filled with relief supplies. They also provided security at the relief stations that were positioned throughout the city. Pickets were placed along all lines of approach to the city and turned away non-essential personnel.<sup>444</sup> The troops were employed in these activities for several weeks until they were relieved during the third week of June. General Hastings subsequently excused the men of the Fourteenth Regiment from participation in the annual encampment and inspections<sup>445</sup>

The contributions of the Pennsylvania National Guard to the massive relief effort in Johnstown went far beyond the maintenance of security and order. These tasks were accomplished rather quickly, and the Guard's services in these areas were of but a few weeks' duration. The true measure of the Guard's contribution to Johnstown was in management of the relief effort. Adjutant General Hastings was named chief of an *ad hoc* Department of Public Safety, and in his capacity as the official representative of the governor, he had control over the operations and personnel of The Pennsylvania Board of Health.<sup>446</sup> In addition Hastings assumed control of the relief effort that was attempting to meet the immediate material needs of the flood survivors.<sup>447</sup> To meet those needs Hastings mobilized the commissary and subsistence sections throughout the Pennsylvania National Guard. The quartermaster general along with every

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<sup>443</sup> *AGR for 1889*, vii.

<sup>444</sup> McMaster, "The Johnstown Flood II," 338. "They guarded the supplies and the buildings; they aided the deputy sheriffs in closing every avenue of approach to the town; and kept order in the long lines of men and women waiting at the supply station for food and clothes."

<sup>445</sup> *AGR for 1889*, iv. The report also noted the loss of a great deal of the Twelfth Regiment's equipment due to the extensive flood damage in the regimental armories.

<sup>446</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Flood Relief Commission*, 21.

<sup>447</sup> Much of the initial material that made for temporary shelter, such as tentage and other camp equipment, was supplied from state stores. Hard use in Johnstown greatly contributed to the poor condition of much of this material during the 1892 Homestead mobilization.

brigade and division commissary and subsistence officer was quickly brought to Johnstown and assigned to one aspect or another of the relief effort.<sup>448</sup>

The logistical effort mounted in Johnstown was a great challenge because relief efforts on such a scale had never been attempted before in either Pennsylvania or anywhere else the United States. The Guard officers involved in this task already had the experience of meeting the food and subsistence needs of large numbers of personnel; the annual encampments of the Pennsylvania National Guard were just such occasions. Throughout the 1880s the quartermaster and subsistence officers met the needs of ever-larger numbers of troops longer periods time in the annual encampments. Uniformly their work had been given excellent notices in the adjutant general's yearly reports. One observer noted the thoroughness of the division and brigade staffs that set up the encampments and met every requirement of the troops. Their work was so thorough that one inspector noted that field officers were deprived of valuable logistical training because they had no part in the process.<sup>449</sup> Reports from other years testified to the high standards that had always been maintained by officers who worked in the logistical divisions-including brigade and regimental medical and sanitary officers.<sup>450</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> *AGR for 1889*, vii. "The entire Quartermaster and Commissary Departments were on hand distributing supplies to the survivors of the disaster." ; *Report of the Secretary of the Flood Relief Commission*, 21. "... having summoned all the division and regimental quartermaster and commissary officers of the National Guard various storehouses were placed in their charge."

<sup>449</sup> *AGR for 1886*, 1. "Battalion officers were getting no experience in setting up camps as division and brigade staffs took care of everything-layouts, quartermaster, and commissary duties before the large encampments began."

<sup>450</sup> The following serve as a representative sampling: *AGR for 1881*, 3. "The judgment and economy which characterized the management of the commissariat last year was well-maintained in the conduct of the several brigades during the season." ; *AGR for 1885*, "Report of William J. Volkmar, Assistant Adjutant General, U.S. Army", 47. "In company with the brigade surgeon, I made a thorough tour of inspection of sanitary arrangements of the camp, which showed the usual foresight of the medical officers of the Pennsylvania National Guard."; *AGR for 1887*, 2. "The camps were laid out in accordance with regulations, and presented a true picture of the service."

The excellent results in Johnstown were proof of the knowledge, experience, and organizational abilities of the Guard's commissary and subsistence officers. They were able to set up several relief depots throughout the city and equitably distribute the thousands of tons of supplies that flowed through the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's central depot.<sup>451</sup> One historian of the flood noted that the key to the success of the National Guard's effort was the systemization of the relief work that was instituted by the officers, a rational organizational scheme that yielded immediate results for the flood victims.<sup>452</sup> Within a week of the start of the relief effort, local men had taken over many of the administrative tasks of the Guard officers. General Hastings subsequently relieved this group of personnel and sent them home.

General Hastings' responsibilities during the relief effort extended to areas well beyond those involving the provision of material aid to destitute flood survivors. As noted above he had been given charge over all the measures initiated by the State Board of Health. Of immediate concern was the removal of decayed matter and other "noxious materials" that might have proved detrimental to public health and safety. The cleanup and disinfection efforts in Johnstown began in the first week of June and ended in mid- October after a satisfactory inspection by state health officials.<sup>453</sup> General Hastings also enlisted the assistance of local

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<sup>451</sup> McMaster, "The Johnstown Flood II," 339. "In the case of these men the handling and distributing of supplies were quickly reduced to a system."

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., 340. "Within two days of the establishment of this system every family in the valley wishing supplies was registered at some district commissary and given a card entitling it to draw relief."

<sup>453</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Flood Relief Commission*, 21. "Further removal of injurious matter continued under General Hastings, and late under Capt. George C. Hamilton, until Oct. 12, when the State Board of Health formally declared the nuisance abated."

merchants and industrialists to open up the city and get it back to some semblance of normalcy.<sup>454</sup>

By November of 1889, the civil authorities in Cambria County had assumed complete control of rebuilding efforts, and the last contingent of National Guard officers left the Conemaugh Valley. Governor James Beaver and his “military staff” were the recipients of an outpouring of praise and gratitude for the work of the National Guard in the disaster zone.<sup>455</sup> The logistical capabilities of the Guard, much like its discipline and martial spirit, had increased far beyond the dark days of the strikes of 1877 when it could neither transport nor deliver rations and ammunition to the units involved in the desperate business that had played out in industrial cities of the Commonwealth.<sup>456</sup>

## II. “Connellsville”

In 1891 The National Guard of Pennsylvania was mobilized for strike related duty for the first time since the riots of 1877. The troubles began in the Westmoreland County coke region centered on the towns of Connellsville and Mount Pleasant. Miners and laborers in the coal mines and coke works had gone on strike for higher wages and an eight-hour workday in January of 1891. Henry Clay Frick and his fellow owners formed an alliance to resist the

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<sup>454</sup> McMaster, “The Johnstown Flood II,” 344. “Hastings called the meeting of businessmen on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June to get things back to normal in Johnstown.”

<sup>455</sup> *AGR for 1889*, vi.

<sup>456</sup> The Pennsylvania National Guard would be mobilized twice more for flood duty in Johnstown in the twentieth century- both in 1936 and 1977.

union's demands and keep their facilities open by hiring replacement workers.<sup>457</sup> Throughout February and March acrimonious negotiations were unable to break the impasse. The Knights of Labor and the Amalgamated Association of Miners and Mine Laborers worked relentlessly to force those men who had remained on the job to join the strike. Frick and his fellow owners were just as determined to keep their operations going.

By late February the number of workers either on strike or idled by the work stoppage had swelled to twelve thousand, and the level of violence increased dramatically as increasingly desperate strikers increased pressure on those who continued to work.<sup>458</sup> In early March the owner of the Rainey coke works petitioned the U.S. Circuit Court to prevent the union from intimidating its workers and damaging its property. According to the brief filed by Rainey's corporate counsel, men had been assaulted and intimidated by armed strikers. The plant also received letters that threatened the further destruction of company property. The strikers had previously set a company mine on fire and destroyed a number of the operation's coke ovens.<sup>459</sup> After acquiring the injunction the Rainey executives brought in Pinkerton detectives and sheriff's deputies to provide security for company property.<sup>460</sup> Because the operators had almost absolute control over the Pinkertons and Coal and Iron police, they were the preferred instruments of strike containment and labor control in Pennsylvania during the last quarter of the twentieth century. The large numbers of private police and deputies increased the tension in the region, so that by the end of March the conditions were rife for an eruption of violence.

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<sup>457</sup> Perry K. Blatz, "Titanic Struggles," 107-108. "The dispute developed in a familiar way, as strikers tried to force workers who remained on the job to join the strike, while companies turned to local authorities to protect their operations." Most modern sources agree that Frick and the other operators saw an opportunity to eliminate union influence in the coke region at this time.

<sup>458</sup> *The New York Times*, February 28, 1891.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*, March 31, 1891.

<sup>460</sup> Kenneth Warren, *Wealth Waste and Alienation: Growth and Decline in the Connellsville Coke Industry* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001), 89.

The coke operators refused to engage in any meaningful arbitration as they believed that the unions could be broken by the passage of time and the continued operation of the mines and ovens by replacements.<sup>461</sup> The striking miner's were becoming increasingly desperate as hunger, cold, and sickness took their toll on the men and their families.<sup>462</sup> The frequency and scale of violent incidents in the Connellsville region, which had been on the increase throughout the month of March, reached new levels when the Frick Company coke works at Morewood was systematically assaulted by over one thousand men on Monday, March 30. Sheriff Clawson of Westmoreland County and a force of twenty deputies quickly abandoned their defense of the Morewood works and made a hasty retreat.<sup>463</sup> Considerable damage was done to a number of coke ovens as well as the plant's railroad track and tool sheds.<sup>464</sup> But the violence was not confined to the Morewood facility. Similar, small-scale outbreaks occurred at the Leisenring, Jintown, and Leith mines.<sup>465</sup> Violence in the coke region had intensified and appeared to be spreading throughout the region. It appeared that the civil authorities had either lost control of the situation or, at the very least, refused to contend with the strikers.

Frick and the other operators urged Clawson to inform the governor he was unable to maintain order in Westmoreland County. The sheriff's statement was the first step in the procedure that would mobilize and deploy the National Guard to the areas affected by the strike.

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<sup>461</sup> Kenneth Warren, *Triumphant Capitalism: Henry Clay Frick and the Industrial Transformation of America* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), 168. Warren attests to the intransigence of both Frick and Carnegie when dealing with work stoppages: "The method of taking time, allowing desperation to build on the part of employees and their families [was better] than blank confrontation."

<sup>462</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, March 17, 1891.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, March 31, 1891. "They were so thinly scattered about the works that concerted action would have been impossible. Being compelled to retire they scattered in all directions."

<sup>464</sup> Warren, *Wealth, Waste, and Alienation*, 91.

<sup>465</sup> *The New York Times*, March 31, 1891. "A bomb was set off at West Leisenring and the men were notified not to work. The Leith works near Uniontown was also raided and the workmen were put to flight."

Governor Robert E. Pattison denied the Clawson's first request, indicating that the sheriff had not exhausted all of the local resources in his efforts to keep the peace.<sup>466</sup> The governor's refusal to use the Guard at this point serves as an illustration of the continuing reluctance of Pennsylvania executives to use troops except in the most extreme of conditions. In his later biennial address to the General Assembly, Pattison would quote at length the words of his predecessor John Hartranft, in order to justify his conservative approach to the use of armed force in the Connellsville strike and later at Homestead.<sup>467</sup> One local newspaper reported that the governor's refusal to commit the National Guard emboldened the strikers and made increased violence more likely.<sup>468</sup>

Sheriff Clawson, having been denied the assistance of National Guard troops, hastily augmented his motley force of Pinkertons, deputies, and company police in order to protect the industrial plants in his charge. Thomas Lynch, manager of General Manager of the H.C. Frick Coke Works, asserted that the company would use every means at its disposal to protect its property and continue operations.<sup>469</sup> Shoot to kill orders were given to guards at all of the works that were still operating. At the Morewood plant, scene of the recent strikers' raid, Sheriff Clawson commanded a force of sixty-five deputies. Standing in these ranks were a number of

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<sup>466</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, March 31, 1891. "The Governor's reply to Sheriff Clawson: 'The civil power to maintain the peace must be exhausted before the military power can be successfully invoked. I decline to issue orders for the use of arms.' The sheriff has made every appeal to Governor Pattison, but that official has left him to the fate of his own resources."

<sup>467</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1894*, "The Biennial Message of the Governor," 33-34.

<sup>468</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, March 31, 1891. The correspondent on the scene quoted a workers' group spokesman: "We have four thousand men who have determined that no black leg shall work. Governor Pattison he [sic] no order out soldiers."

<sup>469</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, April 1, 1891. "Lynch: 'We will allow the civil authorities of Westmoreland county to exhaust every effort, and then we will take matters in hand', said he, and he emphasized his remark with a drive of his fist upon the desk which could not be misunderstood."



members of Company E, Tenth Regiment Pennsylvania National Guard, based in Greensburg. Company E's captain, James Loar, had, along with several of his men, volunteered for duty on March 31 and were sworn in as sheriff's deputies.<sup>470</sup> It must be noted, however, that Loar and his men were not, at least at this point, in the service of the state of Pennsylvania. The Company C men were volunteer deputies entirely under the authority of sheriff of Westmoreland County.<sup>471</sup>

On April 1 over one thousand strikers marched once again on Frick's Morewood works. Sheriff Clawson was better prepared than he had been on March 30. The force of sixty-five deputies was well armed and forewarned of the coming attack. The strikers were also well organized, armed, and appeared to be following a tactical plan of some sort. They had divided themselves into two sections and each approached the Frick property from different directions led, all along the way, by their own drum and bugle corps.<sup>472</sup> One of the strikers' columns confronted a group of deputies barricaded in a large company shed. "Captain" Loar apparently had command at this location, and ordered the mob to disperse immediately. There was

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<sup>470</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, March 31, 1891. "Company E of the 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment had several members volunteer to assist sheriff Clawson and they were sworn in as deputies." While confident in the abilities of the Guardsmen, the correspondent had reservations concerning the quality of the other sheriff's deputies: "They have however, not the best of material, as a large number of the men were picked up about the court house in Greensburg."

<sup>471</sup> At least two studies of the Pennsylvania National Guard's involvement in labor disputes erroneously attempt to connect the citizen volunteer deputies of Company C and the official activities of the Guard. Such a connection cannot be made from an objective analysis of the source materials. See: Kuritz, "The Pennsylvania State Government and Labor Controls", 128. ; Holmes, "The Pennsylvania National Guard," 260.

<sup>472</sup> *The New York Times*, April 3, 1891. "The attack on the Morewood plant was well planned and conceived and headed by men determined evidently to intimidate the men working there once and for all."

considerable doubt, as to which side fired the first shot, but in the fusillade that followed, seven strikers were killed and many more were wounded.<sup>473</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of the shootings the entire region lay under a threat of continued deadly violence. The strikers swore vengeance and burned “Captain Loar” in effigy on the front yard of his Greensburg home.<sup>474</sup> Sheriff Clawson sent an immediate appeal to Governor Pattison for National Guard troops. The governor refused to do so immediately because he did not believe that such a measure was necessary at this point.<sup>475</sup> Pattison ordered Inspector General McKibben into the region to provide him a factual and objective assessment as to the situation on the ground and the advisability of using the National Guard. McKibben’s subsequent report moved Pattison to mobilize the Tenth and Eighteenth Regiments under the command Colonel Hawkins and Colonel Smith respectively.<sup>476</sup> Both regiments left Pittsburgh and arrived at Mt. Pleasant at midnight. From the moment of mobilization to the arrival on site only some ten hours had passed. Two infantry regiments with rations, equipment, and baggage were fully deployed for duty- an accomplishment that would have been almost impossible in

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<sup>473</sup> Ibid., “The fight was brief and deadly. Two rounds of cartridges were fired by a band of sixty-five guards, and seven of the mob of strikers fell dead, while at least forty others were wounded.” ; Kenneth Warren , *Wealth, Waste , and Alienation* ,

<sup>474</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, April 1, 1891 ; *The New York Times*, April 3, 1891. Loar was not at home to see the show. He had left the area, abandoning his duties as a deputy sheriff as well as his dental office- “it was conceded that his departure was well advised.”

<sup>475</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, April 3, 1891. The governor was not about to order the use of troops ‘until he was satisfied that they were needed, and he requested the sheriff to keep him informed.”

<sup>476</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, April 3, 1891. The paper noted the governor’s change of heart after hearing McKibben’s report: “While the question of the right or wrong of the strike does not concern him, yet when it comes to the question of mob rule and the interference with the law he will not hesitate to employ the means at his command to uphold the peace of the Commonwealth.”

1877. General Wiley, commander of the Second Brigade attributed these accomplishments to the hard work performed by the officers and men during the annual encampments.<sup>477</sup>

The troops detrained and marched directly to the Morewood works in the dead of night and in the middle of a torrential rainstorm. Arriving at the works, they set up sentries and camped in the open, all the while in state of constant readiness, anticipating an attack at any moment.<sup>478</sup> The next morning saw to the disposition of the troops on hand. A strong force was left at the Morewood works and a number of company-sized units were positioned to act as mobile columns and operate independently should the need arise for intervention in other areas. These smaller mobile units were in constant communication with the field headquarters at Morewood.<sup>479</sup> This tactical plan testified to

both the increased level of training and efficiency of the officers and men as well as high level of confidence in their abilities to carry out relatively complex maneuvers in less than optimal conditions, i.e., weather and terrain, and doing so in the “face of the enemy”.

The presence of the National Guard had an immediate effect in the region. There were no further outbreaks of violence. Adjutant General McClelland noted that the introduction of Guard, at this point in the strike, had been a necessity as their presence served to quell the

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<sup>477</sup> *AGR for 1891*, “Report of Brigadier General John Wiley, Commander Second Brigade,” 92. “The training which the Guard received in the annual camps enabled them to move with a promptness and regularity without the least confusion, and to take care of themselves in exposed situations even without tents.”

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*, 104. The men had to contend with: “The inclemency of the weather, the intense darkness, in a strange territory without shelter, about as uncomfortable as they could be, with a belief in the morning would come the conflict, with the inflammable rumors incident to the excitement of the times ... .”

<sup>479</sup> *Ibid.*

“riotous elements” that had seemingly gained the upper hand before the arrival of the troops.<sup>480</sup>

When rumors began to circulate in the region that the troops would be quickly withdrawn incidents of threat and assault began once again. The strikers looked upon the rumored withdrawal this as an opportunity to intimidate those who continued to work.<sup>481</sup> The governor did remove the better part of the Tenth and Eighteenth Regiments from the area on April 18. Two companies were left behind as a precaution. Company C of Uniontown did see limited action as it assisted the sheriff in serving eviction notices to strike leaders in Frick-owned company housing.

Eventually the two remaining companies were relieved but the strike continued. Apparently the governor was sincere when he declared his impartiality on the merits of the strike and would not allow the Guard to function as a strike police. One Pittsburgh newspaper expressed the opinion that the presence of the Guard was unnecessary and that the Morewood “massacre” had been deliberately perpetrated to get the troops to the region in order to break the strike.<sup>482</sup> But once order was restored in the region the troops were withdrawn despite the fact that the strike was still viable and the number of men who had returned to work was still

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<sup>480</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 104. “The presence of the troops was an absolute necessity, and but for their presence acts of violence would have been numerous and loss of life and property would have occurred.”

<sup>481</sup> *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, April 6, 1891. “The feeling here is that the strikers will offer no violence at the works as long as the militia remains in charge, but great fears are entertained for the men to return to work.” The same paper reported that those fears were justified as it reported on April 10: “He [company spokesman] attributed the loss of men the seven men to the fact of rumors to the effect that the troops were to be withdrawn at once circulated among the workers at the ovens and in the mines.” ; Kenneth Warren, *Wealth, Alienation, and Waste*, 93. The power of intimidation was proved: “Men who had returned to their jobs in Morewood left again.”

<sup>482</sup> *National Labor Tribune*, April 11, 1891. “At this writing it looks very much as though the policy determined was to get matters in such a condition that the Governor would be compelled to order out the state militia, and thus aid the coke companies in their quest to win the contest for wages and terms.”

inadequate, a state of affairs that was a disappointment to Frick and fellow owners. In this instance the coke operators could not depend on the National Guard as even a short term or stopgap security force. They also could not rely on the Guard's long- term presence to break the strike. The relatively quick withdrawal of the Guard forced them to make other arrangements to protect their property and operate their facilities. On April 21 Frick introduced one hundred Pinkerton detectives into the region and had them duly sworn as deputy sheriffs. In conjunction with this private security force, he also brought fifty laborers in from Punxsutawney, Jefferson County, to work his mines and coke ovens.<sup>483</sup> With the security provided by the Pinkertons, Frick was soon able to recruit hundreds of workers in Pittsburgh. Within a few days of this mass hiring the strike was effectively broken. By mid May the vast majority of men had returned to work.

The National Guard received accolades from many quarters for their service in the Connellsville region during the strike. Governor Pattison was the recipient of numerous testimonials from private citizens from Westmoreland and Fayette counties that testified to the Guard's efficiency and professionalism.<sup>484</sup> The issue of conflicted loyalties that had been of such great concern in the 1877 labor disputes was not a factor during the Guard's tour of duty during the coke strike. In Pittsburgh during the 1877 rebellion the Guard had to contend with nothing less than a community in arms. Widespread antipathy towards the Pennsylvania Railroad aroused the passions of most Pittsburghers and turned them out into the street. In 1877 the Guard was opposed by an enraged community- in many cases their own friends and neighbors. The people of Connellsville had not arrayed themselves against the coal operators. Not even the presence of Henry Clay Frick excited the passions of people outside of the mining

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<sup>483</sup> Warren, *Wealth, Waste, and Alienation*, 94-95.

<sup>484</sup> *AGR for 1891*, 105.

trade. In 1891 the troops remained loyal and evinced no signs of sympathy for the strikers. The *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* did report on one instance of strike-related insubordination but its account was not substantiated by any other source.<sup>485</sup> At the very start of the deployment a lieutenant colonel of the Tenth Regiment did make a forceful presentation to the men that served to remind them of their duty to all the citizens of the Commonwealth.<sup>486</sup>

Unlike the numerous incidents of insubordination and dereliction of duty that were clearly evident in 1877, the men of the Guard held fast to their soldierly obligations in 1891- despite the fact that many of the men in the ranks were workers themselves, drawn from the very counties most affected by the strike. One company, whose working-class members were largely recruited from the vicinity of Mt. Pleasant, drew the special notice and praise of the adjutant general, and the commander of the Second Brigade for their devotion to duty and professional conduct.<sup>487</sup>

Albert Logan of the *Duquesne Grays*, a Pittsburgh unit that had been mobilized for strike duty, offered a summary of the Guard's achievement in the coke strike and noted the "high degree" of progress that had been attained since their last tour of active duty in 1877.<sup>488</sup> This,

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<sup>485</sup> *The Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, April 8, 1891. "Many of the Uniontown Company are known to be outspoken strikers. It is reported that Company C, on duty at Morewood openly insulted the men at work, and applying such epithets as 'scab and blackleg'."

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*, April 8, 1891. "He impressed the men with the fact that they were called to protect the lives and property of every citizen in this turbulent region, whether operator, workman on duty, or striker. He advised them to take no sides in the controversy, to know neither operator or striker but to attend strictly to their duties, which are to preserve the peace and protect all parties in their rights and property."

<sup>487</sup> *AGR for 1891*, "The company which saw the greatest service of any of those ordered out for duty, belonged directly in the town where the trouble first occurred, thus showing that even if their friends and neighbors arise in opposition to the laws of the commonwealth, that the National Guard can be depended upon to act against them in the maintenance of good order and preservation of peace."

<sup>488</sup> *Logan MSS 0096*, Folder 14. Albert Logan, mobilized for strike duty noted the difference between 1877 and 1891: "The mobilization of the troops for this service was very satisfactory to

indeed, was a vastly more competent and professional organization than it had been in dark days of the railroad strike. The course of events in Westmoreland and Fayette counties proved that the civil authorities could now rely on the Guard to respond quickly and conduct itself with restraint. From all indications the Guard was no longer, as its earlier critics proclaimed, a “weak and hollow shell,” or a “gaggle of civilian poseurs,” masquerading as military force. But its capacities would soon be put to an even greater test on a vastly larger scale in the coming months in Homestead, Pennsylvania.

### III. “Homestead”

On July 2, 1892, the management of the sprawling Carnegie Steel Company’s massive works situated on the Monongahela river at Homestead, dismissed most of the plant’s four thousand employees and gave notice that it would begin hiring replacement workers.<sup>489</sup> The lockout and employment notice was the latest development in a protracted and bitterly contentious contract dispute between the company and the Amalgamated Association of International Steel Workers (AAISW), the union that represented the workers. Previously, H.C. Frick, chairman and chief executive of Carnegie Steel had given the Amalgamated Association and its membership until June 24 to accept the company’s wage terms. After that date the

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the officers and enabled them, within a few hours after order had been issued, to have troops on the ground and to restore order and bring about normal conditions.”

<sup>489</sup> *The National Labor Tribune*, July 8, 1892. “To what extent this shutdown was due we are not informed, but inference is that the action of some of the men in hanging an effigy, within the mill, the leading active member of the Homestead company had something to do with it.”

Carnegie Company would no longer negotiate with the Amalgamated Association, but would contract with each employee on an individual basis.<sup>490</sup>

In the midst of the negotiations, Frick had taken the extraordinary precaution of constructing a massive fence on the landside of the plant, some three miles long, complete with barbed wire and lookout towers.<sup>491</sup> Three-inch holes positioned at shoulder height were drilled at regularly spaced intervals.<sup>492</sup> Watchtowers, searchlights, and high-pressure water hoses completed the defensive arrangements what the local newspapers dubbed as “Fort Frick”. Frick and the Carnegie management had prepared the plant as if for a siege. An already contentious relationship between capital and labor was on the verge of a violent eruption.

In addition to augmenting the physical security of the plant, Frick and the Carnegie management had made arrangements to provide an even greater level of protection for the mill and the permanent replacement workers that they planned to hire. Earlier, on June 24, Frick concluded arrangements with the Pinkerton Detective Agency for the hiring of three hundred detectives to guard the works in Homestead and protect the replacement work force that would continue operating the plant. The Pinkerton men would be deputized after they arrived in Pittsburgh. Frick obviously had no confidence in the resources or abilities of the Allegheny

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<sup>490</sup> Leon Wolff, *Lockout- The Story of the Homestead Strike of 1892: A Study of Violence, Unionism, and the Carnegie Steel Empire* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), 81. “... Frick announced to the union men that they would have to accept his scale by June 24. If not, they would be dealt with individually. The challenge to the Amalgamated could not have been more blunt; it could surrender, it could disband, or it could strike.”

<sup>491</sup> *The Local News* (Homestead), July 2, 1892. “The fence that has been thrown about the works is eleven feet high, and upon top of that, with six inches of barbed wire firmly secured to the boards every few feet which extend eighteen inches higher than the fence. It is very formidable looking and suggests a fort indeed. ‘Fort Frick’ will go down in history.”

<sup>492</sup> Henry David, “Upheaval at Homestead”, *America in Crisis: Fourteen Crucial Episodes in American History*, Daniel Aaron, ed. (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1952), 145. “... holes in the fence were later described by Frick as designed for observation purposes. To the workers, they seemed suited to a different use.”



County sheriff's office to restrain the union workers.<sup>493</sup> Frick, moreover, seemed determined to break the Amalgamated Association in much the same way he had eviscerated the coke region unions.<sup>494</sup> He had employed a force of Pinkertons during the coke strike at Connellsville. They were brought in to provide security for the mines and coke ovens after the National Guard troops had been withdrawn from the region. Pinkerton protection of Frick's replacement workforce quickly brought that strike to a close.

On June 28 the threatened dismissals were initiated, and 3,800 workers at the mill were discharged. On June 29, the remaining workers voted to go out on strike and completely shut down operations. The AAISW formed an Advisory Committee that organized the workers to guard the mill and prevent the infiltration of either Pinketon men or replacement workers. Utilizing a "military style" organization, the Advisory Committee used the 4,500 strikers to effectively blockade the grounds and deny access at every point along the perimeter of the plant—even those access points on the banks of the Monongahela River.<sup>495</sup> But at no point did the strikers trespass on company property.

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<sup>493</sup> Frank Morn, *The Eye That Never Sleeps: A History of the Pinkerton Detective Agency* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 103. "When a new strike threatened in 1892, Henry Clay Frick, bypassed local police authorities altogether and hired Pinkerton guards." ; J. Bernard Hogg, "Public Reaction to Pinkertonism and the Labor Question". *Pennsylvania History*, vol. xi, no.3, (July 1944): 171-199, 179. "The appearance of Pinkerton guards was a sure sign that the regularly constituted authorities were powerless to furnish the protection every owner of property had the right to expect."

<sup>494</sup> *The New York Times*, June 13, 1892. "H.C. Frick, the active head of the Carnegie interests, is the man who broke the last coke strike and disrupted the cokers' organization. He counts on repeating that experience at Homestead."

<sup>495</sup> *The World* (New York), July 1, 1892. "As many of the 4,500 locked-out men as can be handled are on picket duty at every possible point of entrance to the works. They are divided into two squads, one for the day and the other for night duty, each under the command of a captain and two lieutenants. The river front for three miles is patrolled by the *Edna* and men in skiffs." ; *The Pittsburgh Dispatch*, July 4, 1892. Headlines and sub heads announced: "In Military Style" ; "Complete System of Organization Adopted by Homestead Workers" ; "Told Off Into Three Divisions With a Commander Over Each," - are very typical.

In order to maintain the integrity of the strike the Amalgamated Association, through its appointed Advisory Committee, had formed its own military and police forces in Homestead.<sup>496</sup> The committee also took the expedient of questioning “unknown persons” that its patrols found on the streets of Homestead and “deporting” any of those deemed guilty of engaging in suspicious activity. It also restricted the hours of operation of Homestead’s saloons.<sup>497</sup> The Amalgamated Association’s Advisory Committee, at this point in the strike, had clearly taken upon itself the prerogatives and duties of a shadow government, both for the Carnegie works as well as the municipality of Homestead.<sup>498</sup> A conflict with the duly elected and authorized civil authority appeared inevitable. Some of the elements from the 1877 riot are present in the Homestead situation as well. In 1877 Pittsburgh rose with the striking trainmen against Tom Scott and the power of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The community of Homestead, a model company town, stood against Frick and Carnegie in 1892.

On July 4, Frick sent a formal demand, drawn up by the company’s attorneys, to Sheriff McCleary of Allegheny County. Frick wanted the sheriff to post deputies in the Homestead works in order to protect company property. Sheriff McCleary sent a ridiculously small contingent of twelve deputies to the plant to attempt to accomplish that end. Some two thousand workers led by the Advisory Committee were on hand to confront the sheriff’s unarmed deputies. They refused to allow them to gain access to the plant. Having been

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<sup>496</sup> William C. Oates, “The Homestead Strike-The Congressional View,” *The North American Review* 155, (Sept. 1892): 355-370. “The watchmen of the company were turned away from the works; guards were placed at all the entrances thereto, the river, the streets and roads entering the town were patrolled by guards, and a rigid surveillance exercised over those who entered the town or approached the works.”

<sup>497</sup> *The New York Times*, July 2, 1892. “The Advisory Committee has visited all the saloons and requested that the sale of liquor be restricted and that mobs not be allowed to gather.”

<sup>498</sup> Wolff, *Lockout*, 94. “By July 4 all executive functions of the boroughs of Homestead and Munhall were being administered by the Advisory Committee and its lieutenants, who worked the water, gas and electric stations, enunciated all *ad hoc* laws, and kept the peace.”

prevented from exercising their official function by the crowd, the deputies returned to Pittsburgh with a report for McCleary.<sup>499</sup> The sheriff decided to make his own assessment of the situation in Homestead and arrived with a few of his deputies in the late afternoon of July 4.

In a closed door meeting McCleary informed the Advisory Committee that he was acting in his official capacity as sheriff in order to protect the Carnegie Company's buildings and property. After deliberations the Advisory Committee offered the sheriff up to five hundred workers to serve as special deputies and help guard the plant. In addition they offered to pay the bond of each man who served in that capacity.<sup>500</sup> Sheriff McCleary told the Committee that he would consider their offer. The Committee finally arranged for the sheriff to take a tour of the buildings and grounds to prove that that were secure and that no damage had been done to company property. After his inspection tour concluded, McCleary was warned by the Committee no one, the sheriff included, would be permitted to bring nonunion men into the plant.<sup>501</sup> The strike leadership maintained a consistent resistance to the civil authority, and for the second time that day refused to obey the McCleary's orders.

While the McCleary waited at their headquarters, the Advisory Committee adjourned for a private session. After an hour meeting, the committee invited the sheriff into their conference room. The group's chairman informed the sheriff that the group was dissolving itself as of that moment, and would no longer be responsible for any of the actions of the strikers in Homestead borough. Up to this point the Advisory Committee had been functioning as a quasi-

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<sup>499</sup> *The New York Times*, July 6, 1892. The *Times*' headlines announced: "Deputies Driven Out of Town."

<sup>500</sup> *The Pittsburgh Dispatch*, July 6, 1892. The Committeemen informed the sheriff that they were as anxious as anyone to preserve the peace, and offered the men " 'to act as your deputies. They will serve without pay and will perform their duty as sworn officers of the law; even though it could cost them their lives. Furthermore, the committee will give bond of either \$5,000 or \$10,000 for each man, no matter how many, that they will do their duty' ."

<sup>501</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 6, 1892.

government body. But in all of its actions it was functioning illegally, and some its members would have charges of treason preferred against them after the strike was over. To many, that which had transpired thus far in Homestead seemed nothing less than an insurrection.<sup>502</sup> But when the Committee dissolved itself on July 5 there was no longer any effective authority, legal or extralegal, capable of maintaining law and order in Homestead.

In the early morning hours of July 6 over three hundred Pinkerton detectives, loaded onto two covered barges, especially purchased and outfitted by the Carnegie Steel company, were being towed up the Monongahela by tugboat. The spacious barges were strengthened by armor plate above the water line and housed bunks, stoves, food, rifles and ammunition.<sup>503</sup> It appeared that the Frick had intended the employment of the Pinkertons to be an extended one. Unable to steel the resolve of Sheriff McCleary, Frick intended to use his hired army of Pinkertons to take back the Carnegie works. The Pinkertons planned to make a landing on the company wharf, disembark with their weapons, and then proceed on to occupy the Carnegie works. But the community of Homestead had been alerted. The leadership assumed that the detectives were going to arrive by boat, as all the land entrances were blocked by picket lines, and blasts on factory whistles in the early morning darkness confirmed the fact. The prospect of the Pinkertons' arrival electrified the already highly charged atmosphere in Homestead.

People poured out of their homes when the alarms were sounded. Men, women and children turned out into the streets carrying a variety of weapons. From all accounts the mob

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<sup>502</sup> Kuritz, "The Pennsylvania State Government and Labor Controls," 224, 228.

<sup>503</sup> James D. Horan and Howard Swiggett, *The Pinkerton Story* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1951), 228.

was heavily armed and ready for a fight.<sup>504</sup> The Amalgamated Association leadership was no longer able to exercise any semblance of control over the crowd.<sup>505</sup> Some six thousand people converged on the plant, overwhelmed the protective barriers, and massed at the Carnegie company's wharf.<sup>506</sup> Despite the exhortations of their leaders cautioning against the use of violence, gunfire was soon directed at the both the tugs and the barges filled with Pinkerton men. The Pinkertons broke out their encased rifles and ammunition and quickly responded with fire of their own directed at the shooters on the riverbank.<sup>507</sup>

There were many more such exchanges in an intense firefight that lasted almost twelve hours. The Pinkertons made several attempts to land, but on each occasion they were driven back by withering fire from the entrenched force on the banks of the river. The men and women on the riverbank were well supplied with ammunition and arms, and they were able to maintain a steady rate of fire from their prepared defensive positions throughout the rest of the day.<sup>508</sup> Eventually the tugboat *Little Bill* veered away and made a run for Braddock carrying a number of

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<sup>504</sup> Wolff, *Lockout*, 108. "The exact number of armed strikers will never be known, but several hundred of them carried weapons dating back to the Civil War: carbines and rifles, some shotguns, but mostly pistols and revolvers."

<sup>505</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 16. "But in the frenzy of the Pinkertons' imminent landing, the committee-at this point directed by Hugh O'Donnell, a heater in the 119-inch plate mill-lost control, and the responsibility for Homestead's defense passed to the townspeople in general. O'Donnell and the other leaders of the committee cautioned against violence, but no one listened."

<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*, 17. Krause believes this act of trespass was the turning point that placed the strikers at a great legal disadvantage: "It was precisely at this point that, in swarming across the mill yard and onto the wharf, Homesteaders crossed an important legal boundary, for until now, they had followed the Advisory Committee's stricture against trespassing on company land to avoid any suggestion of an assault on property rights."

<sup>507</sup> *The New York Times*, July 7, 1892 ; *New York Herald Tribune*, July 7, 1892.

<sup>508</sup> *New York Herald*, July 7, 1892. "Homestead was scouted for arms. Homestead was a place where arms abound. There is good shooting along the Monongahela, and nearly every family has some sort of firearm, a musket, a shotgun or sporting rifle. By the time that the *Little Bill* was underway for Braddock, the mill yard was a series of rifle pits."

wounded detectives.<sup>509</sup> The retreat of the tugboat left the Pinkerton men with few options. They were left moored, but effectively stranded near the river's edge. They would have to fight it out or surrender, and neither option held out much hope for their survival. Meanwhile the workers made several attempts to sink the barge. They employed two antiquated, but serviceable, artillery pieces purloined from the local G.A.R. post, but the cannon proved ineffective.<sup>510</sup> On several occasions the strikers used rafts and railroad flatcars loaded with flammable materials in unsuccessful attempts to burn the barges.<sup>511</sup> In the early afternoon the Pinkertons made attempts to surrender, but the mob, either unwilling or unable to recognize the overtures, continued to blaze away at the barges.<sup>512</sup> At one point a rumor circulated that the Pennsylvania National Guard was already on its way to Homestead. This prospect seemed to infuriate the crowd and increase its efforts to annihilate Pinkertons.<sup>513</sup> The gun battle continued unabated.

Late in the afternoon an arrangement to end the battle was proposed. The Pinkertons agreed to surrender to the leaders of the Amalgamated Association if their safety was guaranteed. William Weihe, president of the Association had just arrived from Pittsburgh after an emergency meeting with Sheriff McCleary. He informed the crowd that there had been enough bloodshed,

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<sup>509</sup> The other tugboat, the *Tide*, had broken down before the barges reached Homestead.

<sup>510</sup> *The New York Times*, July 7, 1892. "In the meantime the strikers had received two small cannons. One was planted on each side of the river. They were loaded with pieces of iron and were trained on the barges. Because of the poor aim of the gunners they did little execution, but each shot added to the terror of the Pinkertons."

<sup>511</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 24 .

<sup>512</sup> Wolff, *Lockout*, 122-123. Even after one union leader made an impassioned case for accepting the Pinkerton's surrender the crowd remained adamant in their goal: "Majority sentiment was for destroying the enemy by some brilliant method not yet concocted."

<sup>513</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 25. "On at least two occasions the agents did succeed in raising a banner, but each time the workers shot it down; they heard that the Pennsylvania militia was to be mobilized, and they wanted to dispose of the Pinkertons before public authorities intervened."

and that the only means of preventing a mobilization of the National Guard was to let the Pinkertons leave Homestead.<sup>514</sup> There was loud, vocal resistance to this proposal. These were, after all, the men who had shot down their loved ones, friends, and neighbors. Weihe was insistent, saying that the sheriff had agreed that if the detectives were allowed to leave, no more Pinkertons would attempt to enter Homestead.<sup>515</sup> Hugh O'Donnell then assured the crowd that after the detectives had been escorted to a holding area, warrants for murder would be sworn out in the presence of the sheriff for every Pinkerton man.<sup>516</sup> These guarantees changed the mood and the mind of the crowd. The Pinkertons would be given safe conduct under the authority of the Amalgamated Association's leaders.

The detectives emerged from the barges and filed off between a veritable gauntlet of strikers and townspeople. Once again the union leadership demonstrated that Homestead and its citizens were out of control and that there was no authority in Homestead that was capable of maintaining order. The Amalgamated men proved unable, or in some cases disinclined, to protect their prisoners, and they were incapable of controlling the crowd.<sup>517</sup> The enraged mob set about the detectives hurling rocks, punching, kicking, and other wise physically assaulting the helpless prisoners.<sup>518</sup> The hapless men were taken to Homestead's opera house and confined

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<sup>514</sup> *The Pittsburgh Post*, July 7, 1892. "Mr. Weihe counseled the men to think of the future. By permitting those men to go away it would prevent the militia from coming into Homestead."

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.*, "Mr. Weihe said that the sheriff had promised him that if their men were sent off without further trouble there would be no more Pinkertons come into Homestead."

<sup>516</sup> Wolff, *Lockout*, 124. "The idea- a most unrealistic one- nevertheless received overwhelming support; more important, it indicated that both antagonists were now willing to stop the war."

<sup>517</sup> Blatz, "Titanic Struggles," 111. "Despite the futile efforts of O'Donnell, the Pinkertons were repeatedly beaten by the men and women of Homestead as they walked through the mill grounds and Homestead itself to the town's opera house, where they would be detained until after midnight." ; Paul Krause , *The Battle for Homestead* , 34-35. Krause's narrative is a compilation of the more lurid journalistic accounts of the assault on the prisoners.

<sup>518</sup> *The New York Times*, July 7, 1892. "There were 209 [Pinkertons] on the boat, and as they reached the street they were compelled to run a gauntlet composed of men and women. They

until custody was transferred to sheriff's deputies who arrived around midnight. The Pinkertons were taken to Pittsburgh and then placed on a train bound for Philadelphia and New York.<sup>519</sup> The day's battle had left several people on both sides killed and wounded, and at the end of the day the Carnegie Steel works were still in the hands of the strikers, and they gave no sign of relinquishing their hold.<sup>520</sup>

While the battle was still raging in Homestead, Sheriff McCleary made several attempts to convince Governor Pattison that the Pennsylvania National Guard was the only force capable of restoring order and the rule of law on Homestead.<sup>521</sup> At 10:00 AM, the sheriff sent his first urgent message requesting troops. Pattison, as he had in the Connellsville strike, refused, and informed McCleary that he had to exhaust all available local means to control the violence before the executive would consider sending in the troops.<sup>522</sup> The governor also took the extraordinary step of explaining his refusal in light of Pennsylvania legal precedents.<sup>523</sup> The governor's refusal to send in the troops was met with no small amount of consternation by McCleary and Carnegie Steel executives. Chairman Frick then sent a personal communiqué

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were knocked down with stones, struck with clubs, and kicked almost into insensibility, and otherwise maltreated."

<sup>519</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 41.

<sup>520</sup> Warren, *Triumphant Capitalism*, 85. "Varying statements of the number of people injured and killed as a result of the events of the day range from ten killed (three Pinkertons and seven workers) and over sixty wounded, to sixteen killed."

<sup>521</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 28-30. Krause details the important role of local and state politics in the matter of the relationship between municipal power brokers and the governor in the National Guard's mobilization- a Byzantine labyrinth that is beyond the scope of this study.

<sup>522</sup> Pattison's reply, quoted in: Leon Wolff, *Lockout*, 130. "The local authorities have not exhausted all the means in their power, as they clearly ought to do. Sheriff McCleary up to this time has employed only twelve deputies. If the emergency is such as he says, he ought to have 1,000 deputies."

<sup>523</sup> *The New York Times*, July 6, 1892. "The governor and his legal advisor base their conclusions on a decision in 9<sup>th</sup> Norris, or 90<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Reports, page 420, the case being that of *Allegheny County versus Gibson and others*, which decision Attorney General Hensol considers as clearly establishing the duties of the civil authorities in cases like the disturbances in Homestead."



demanding the immediate deployment of the Guard. Pattison's lack of response also drew scrutiny and criticism from newspaper editors, politicians, and industrialists throughout the United States.<sup>524</sup> As the battle at the mill continued and escalated, McCleary sent yet another telegram to the governor at noon. The sheriff insisted that he had already exhausted the scant means at his disposal, and that National Guard troops were needed immediately. Seemingly unfazed by McCleary's predicament, Governor Pattison's reply demanded a precise accounting of the exact means that the sheriff had utilized in his prior attempts to restore order.<sup>525</sup> To this point in the crisis the governor remained firm in his resolve to withhold the troops.

Sheriff McCleary sent his third request of the day for state assistance at 3:00 PM in afternoon. He informed the governor that no measure short of the National Guard would be able to pacify Homestead. Even if he had a massive force of deputies at his disposal he would be able to accomplish little in the face of the determined resistance he expected at the mill and in the town.<sup>526</sup> Governor Pattison did not reply. Sheriff McCleary, it seemed, was left on his own to deal with the Homestead problem. But Governor Pattison, even as he denied the repeated requests of the sheriff, attempted to ascertain the situation in Homestead through the reports of three Guard officers who had arrived on the scene a few days earlier. One of these men assured the governor that the sheriff had not as yet moved with any real vigor on Carnegie works, and

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<sup>524</sup> Wolff, *Lockout*, "Business leaders, political conservatives and many an editorial writer were incensed over his refusal to summon the state guard instantly."

<sup>525</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 7, 1892. According to the correspondent the governor insisted on an answer to the following question " 'How many deputies have you sworn in and what means have you taken to enforce order and protect property?' "

<sup>526</sup> Quoted in the *Pittsburgh Post*, July 7, 1892. " 'Nothing short of the militia will, I believe, quell the disturbance. What would even a thousand deputies do among so many determined men.' "

that he and his fellow officers had reached a consensus view- the National Guard was not needed as of yet.<sup>527</sup>

On July 7 a group from the reconstituted Advisory Committee requested a hearing with the governor. Pattison agreed to the meeting and it was scheduled for the following day.<sup>528</sup> These men had grown impatient with the machinations of Sheriff McCleary and the local politicians who seemed determined to bring the National Guard to Homestead. The Advisory Committee was equally determined to keep the troops out and gave the governor its own assessment of the current situation. In their meeting with the governor

they assured him that no intervention was needed in Homestead, as it had remained quiet since the gun battle of July 6. Hugh O'Donnell, speaking for the group, declared that all was peaceful at the mills and in the town, and that the company's watchmen had been allowed to enter the plant.<sup>529</sup>

The governor informed the Advisory Committee delegation that they must return to Homestead and assist the sheriff in the restoration of order and the return of the Carnegie Steel property to their rightful owners. On a more ominous note, Pattison told the group that he would allow no more interference with the company's property rights, and that he would invoke the power of both the state and the federal government if such interference should continue.<sup>530</sup> The

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<sup>527</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents for 1894*, "Biennial Address of the Governor," 34. One of these officers, a member of my staff, in whose judgment I had the utmost confidence, reported that the Sheriff was then about to make some effort to suppress the disorder, and that the best judgment concurred in the un wisdom [sic] of sending troops at that time."

<sup>528</sup> Ibid.

<sup>529</sup> Paul Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 333-334. "Meanwhile, in Harrisburg, O'Donnell tried desperately to convince Pattison that order had been restored and that the property of Carnegie Steel was secure. In fact, he said proudly, company watchmen were back on the grounds."

<sup>530</sup> *Pennsylvania Executive Documents for 1894*, 34-35. "... further, that if this were not done promptly I would direct the entire military force of the Commonwealth to proceed to Homestead,

Advisory Committee assured him that they would do all in their power to bring about the results that the governor demanded, and would, in any case obey the authority of the state.<sup>531</sup>

Just prior to the arrival of the Advisory Committee delegation, Pattison had received another urgent message from McCleary that essentially recapitulated his requests for state assistance. The governor hesitated and sought an updated situation report from Homestead where, on July 9, Adjutant General W.W. Greenland, who had previously met with the Amalgamated Association leadership, hastened to meet with the Carnegie executives. Greenland had a lengthy conference with Chairman H.C. Frick and Philander C. Knox, chief counsel for Carnegie Steel. In the meeting Greenland was given a detailed account of every event, from July 1 to the present time, from the company's point of view.<sup>532</sup> Frick and Knox expected nothing less than the return of every square inch of company property. Frick also reiterated his plan to run the mills with nonunion men.<sup>533</sup> General Greenland then took a personal tour of the Carnegie works and the town of Homestead. After, at an impromptu press conference, he informed the assembled journalists that he had just sent a message to the governor informing him that no troops were needed.<sup>534</sup> Greenland's remarks seemed intended to let Mr. Henry Clay Frick know that the National Guard was not at the beck and call of the Carnegie Steel Company.

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and if this was not sufficient I would ask for aid from the Federal Government, and that they might as well realize there could be but one result in such a collision.”

<sup>531</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>532</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 9, 1892. “Every point was discussed by the Carnegie people, so that General Greenland might not have the slightest misconception of the whole affair.”

<sup>533</sup> Ibid. “Chairman Frick's determination to run the works as non-union was reiterated. He would not consent to anything other than the complete restoration to the company of their property.”

<sup>534</sup> Ibid., ““There is not in my mind any present necessity for calling out troops’, said he. ‘The men say that they are not in possession of the Carnegie property.’ ”; *Pennsylvania Official Documents*, 35. Governor Pattison hewed to the same line: “In the meantime no communication was received from the Sheriff (July 9), and all the telegrams and other advices which reached me indicated that no troops were necessary.”

Despite General Greenland's optimistic and reassuring report, Governor Pattison was greatly concerned by reports gleaned from his contacts in Homestead and provocative statements made in the newspapers that seemingly challenged the governor to gain control of the situation.<sup>535</sup> Although the town and mills were quiet, there appeared to be no legally constituted authority in control. The Amalgamated Association, an obviously unauthorized body, still controlled the town with its own surveillance system. Several reporters, deemed by the union to be hostile to the strike, were turned out of the town.<sup>536</sup> At 9:00 PM July 10, Pattison received yet another urgent request from Sheriff McCleary for troops. McCleary informed the governor that his efforts to form a posse had not met with much success, and that only a substantial National Guard presence would restore order. After consultation with Adjutant General Greenland the governor then made his decision to send the National Guard to Homestead. Greenland appeared to have an inexplicable change of heart. His report was instrumental in convincing the governor to send in the troops.<sup>537</sup>

Governor Pattison gave the order to mobilize the entire division at 10:30 P.M., and he directed Major General Snowden, Division Commander, to move on Homestead immediately.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>535</sup> *The New York Sun*, July 11, 1892. "The law is defied, ... the Constitution is violated ... daily, ... yet the state has made no move to put down the rebellion." Quoted in: Paul Krause, *The Battle of Homestead*, 335.

<sup>536</sup> *The New York Times*, July 24, 1892. "Delegations of strikers passed through every train, blocking the platforms and the aisles, questioning suspects, and interfering with the business of innocent travelers. Not even during the war was such an arrogant and arbitrary system of surveillance." ; Leon Wolff, *Lockout*, 138. "Outraged by statements they considered untrue, once more they began ejecting from town sundry newspaper men considered hostile to their cause."

<sup>537</sup> *New York Herald*, July 11, 1892. "The Adjutant General made a thorough inquiry into the situation, and it is understood that he told the Governor that a collision more sanguinary and appalling than that of Wednesday was sure to result if the militia were not sent to Homestead."

<sup>538</sup> *AGR for 1892*, "General Orders No. 19," 297-298. "Major General George R. Snowden, division commander will put the division under arms, and move at once to the support of the sheriff of Allegheny county at Homestead, in order that the peace may be maintained and all persons protected in their rights under the constitution and laws of the state."

“General Orders No.19,” demanded that troops move in “compact bodies” while traveling to Homestead. This directive was meant to prevent a repetition of the 1877 mobilization when numerous units had traveled to their objectives in small groups, and as a result they had been effectively rendered *hors de combat* by mob intimidation at various points in the state.<sup>539</sup> Each soldier was further instructed that firing, if it had to be done at all, was to be done only on an expressed command from an officer.<sup>540</sup>

Despite the late hour and the absence of any advance notice, the National Guard’s three brigades were soon on the move.<sup>541</sup> Adjutant General Greenland issued specific orders and objectives for each brigade. General Gobin’s Third Brigade, headquartered at Lebanon, was to muster and move quickly to the Lewistown depot of the Pennsylvania Railroad. They would then travel west to Homestead. Brigadier General Dechert’s First Brigade, headquartered in Philadelphia, was ordered west to Mt. Gretna, just outside of Harrisburg. The First Brigade was to function throughout the mobilization as a strategic reserve, ready to move in any direction should any strike-related violence flare up in the eastern or central parts of the Commonwealth. Snowden was convinced that two brigades could handle any opposition that might be encountered in Homestead. The Second Brigade, headquartered in Franklin went first to Radebaugh- intended as a staging area- then on to Homestead via the dependable Pennsylvania Railroad.<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> See chap.1, part IV.

<sup>540</sup> *AGR for 1892*, “General Orders No. 19.”

<sup>541</sup> *The New York Times*, September 11, 1892. “No preliminary order had been promulgated to the Pennsylvanians, and the Governor’s decision to order out the guard was not made known to General Snowden until 10:30 o’clock Sunday night, the most inauspicious night and hour in all the week for an unexpected and sudden military movement.”

<sup>542</sup> *Ibid.* 70.

The mobilization proceeded smoothly and quickly. The contrast with the general mobilization of 1877 is profound. Within a few hours of the governor's initial order there were 8, 500 troops, fully armed, with three days' rations and ammunition moving toward their objectives. The troops that detrained in Pittsburgh during the railroad riots of 1877 had only a few rounds of ammunition per man and no food or other supplies of any kind. Company grade officers were responsible for gathering their men as well as making certain that they were supplied. There was no central organizing principle or authority to deliver logistical support in 1877. But in 1892 Division Quarter Master, Colonel G.M. McClelland, was charged with all of the logistical arrangements and the delivery of the mobilization orders. McClelland and his staff had been dealing with the logistical demands of the most recent annual encampments, and had also supported two regiments during the Connellsville strike. They were experienced and discharged their duties with a uniformly high level of competency and efficiency. Officers at every level of command later praised the work of the quartermaster departments.<sup>543</sup>

Breakdowns in communications and transportation, where they did occur, arose because of the Guard's continued reliance on the private sector for basic services. Mistakes and miscommunications arose in those areas and instances where Guard personnel had little or no control. In one notable case the governor's orders did not reach a brigade commander. Brigadier General Wiley of the Second Brigade was informed of his brigade's mobilization when a newspaper reporter phoned him with the news at 1:00 A.M., Monday. This, and other similar communications' delays could be attributed to the Guard's reliance on private telegraph companies and operators to relay important information.<sup>544</sup> Telegraph offices throughout the

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<sup>543</sup> *AGR for 1892, passim*. Officers from the regimental to the division level noted McClelland and his staff's accomplishments in official reports.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.* 70. "There was some delay due to the closure of the telegraph offices on Sunday."

state were closed on Sundays. General Wiley was not able to get orders to his regimental commanders until 8:00 A.M. Monday morning, when the local telegraph offices opened for business.<sup>545</sup>

Albert Logan, quartermaster of the Second Brigade, noted the difficulty of moving supplies from the Homestead depot to the camps due to the scarcity of transport. The state owned very little in the way of draft animals and wagons. The National Guard had always relied on private contractors to move their supplies and equipment during the annual summer encampments. Logan noted that this procedure became problematic during an actual deployment in a Logan noted that this procedure became problematic during an actual deployment in a “hostile” environment. Quartermaster Logan had to contract to hire teams and wagons on his own authority, and many of these were located at some distance from the town.<sup>546</sup>

But despite the difficulties the deployment was a great success and a dramatic improvement over the 1877 debacle. This was an organizational and logistical accomplishment of the first order, one that even the regular Army might envy.<sup>547</sup> The division’s three brigades reached their assigned objectives quickly. The Guard “took” Homestead quickly and with overwhelming force. From the instant General Snowden received his orders to mobilize the

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<sup>545</sup> John L. Marsh, “Captain Fred, Co. I, and the Workers of Homestead,” *Pennsylvania History* 46, no.4 (October, 1979): 291-311, 292. “The ‘at once’ stipulation was all but impossible to comply with, for Wiley was not able to reach his regimental commanders until 8 A.M.- after the telegraph offices opened for business.”

<sup>546</sup> Logan Papers, MSS 0096, Folder 14. “This was no small task. There were few of the local people that were willing to take the chance of displeasing the strikers by allowing their teams to be used for the work; however, after some delay, I did succeed in getting a very few adequate vehicles for this transportation.”

<sup>547</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 87. “Report of Lt. Colonel R.F. Cullinan, Quartermaster General, Division,” (hereafter cited as ‘Quartermaster’s Report’) “The readiness and rapidity with which the troops moved- concentrated by regiments and brigades and finally assembled in complete in complete order and equipment for war service at the point of hostilities- speaks more eloquently for the ‘Pennsylvania system’ of training than anything written in the official reports could.”

division, all units were concentrated and in control of the assigned objectives within twenty-six hours. Snowden demanded that units move not only with the greatest speed, but also under the cover of absolute secrecy. He did not want Homestead to be on the alert for the arrival of the Guard. The mob had been prepared for the arrival of the Pinkertons on July 6, and Snowden did not want his troops to be given a similar reception.

Snowden's demand for movement security led him to keep at least one brigade commander out of the information loop. General Wiley of the Second Brigade was unaware that the Radebaugh stop was to serve as his staging area. Snowden had originally ordered him to proceed first to the Blairsville Intersection then on to Homestead. Only the railroad officials and train crews knew of the stop at Radebaugh.<sup>548</sup> Wiley would later complain of this subterfuge in his official report of the operations of his brigade during the mobilization. He warned that unfortunate consequences could ensue if the senior officers on the trains were not made privy to the same information that the engineers and brakemen had received from their civilian supervisors.<sup>549</sup> This criticism was not just a fit of pique on Wiley's part. The complicity of trainmen in a future labor disturbance might lead to the deliberate misdirection of troop and supply trains. The continued reliance of the National Guard on the railroads, though necessary, was not without its share of potential hazards.

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<sup>548</sup> Marsh, "Captain Fred," 295. "These privileged individuals took Snowden's strictures of secrecy so seriously, however, that Wiley's regimental commanders were carried from place to place and in some instances in the opposite direction from what should have been taken to conform to their orders."

<sup>549</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 24. "[Wiley recommended] that when troops are in motion on trains, that at least the commanding officers of such trains should be informed of their purport, officers might very properly decline to allow a conductor of a railroad train to run them away from the obedience of their proper military orders, without some satisfactory explanation-dire confusion and disastrous results might easily arise."



Security for the troop movements, albeit clumsily executed in a few instances, kept Homestead in suspense as to the arrival time and landing point of the troops. That the National Guard was on the way was no great secret. The Amalgamated Association and the townspeople were well aware of the impending deployment. In a town gathering, held in the Homestead Opera House (and erstwhile temporary jail), there was a long public discussion that centered on the manner in which the National Guard was to be received once they had arrived in town. The Advisory Committee's spokesman, Hugh O'Donnell, assured the crowd that Governor Pattison and the National Guard were on the side of the Homestead community, and ought to be treated, therefore, as allies in the present conflict with the forces of "monopoly."<sup>550</sup> After numerous speeches by local civic leaders and members of the Advisory Committee, it was decided that the Guard would be welcomed with open arms.<sup>551</sup> The people were warned that verbal insults and taunts directed toward the troops would not be tolerated, and that any such outbursts or like displays of disrespect or hostility would be dealt with in a summary manner.<sup>552</sup> Most scholars have interpreted the Amalgamated Association's support for the militia as an acceptance of the inevitable.<sup>553</sup>

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<sup>550</sup> *New York Herald*, July 12, 1892. The correspondent quoted O'Donnell's address: "'This man Pattison is acting wisely and judiciously. He understands our cause, and our position. He is a just man and will not cater to monopoly, and will not permit the troops of our state, the servants of the people, the defenders of the dignity of the Commonwealth... to outrage a community of people situated as we are.'"

<sup>551</sup> *The New York Times*, July 12, 1892. "The latter [Homestead Burgess John McLuckie] addressed the audience as fellow work-men and gentlemen. He declared that the troops were coming as friends and allies, and would be received as such. 'If that unclean Pinkerton horde strikes our shores again,' he said, 'there must be death.'"

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.* "'I move,' said a well-dressed mill hand in the gallery, rising and bringing into view a pair of long corkscrew mustaches, 'that any man who insults the troops be ducked in the Monongahela.'"

<sup>553</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 336. "The truth is that by 11 July, McLuckie-and Homestead- simply had no choice. Most townspeople understood that to engage in armed

General Snowden's obsessive demand for secrecy paid a strategic dividend as the entire force of 6,500- the personnel and equipment of two entire brigades, concentrated at Radebaugh within five hours.<sup>554</sup> The trains then traveled south, arriving at the Munhall station at 9:00 A.M. on July 12. This was a massive show of force- there would be no piecemeal deployment of troops as in 1877, and the use of Munhall as a disembarkation point was especially judicious. Snowden was prudent despite the promises of support from the union and the burgesses. In fact, a large number of townspeople had been gathering at the Homestead station since early morning in anticipation of the Guard's arrival. The use of the Munhall station guaranteed that Homestead would be taken completely by surprise.<sup>555</sup> In contrast to the amateurish deployment of 1877, the National Guard arrived in Homestead with a considerable store of accurate information about the layout of the town and the configuration of the Carnegie Steel works. Officers had been supplied with detailed maps to guide them along their lines of march as their troops moved out to their assigned objectives.<sup>556</sup>

Snowden immediately secured the high ground on the other side of the Monongahela from the Carnegie works. This promontory covered the area where the Pinkertons had attempted to land on July 6, and Guard presence there would have made a cross-river assault by unfriendly

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resistance against 8,500 armed militiamen, as a hand full of steelworkers suggested, was tantamount to suicide."

<sup>554</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 71.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*, July 24, 1892. "The troops embarked without molestation, one company of flankers and skirmishers experiencing no trouble in clearing the streets near Munhall station. The majority of the strikers had gathered in the vicinity of the main station in town." ; Arthur G. Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892* (Pittsburgh: Rawsthorne Printing and Engraving Company, 1893; reprint, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), 119. "Without the firing of a shot or the semblance of a parley, the town, which a week before had been the scene of carnage, was captured, and its guardians were taken so completely by surprise that they scarcely realized what was occurring until the troops were in possession."

<sup>556</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 70.

elements extremely unlikely.<sup>557</sup> The task of occupying the heights was given to Colonel Hawkins who was given a provisional brigade made up of the Fourth, Tenth, and Fourteenth Infantry Regiments along with guns of Battery C of the Second Brigade. Snowden's order to occupy the heights and Hawkins' disposition of his forces was a strategic masterstroke. The guns of the provisional brigade covered the town, the mills, and the surrounding area. Every possible line of approach was under constant observation.<sup>558</sup> Colonel Hawkins' command, though separated from the main force in Homestead, was not out of communication. The provisional brigade, in fact, actually served as a strategic communications link between the Homestead force and the First Brigade encamped to the east at Mount Gretna. Supplying the detached force on the other side of the Monongahela proved to be a fairly simple task. The now famous tugboat, *Little Bill*, along with numerous smaller boats and the railroad bridge, were more than adequate to transfer men and supplies from shore to shore.<sup>559</sup> Supplying the troops with fresh water was another test of Guard ingenuity. Within days fresh water was supplied to both camps via a pipeline to the local pumping station that had been speedily constructed by Guard engineers.<sup>560</sup> The provisional brigade's accomplishments are all the more exceptional in comparison to the haphazard system of communication in Pittsburgh in 1877 when a link could not be secured between the Penn Hotel and the roundhouse in East Liberty.

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<sup>557</sup> Ibid., 71. Snowden later reported that his purpose in this operation was to "guard against interference from evil-disposed persons from places above and below on that side of the river."

<sup>558</sup> *The New York Times*, July 14, 1892. "He [Hawkins] informed a *Times* reporter that his guns were now trained so well that in case of a disturbance in Homestead he could reach any house in it. The big Duquesne and Braddock Mills also come under the line of his fire. His position is indeed strong."

<sup>559</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 73. All of these conveyances, according to Hawkins, "had the capacity to carry over a regiment in twenty-six minutes by actual test."

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 74. "As the water on the hill was entirely insufficient ... Major Patterson, inspector of the Second brigade, ... called for volunteers who, under his supervision, in a few hours, laid pipe line, started the engines and supplied the camp."

Major Lawrence Wetherill, a division staff officer, seized an opportunity to utilize signals training that he had initiated in the Guard during the 1887 encampment at Mount Gretna. On his own initiative Wetherill had requested the War Department to assign a regular Army signal officer to the encampment to demonstrate the use of modern signal equipment.<sup>561</sup> Although initial interest in the technologies and techniques of signaling was high, only one company had maintained regular signals practice by the time of the Homestead deployment.<sup>562</sup> After Wetherill was assigned to the provisional brigade on the far side of the Monongahela, he requested eight men from Company *H* and formed a signals unit. The group was divided evenly between the two camps on each side of the river.

The men had to improvise their own flags from materials at hand in the camp, but were soon receiving and transmitting messages between the two camps. A heliograph unit was obtained from the Pittsburgh Arsenal and within hours of its arrival, despite no prior instruction with the unit, the men had it up and running. The heliograph was especially useful when haze and smoke precluded the use of semaphore signals. Wetherill closed his official report of his duties in Homestead by recommending the creation of a permanent signal corps. The service of this provisional brigade and its ersatz signal corps is all the more exceptional when we recall that in 1877 communications could not be maintained by the Guard between the Penn Hotel and East Liberty.

Back on the Carnegie works side of the river, Snowden, on the advice of the division quartermaster, chose a hill overlooking the mill and the town as an encampment for the

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<sup>561</sup> Ibid., "Report of Major A. Lawrence Wetherill", Major and A.D.C., Division N.G.P.", 102. During the 1887 encampment "an effort was made to interest officers of the Guard in the art of signaling, and to this end, Lieutenant Reber of the regular service was sent by the War Department with a full set of signal equipments, to demonstrate to our troops their working, as then used in the army."

<sup>562</sup> Ibid. This was Company *H* of the Twelfth Regiment, headquartered in Lock Haven.

remainder of his forces.<sup>563</sup> This land was cleared of trees and a number of hard-packed dirt streets had been laid through it. The hill had a commanding view of the mills and the town- any approach by a force with hostile intent would be covered by entrenched positions.<sup>564</sup> Carnegie Steel had purchased the land from the City Poor Farm shortly before the strike began. Ever the philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie had built a schoolhouse on the hill that was intended for the children of his Homestead workers. General Snowden now occupied the school and utilized it as Division headquarters.<sup>565</sup> Troops were quickly deployed, but did not enter the Carnegie works. Picket lines were emplaced along the entire perimeter of the mill, and guards were posted at all of its entry points.

At noon on July 12, a group representing the citizens of Homestead and the Amalgamated Association had a meeting with Major General Snowden. Snowden was conferring with Sheriff McCleary when the Homestead delegation came into the room. An ex-militia officer spoke for the group and assured the general that the Amalgamated Association and the citizens would cooperate with the Guard in the maintenance of order. General Snowden curtly dismissed the proffered assistance by refusing to recognize the authority or even the

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<sup>563</sup> *Ibid.*, “Quartermaster’s Report,” 87. “By the major general’s order I proceeded immediately to the elevated ground overlooking the Carnegie-Phipps works and the boroughs of Munhall and Homestead, and selected the positions to be occupied by the troops, reported the available ground within an hour, and upon the approval of the sketch by the major general commanding, indicated [to all units]...the locations assigned and the distances and formations of the camps.”

<sup>564</sup> *The New York Times*, July 24, 1892. “The hill which was selected for camp on the Homestead side of the Monongahela is steep, barren of trees, intersected here and there by newly-cut streets ... . It was the best spot in the vicinity, tactically and strategically, that could have been chosen.”

<sup>565</sup> Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, 337. “As Carnegie had indicated when the deal was signed, the firm would always make good use of this land.”

existence of an Amalgamated Association or Citizens' Committee.<sup>566</sup> General Snowden then advised the delegation that the best way for all citizens to cooperate in the maintenance of the peace was to submit to the lawful authority of the county sheriff. The delegation assured the general that such had been the case since the beginning of the troubles. Sheriff McCleary, present throughout the exchange, then stated that he had received little if any cooperation and submission from the union or the citizens.<sup>567</sup>

The delegation then proposed that the Guardsmen participate in a parade complete with four brass bands. This event would serve as a formal welcome to the soldiers and a way to show the people's appreciation for their new friends. The proposal was a shrewd public relations ploy on the part of the union. After all, what National Guard officer could resist the opportunity to participate in a grand review? The event would also serve as a means for the workers and townspeople to fraternize, and thus provide a venue for the people to reach out to those men in the ranks who might be favorably disposed toward the goals of the strikers. But once again Snowden disappointed the delegation. He asserted that there was no need for such a welcome because the National Guard should be naturally welcomed in any community in the Commonwealth. Snowden then added that he and his men were there for serious purposes and had no time for such distractions. A *Times* correspondent who reported on the meeting, noted that the delegation, after being dismissed by General Snowden, walked away in sullen silence. The once festive mood in Homestead now turned to one of "abject submission".<sup>568</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 75. In addition to the Amalgamated Association and the Citizens' Committee, Snowden also refused to recognize "any other society or organization, social, political, religious, or otherwise for the purpose of preserving the peace, not authorized by the law to assist."

<sup>567</sup> Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892*, 121-122.

<sup>568</sup> *The New York Times*, July 13, 1892. The correspondent's version is the most dramatic of the sources for this encounter. General Snowden's response to the offer of a parade can only be

The worst fears of the union men and the community were realized on July 15, when Carnegie Company began to transport non-union workers from its Pittsburgh offices to the Homestead plant. It was Frick's stated intention to restart steel production without coming to terms with the Amalgamated Association. For days the boats plowed up the Monongahela delivering replacements to the temporary housing that Frick had built behind the security provided by the plant fences and National Guard checkpoints.<sup>569</sup> The Carnegie Company also used the trains to run non-union men into Homestead. The potential for violence was heightened by the fact that the men would have to walk through the town to the mill entrances, and often had to face an irate reception committee. In many cases the troops of the National Guard provided an armed escort for these men to the plant entrances, a sight that further infuriated the strikers and their supporters.<sup>570</sup> The Carnegie Company brought in hundreds of replacements to run the mill. Union men soon broke ranks with the Amalgamated and sought employment under the terms imposed by the company. At this point General Snowden began a moderately paced withdrawal of Guard units from Homestead. The last troops of remaining companies of the Fifteenth Regiment quietly departed Homestead on October 13.

The deployment was the longest to date in the history of the Pennsylvania National Guard. The service was difficult but mainly uneventful. Outside of the security details and

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described as arrogant pomposity: "I don't want any of that brass band business while I'm here. I want you to understand that I am master of this situation."

<sup>569</sup> Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892*, 124. "Similar trips were made every day thereafter, the safe arrival of the first batches of recruits having emboldened others. Once the ball was set rolling, the firm experienced little trouble in securing men." ; Paul Krause, *The Battle for Homestead*, "Hundreds of troops patrolled the mill yard and the river and rail approaches to it, and sentries manned the entire perimeter of the works, which had been enclosed by Frick's fence."

<sup>570</sup> J. Bernard Hogg, "The Homestead Strike of 1892," (Ph.D. diss.: The University of Chicago, 1943), 33. "Henceforth the sight of men being marched from the railroad to the river under the protection of a company of militia became common, to the great anger of the striking steel workers."

patrols mounted by the troops, the “Battle of Homestead” turned out to be a rather dull affair for the men. The real tests for the Guard during the Homestead mobilization did not involve combat in the streets against a desperate enemy. The true measure of the National Guard’s progress in efficiency and professionalism can be found in the mundane areas of logistical support and discipline. Governor Pattison’s commitment of the entire division required a massive effort on the part of quartermasters, subsistence, and staff officers. Of course the regimental, brigade, and divisional encampments had provided exceptional practical experience for the logistical demands of actual field service. These annual affairs were planned for far in advance, and despite their serious military purpose they took place in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. Homestead, although not a battlefield, required the long-term maintenance of a substantial force in conditions that were far from ideal, and in the midst of a population that was decidedly uncooperative. The accomplishments of the quartermasters, commissary, and subsistence officers, that have been noted above, were exceptional. The medical department likewise operated in professional and efficient manner over the entire period of the deployment. Surgeon General Louis Read, who had been part of the medical staff during the Johnstown flood mobilization, reported that the medical personnel deserved special commendation for their efforts to maintain sanitary and healthy conditions throughout the lengthy tour of duty.<sup>571</sup> Their work in this area was made all the more difficult by sewage and other wastes emanating from the town of Homestead and its immediate environs. Guardsmen were detailed by the medical officers to apply copious amounts of disinfectant to a number of Homestead’s streets that were adjacent to the camp after first

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<sup>571</sup> *AGR for 1892*, “Report of Surgeon General Louis Read,” 47. “I made three distinct visits to Homestead while the troops were encamped there. I desire, in this connection, to commend the medical officers for their constant vigilance and zeal in the performance of their whole duty, and the effort made to avoid any unfavorable criticism or reproach so far as the medical department was concerned.”



clearing them of refuse. The surgeon general received a number of requests from Homesteaders to expand the sanitary mission of the Guard to encompass the entire borough.<sup>572</sup> Despite the best efforts of the medical staff a number of cases of typhoid fever developed after men had returned to their homes. A few deaths were attributed to the disease and were ultimately the only casualties that the Guard incurred during the deployment.<sup>573</sup>

When the National Guard was mobilized for service in Homestead a number of newspapers speculated on the possibility that the insubordination and mutinies of 1877 would be replayed in Homestead. This, in spite of the fact, that many of the same men had been mobilized earlier in the year for the Connellsville coke strike, and had not wavered in their military obligations. As had been the case in 1877, the men of the Second Brigade were drawn from western Pennsylvania, an area in the forefront of industrialization, thick with basic industries such as steel and coal. Many of the striking workers in Homestead could count friends and relatives among the men enlisted in Guard companies. A number of the men who were mobilized for Homestead were union men themselves who would obviously have a conflict of loyalties in the course of this tour of duty.<sup>574</sup> A New York newspaper reported that public

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<sup>572</sup> Ibid., 46. "The whole town in that vicinity was in a very unsanitary condition. The residents appealed to me to cleanse and disinfect it. This I declined to do, and informed them that the duty belonged to the burgess or board of health."

<sup>573</sup> Ibid., "Report of Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, Commander, Third Brigade," 131. "The filthy conditions of the surroundings of the Homestead in which localities the men were posted, while on duty, left its deleterious effects, and a number of typhoid cases developed among them after their return to their homes."

<sup>574</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 13, 1892. A Printer's union official told the *Post's* correspondent that: "many printers in the city were members of the National Guard, and have gone to Homestead. With them it is a case of non-union labor against unionism, and the fellows do not like it. The printer said at the next meeting of the union there was going to be an effort to make the men leave either the National Guard or the union."

opinion in Pittsburgh on the subject of the loyalty of the men was evenly divided.<sup>575</sup> Once the troops arrived in Homestead there were scattered reports of loose talk from union sympathizers in the ranks, but this was usually overheard by a zealous member of the press corps in one of Homestead's numerous saloons.<sup>576</sup>

Fraternization with the townspeople and strikers posed a serious problem for the duration of the Guard's service in Homestead. Many of the acts of insubordination and outright mutiny during the 1877 labor riots were brought about by the inability of Guard officers to keep their men from mingling with the populace. This was especially the case during the events preceding the gun battle in East Liberty. But Homestead was to be a different matter all together. Immediately upon arrival General Snowden established a sizeable provost guard composed of five companies. The provost guard patrolled the streets of Homestead, assisted the sheriff in serving warrants, and served as a military police unit. In this latter capacity it had only a few occasions to deal with breaches of military discipline and good order, despite the fact that the troops were liberally issued passes to go into the town.<sup>577</sup> During the months long deployment there were three disciplinary infractions registered in the reports of the provost marshal. All three incidents involved varying degrees of public intoxication. Such occasions

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<sup>575</sup> *New York Herald*, July 10, 1892. "Opinion is evenly divided as to how the Pittsburgh troops will behave in the matter The two regiments [Tenth and Fourteenth] are composed almost exclusively of workingmen and it is feared that a large number of these may seek to evade the Governor's call."

<sup>576</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, July 13, 1892. "Some of the soldiers loudly declared that they will stack their arms if they are called upon to protect Pinkertons or non-union men, and this spirit is by no means confined to a few sporadic cases."

<sup>577</sup> *AGR for 1892*, "Report of Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Greene, Officer and Provost Marshal," 96-102.

were so rare that General Snowden and his officers saw no reason to shut down the town's thriving saloon trade or declare that such establishments were off limits to the troops.<sup>578</sup>

A *New York Times* reporter, who investigated the possibility of conflicting loyalties amongst the troops, found that despite the natural feelings of sympathy for the strikers and their loathing of Frick and Carnegie, the Guardsmen affirmed that they would all do their duty. This was true even amongst certified union men who had friends and relatives among the strikers.<sup>579</sup> General Snowden noted that his men held firm even in the midst of a barrage of pro-strike propaganda disseminated by the union men and their various allies in an effort to "seduce" the troops. The troops were subjected to both oral and written harangues, the latter in the form of handbills and broadsheets that appeared in the camp on a seemingly daily basis throughout most of the deployment.<sup>580</sup> Arthur Burgoyne, in his creditable eyewitness account of the Homestead strike did report on one occasion when at least one unit needed more than a mild reinforcement of their duty to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Some men of the Fifteenth Regiment reportedly said that they would hand over their weapons to the strikers should the company make any attempt to start up production with nonunion workers.<sup>581</sup> Outside of this "incident" there are

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<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>579</sup> *The New York Times*, July 13, 1892. "Yes, a good many of us are miners and mill hands, and we naturally are in sympathy with these men. But we are sworn to uphold the law; we fully understand that, and we will do whatever duty calls us to do." Another soldier expressed similar sentiments in the same article: "We hustle for a livin' [*sic*] just like these Homesteaders, and we ain't anxious to fight, but we will fight if we have to."

<sup>580</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 78. "Notwithstanding many attempts at Homestead to seduce them from their allegiance, and the distribution of circulars of an anarchistic nature, calling on them to lay down their arms, or at least not to fire on their friends and brethren, officers and men all stood firmly to their colors."

<sup>581</sup> *The Homestead Strike of 1892*, 124. "... the Colonel caused the regiment to be brought up in line, mentioned the report which he had heard and closed with these words- 'Let any man foolish enough to attempt anything of the kind and I will shoot him down in his tracks.' After this, the militiamen put bridles on their tongues and disaffection was not hinted at." A thorough examination of all other primary sources revealed that Burgoyne relates the only account of this

no other occasions in which the loyalty of the troops wavered. General Snowden's assessment that the troops "held fast to the colors" was the rule in Homestead.

The Guard's steadfast loyalty and obedience did have one striking exception- the Iams affair.<sup>582</sup> Private W.L. Iams, who served in Company K of the Tenth Regiment based in Greene County, uttered a loud cheer when news of the attempted murder of H.C. Frick reached the camp on July 23. Iams was subsequently taken into custody and confined in the guardhouse. Colonel Streator of the Tenth Regiment then had Iams strung up by his thumbs until he apologized for his remark. Iams refused to do so, but on the advice of the regimental surgeon he was cut down and returned to the guardhouse. Within the hour, after receiving the approval of General Snowden, Colonel Streator had Iams literally drummed out of camp. Iams' case became a national *cause celebre* among the strikers and their supporters- not the least because he was denied the benefit of a court martial before the punishments were inflicted. General Snowden was lambasted in the national media for the barbarity of the punishment.<sup>583</sup> Iams later had Streator and Snowden prosecuted for assault but these officers were acquitted and their conduct was deemed justifiable. But for all the attention the incident received, the behavior of Iams was, as General Snowden

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incident, rendering it of doubtful value to any subsequent research on instances of insubordination or mutiny at Homestead.

<sup>582</sup> The following summary is taken from sources that provided a wealth of detail on the incident and its consequences for all those involved. Primary source accounts include lengthy articles in *The New York Times* on July 25, July 30, and August 6, of 1892 ; Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892*, 151-154. General Snowden's account is naturally tilted in favor of his action in the case. It can be found in: *AGR for 1892*, 78-80.

<sup>583</sup> *New York Herald*, July 31, 1892. "We find it impossible to believe that any useful result was accomplished by the physical suffering of Iams. It certainly did not benefit him, and there is no proof or indication that it produced a better feeling or higher state of efficiency among the troops at Homestead."

reported, the only occasion in which any member of the National Guard openly expressed any sort of contentiousness during the deployment.<sup>584</sup>

Unlike their predecessors in 1877, the Guard of 1894 remembered which side that they were on and performed their duty as professionals in spite of any sentiments or emotions that might have dictated a rejection of their military obligations. The Homestead mobilization proved that the men of the Pennsylvania National Guard were soldiers first and foremost while they were in the service of the Commonwealth. Homestead was also a proving ground for the relatively new state military code enacted by the General Assembly in 1887. The increased levels of state support, training innovations, and an increased emphasis on drill, discipline, and professionalism had paid significant dividends during the lengthy deployment. Brigadier General J.P.S. Gobin, the commander of the Third Brigade, remarked that all aspects of the Guard's service during its tour of duty in Homestead had received great praise from military authorities across the nation.<sup>585</sup> Arthur G. Burgoyne's eyewitness account of the strike, though sympathetic

with the goals of the strike, gave grudging praise to the progress that the Guard had achieved over the years since the railroad riots.<sup>586</sup> One modern historian of the labor movement

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<sup>584</sup> *AGR for 1892*, 78. "There was one man only out of 8,615 who forgot his oath and disgraced his uniform by expressing open sympathy with the enemy, Private William L. Iams, company K, Tenth Infantry."

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, 131. "This tour of duty of the Guard has become part of the history of the state and been subjected to the criticism and the comment of military men throughout the nation. The rapid concentration, the provision for transportation, the organization of the several departments, the zeal and military devotion of officers and men are certainly creditable in the highest degree."

<sup>586</sup> Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892*, 110. "General Sherman said at the Garfield inauguration that the Pennsylvania militia were the best body of troops in the National Guard of the country and, if confirmation of the accuracy of his judgment were needed, the Homestead 'campaign' furnished it in amplest measure."

in Pennsylvania observed that the occupation of Homestead was an indication of the operational proficiency of the “new” National Guard.<sup>587</sup>

#### IV. “Buffalo and Homestead”

The Guard’s first deployments since 1877 placed on display a new, and much more efficient, National Guard. The relief effort in Johnstown was but an indication, a glimpse, of its potential. The employment of the Guard as peacekeepers during the labor disputes in Homestead and Connellsville revealed that the civil authorities and the field officers had employed the Guard judiciously and deftly in explosive environments. Corporate interests discovered that the National Guard was not their private enforcer, and that they would have to rely on their own police forces to police their labor problems. Pennsylvania governors had established a high threshold for deploying troops. In the eyes of the executive power, the Guard was the pacification force of last resort. Other states also had their share of strike related violence that ultimately involved the deployment of their National Guard forces. In 1892 a railroad strike erupted in Buffalo, New York that resulted in the deployment of the state’s entire National Guard contingent. Given that both deployments happened in the same year and on the same scale, and that both organizations enjoyed the high esteem of military men, it would be instructive to compare the two deployments to gauge Pennsylvania’s progress since 1877.

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<sup>587</sup> Blatz, “Titanic Struggles,” 112-113. “The militia, whose operations had been professionalized in the years following its disastrous service in 1877, quickly established itself in strategic positions overlooking the town and moved to guard Carnegie’s plant.”

The entire complement of the National Guard of the state of New York was mobilized for riot duty in the summer of 1892. The trouble began in the city of Buffalo on August 14 when a strike by the switchmen of the Erie and Lehigh Valley railroad turned violent. Freight cars were burned and switches were sabotaged in the Buffalo yard. The next day a sheriff's posse was disarmed and turned away from the freight yards by striking workers and their numerous supporters. After this confrontation the sheriff requested that the military department commander, General Peter Doyle, call out his troops. General Doyle immediately placed his two brigades on alert and ordered them to prepare for immediate service.<sup>588</sup> The New York system permitted regional military district or department commanders to call out their troops for active service on the request of a county sheriff and the writ of a superior court judge.<sup>589</sup> General Doyle was not obligated, under the existing military laws to notify either the governor or the state's adjutant general. The regional commander simply issued mobilization orders to his company officers, a process that bypassed the regimental and brigade staffs completely. As result regimental and brigade quartermasters and commissaries had a delayed response.

Before noon on August 16 Doyle ordered two regiments from his brigade into Buffalo to take up positions within the train yards. The first in a series of spectacular logistical and communications blunders was played out when these "local" units arrived for duty. The troops had arrived with neither tents nor rations.<sup>590</sup> One day later General Doyle committed the

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<sup>588</sup> *New York Herald*, August 16, 1892. "General Doyle's order to his troops: ' They will wait at their headquarters under arms till a call has been made for them to do active service in putting the lawlessness at East Buffalo and beyond.'"

<sup>589</sup> *The New York Times*, January 4, 1893. "The demand of the sheriff was supplemented by the requisition of a Judge of the Supreme Court in that department... ."

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, August 17, 1892. "The guardsmen slept last night with no tents, and many of them came near getting no breakfast this morning, their rations being delayed until 9 o'clock."

remainder of his brigade. The two thousand Guardsmen in Buffalo continued to have difficulty securing enough tents and rations- some units had difficulty securing two partial meals a day.<sup>591</sup> Hungry, tired troops patrolled the rail yards and lines, and in the course of this duty a number of men were killed and injured in accidents. One man was killed by an accidental discharge of another soldier's weapon, while a second was crushed by rolling stock in the yard. Fatigue and hunger must have played a role in these unfortunate events.

On August 20 Governor Roswell P. Flower alerted the personnel of the entire New York state Guard to be ready to move on Buffalo. As with the case of General Doyle's mobilization order, the governor had to send an individual directive to each company commander on a statewide basis. Once the movement order was given, troops from all over the state were on their way to Buffalo. But the Guard's commissaries and quartermasters had made little or no preparation for their arrival, and *The New York Times* noted the haphazard, chaotic, and manifestly unplanned delivery of the troops to Buffalo. But it was, according to the critics, the system, rather than the personnel that created the difficulties for the men.<sup>592</sup>

The National Guard Ordnance Department was normally responsible for transportation, quartering and subsistence. But during the Buffalo mobilization was unresponsive and ineffective. The Ordnance Department, which had always received high praise for its support during the annual encampments, failed miserably in Buffalo.<sup>593</sup> It issued tents,

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<sup>591</sup> *New York Herald*, August 18, 1892.

<sup>592</sup> *The New York Times*, September 11, 1892. "Those who have criticized general officers for their failure to provide suitable quarters and substantial food for the troops who were *dumped* (my ital.) into Buffalo overlook the fact that the system rather than the officers was at fault."

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*, August 21, 1892. "The Ordnance Department, which, under ordinary conditions would have been called upon to undertake the responsibility of providing not only for the transportation, but the comfort of the troops in the matters of quarters and subsistence, has in this emergency been relegated to the position of merely being a bureau of supply or an issuing depot."



food, and other supplies but made no provision for their prompt delivery to the troops in the field. The editors of the *Times* contrasted the bungling at Buffalo with the smooth professionalism of the Pennsylvania National Guard at Homestead.<sup>594</sup> Furthermore, noted the editors, the Pennsylvania system was modeled on the system used by the regular Army and each of the departments functioned autonomously and with a high degree of efficiency during the Homestead deployment.<sup>595</sup> The *Times* also noted that Pennsylvania was able to keep the *per diem* cost of the ample soldier's ration at sixty-five cents, while the New York rate was one dollar.

The difficult conditions that the New York Guardsmen faced ultimately had an impact on the morale of the troops. A Lieutenant Haws of the Twenty-Second New York Infantry Regiment, bitterly complained that the privations and the lack of any sort of meaningful duty made the men question the need for the deployment in the first place. They noted that there was no riot in progress and they had not seen a striker since they had arrived.<sup>596</sup> In a number of cases desperate men were forced to forage in the city in order to provide for themselves. A number of private homes and construction sites were stripped of available lumber for cooking and campfires. Once again the *Times* felt obliged to contrast this sorry state of affairs with the

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<sup>594</sup> Ibid., "Commissary and Quartermaster officers get plenty of opportunity to practice- down to the regimental level in camps. That they managed to keep up in practice was amply demonstrated at Homestead, where camp equipage and subsistence were on the ground conjointly with the troops."

<sup>595</sup> *The New York Times*, September 11, 1892. "Each department looked strictly after its own business, and everything was working in the smoothest and most harmonious manner."

<sup>596</sup> *New York Herald*, August 20, 1892. "We have 500 men in camp here and it is a miserable hole. The men have had nothing to eat since they left New York and there is no place to buy anything. We have no tents, and will have to lie on the ground. We can't imagine why we have been brought here. There has been no riot. We have seen no assemblage of strikers."

Homestead “success story”.<sup>597</sup> In addition to assaults on property there were scattered reports of Guardsmen using violent means to secure provisions. In at least one instance hunger drove a soldier to attack a local merchant and threaten bystanders with his bayonet. In his defense the *Herald* reported that he had been drunk at the time- a serious breach of military discipline, caused, most likely, by boredom and hunger.<sup>598</sup> Although such serious breaches of discipline and attacks on civilians and their property were rare occurrences during the Buffalo deployment, one looks in vain for any similar displays among the Pennsylvania troops at Homestead.

The “home front” was kept abreast of the difficult conditions and the continued privations that the men experienced in the Buffalo camps. The men of the Fifth and Tenth Separate Companies of Newburgh sent harrowing accounts of their first few hours in Buffalo after their long cross-state journey in overcrowded railroad cars. When they arrived in Buffalo they found that no preparations had been made to receive them and, after a long hot confinement in their “cattle cars”, they had to fend for themselves.<sup>599</sup> Members of the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Separate Companies sent similar messages to their hometowns about the lack of provisions and adequate quarters. In this particular case relatives and friends sent food and

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<sup>597</sup> *The New York Times*, September 11, 1892. “On the work of Pennsylvania’s Quarter master General, Colonel Cullin, in Homestead: “Before he had been on the ground an hour Colonel Cullin purchased 100 cords of wood which was promptly distributed among the regiments.”

<sup>598</sup> *New York Herald*, August 21, 1892. “A unknown soldier of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment threatened a butcher with a bayonet in order to get something to eat. The spectacle of a man half-crazed and the other half filled with ‘Buffalo booze’ running up and down the Elk st (*sic*) market, stabbing everybody right and left with an ugly looking bayonet was seen today.”

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*, August 22, 1892. “It took them fourteen hours to make the run in over-crowded cars, and it was hours after getting into the hot Buffalo yard before they were allowed to disembark. It was a further twenty-four hours before they had anything to eat, and they took up quarters in a small, leaky freight storage shed where they had to sleep sitting up.”

clothing to the soldiers in Buffalo, providing through private means what the state could, or would, not.<sup>600</sup>

In its analysis of the failings in Buffalo, the *New York Times* noted that the governor's staff was composed of men with little in the way of military knowledge or practical experience.<sup>601</sup> A staff assignment was more than likely a political payoff rather than a position that a man earned by merit. The Ordnance Department was especially culpable in the Buffalo events, but the men in the ranks had to shoulder their share of guilt as well. During the New York Guard's annual camps of instruction private contractors provided for shelter, food, and other basic material needs. Their camp living quarters, either tents, or permanent barracks, were provided by the state. The men did not have to learn how to pitch a tent in the kind of conditions that they would encounter during actual service in the field. While the men were in camp their meals were cooked and served to them by companies that won bids to provide those services. New York Guardsmen typically had their camp meals served to them by white-gloved waiters. In Pennsylvania the annual camp regimen demanded that the men take care of themselves. They set up their own tents and cooked the daily rations themselves. Perhaps most distressing to the *Times* was that an ample ration for each soldier was provided by the state of Pennsylvania at a cost to the taxpayers of sixty-five cents per day. In contrast, the New York ration came in at one dollar per day. The efficiency of the Pennsylvania system apparently served to lower subsistence costs and the burden on the taxpayers.

A correspondent who covered both the Homestead and Buffalo strikes did observe that the New York troops were superior to their Pennsylvania counterparts in appearance of equipment, ceremonials, and military courtesy. In Homestead the relationships between officers

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<sup>600</sup> *The New York Times*, August 23, 1892.

<sup>601</sup> *Ibid.*, September 11, 1892. The following are taken from this lengthy article.

and men were entirely too informal, and fraternization was the rule rather than the result of a forgivable lapse of judgment.<sup>602</sup> Also noted was the egalitarian spirit that prevailed in the area of military courtesy. Pennsylvania Guardsmen were chronically slack in showing proper respect and rendering tribute to their superiors. But the *Times* also observed that consistently high ratings in camp ceremonials, parades, and spit and polish inspections were no real tests of a military organization. The Buffalo mobilization had been a proper test and the New York National Guard was found wanting. Homestead had been a similar test for the Pennsylvania troops and they had performed superbly.<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>602</sup> Ibid., "In Homestead officers and men hobnobbed altogether too familiarly, officers were called by their Christian names, and were seen daily in uniform standing up at a bar and drinking with their men."

<sup>603</sup> Ibid. , "But a riot breaking out at one end of the State, for the suppression of which, troops are called out from the others, is a real test of the efficiency of the militia in all its departments and approximates the conditions of actual warfare."

## Chapter Five

After Homestead there were four strike mobilizations spread out over eight years. It appeared as if the Guard was being employed as an anti-labor constabulary. But a closer examination of each of the four incidents reveals that the pattern that emerged for strike mobilizations in Connellsville and Homestead remained constant. In each case, governors were reluctant to use state troops, and did so because lawlessness and violence threatened to devolve into anarchy. In Jefferson County striking coke workers and miners took hostages in order to compel other workers to join their ranks. The Guard was mobilized in the anthracite region to prevent violence from escalating after gunfights between miners and company police had killed and wounded many on both sides of the picket line. It also faced the challenge of the dealing effectively with a working class increasingly composed of immigrants from southeastern Europe.

The Guard acquitted itself admirably in each deployment, displaying a high degree of efficiency and professionalism in very difficult circumstances. Industrialists found that the Guard was a reluctant “ally” in the war between capital and labor. State authorities did not want to continue to pay for the Guard mobilizations. Guard officers noted the deleterious effect of strike duty on recruitment. Increasingly the officer corps looked upon strike duty as beneath the dignity of an organization that took great pride and satisfaction in its military

professionalism. As state authorities became increasingly resistant to expensive deployments, corporate interests turned to the use of Coal and Iron police to protect their interests in increasingly contentious labor disputes. The record indicates that in the hundreds of strikes in the post 1877 period, the National Guard was called up only six times. In the year of the Homestead mobilization there were twenty-nine other strikes of varying size and duration in the Commonwealth, yet the Guard was only deployed once that year. If corporate interests counted on Guard deployments to solve their strike problems the Guard was useless to them. The Guard simply did not have a record of usage that would indicate that they were organized, trained, and deployed a policeman of labor.

The Guard's last strike-related duty was in the 1902. In 1905 the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed legislation that created the Pennsylvania State Constabulary. This organization became the real policeman of labor. Having turned over this aspect of their mission to the Constabulary, the National Guard continued to focus on its preferred role as part of the Army's first-line reserve.

## I. "Jefferson County"

In April of 1894 the United Mine Workers of America ordered a nationwide strike as a response to a steep decrease in miners' wages and the refusal of most operators to bargain with the union in good faith. The mining industry, like most other businesses were experiencing the difficulties associated with the nationwide depression that followed in the wake of the Panic of 1893.<sup>604</sup> Unemployment, sharp wage reductions, and worker desperation soon sparked a general upheaval of labor throughout the United States. This was the time of the Pullman Strike and Coxey's Army. Coal miners went on strike in Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. Pennsylvania coal miners, at the behest of the revitalized UMWA, joined their midwestern brothers and walked out of the mines in the spring of 1894. While many western Pennsylvania coal operators were willing to deal with the UMWA to establish wage standards, they were also in desperate competition with those operators who refused any discussions with the union.<sup>605</sup>

In June of 1894 striking miners seized and occupied the facilities of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company in the small villages of Walston, Adrian, and Anita that were situated

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<sup>604</sup> Robert A. Divine, *et. al.*, *America Past and Present* (New York: Longman, 1999), 624-625. "Business investment dropped sharply in the railroad and construction industries, touching off the worst economic downturn to this point in the country's history."

<sup>605</sup> Perry K. Blatz, "Titanic Struggles, 1873-1916," 114. "However, constant concern over how competitors might undercut those who signed with the union made it practically impossible to reach agreement or to enforce such limited agreements as were negotiated. Desperate to stop wage cuts, in April 1894 the UMWA ordered a nationwide strike after yet another conference with the operators collapsed."

on the outskirts of Punxsutawney in Jefferson County.<sup>606</sup> The majority of the miners were Italian and Slavic immigrants who were among the first arrivals in the massive wave of immigration from southeastern Europe that began after 1890. Support for the strike was by no means complete. Many of the English and Irish miners disassociated themselves from the actions of their volatile co-workers and refused to participate in the occupation of the R&P's works. This, in turn, led to some violent confrontations within the mining community itself. Those miners who refused to cooperate either left town or were kept under virtual house arrest by armed strikers and their sympathizers.<sup>607</sup>

The striking workers had been motivated to seize the R&P's facilities by rumors that the company was planning to bring in replacement workers to reopen the mines under the protection of Pinkerton detectives and Coal and Iron Police.<sup>608</sup> By June 21 they were well armed and had prepared defensive works in preparation for a confrontation with the company's hired guns. The Pittsburgh newspapers noted that many of the strikers were veterans who had served in the armies of their native countries and knew how to defend a position.<sup>609</sup> During the afternoon of June 21 Sheriff D.L. Gourley of Jefferson County sent a report to Governor Pattison indicating that the crisis was deepening. Strikers were marching through the towns of Walston,

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<sup>606</sup> *Pittsburg Post*, June 22, 1894. "There are 2,000 strikers in possession of the town of Walston and they are determined to hold it."

<sup>607</sup> *Ibid.* "They have driven all the English speaking families who did not sympathize with them from Walston into the surrounding towns. Those who have refused to stand guard duty were taken prisoner and are now in the camp of the rioters."

<sup>608</sup> *Punxsutawney Spirit*, June 20, 1894. "Since Saturday the foreign element in Walston and Adrian have been in a more desperate mood than ever. They have been excited by wild rumors, by fears of treachery, and a feeling that they have been trifled with. They are constantly adding to their store of arms and act as though they expect to accomplish something by unlawful methods."

<sup>609</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, June 22, 1894. "Nearly all the strikers are Hungarians and Italians. All are armed with guns, many of which have seen service in European wars. The strikers say they are determined to keep 'black sheep' out of the Walston mines, and will defy the state guards as they have defied the sheriff."



Adrian, and Anita seizing hostages and marching them off to their makeshift camp on the outskirts of Walston. He further informed the governor that all of his efforts to enlist a posse had been frustrated due to the extreme fear that pervaded the community. Many of the men called for duty informed the sheriff that they would rather be arrested for refusing his summons to than join a posse and face death at the hands of the mob.<sup>610</sup> In closing Sheriff Gourley insisted that he had exhausted all of his power to restore order and needed the assistance of the National Guard.

But in a reprise of his initial reactions to both the Connellsville and Homestead strikes, Pattison did not immediately acquiesce to Gourley's request for troops. Two regiments from the Second Brigade, the Fifth and Sixteenth, along with the *Sheridan Troop* of cavalry were placed on alert by executive order, but no marching orders were given at that point. Pattison insisted that Gourley supply more information that clearly defined the situation and all of the measures that had been taken by local authorities to handle the situation.<sup>611</sup> Pattison, like those Commonwealth governors that preceded him, insisted that the local authorities were responsible for all aspects of law and order. Maintaining the peace was the proper work of the county sheriffs, not the National Guard, and he felt little pressure to quickly recover the property of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company. Both the newspaper accounts and the state records contain no indication that company officials were involved in the situation in any capacity. The governor was ultimately moved to action by Sheriff Gourley's second communication that was sent around midnight June 21. The sheriff emphasized that the situation in Walston was deteriorating by the hour, and that the strikers not only controlled the mines and affiliated works-

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<sup>610</sup> *AGR for 1894*, xii. "All my endeavors to secure deputies have been useless as the overwhelming number of the armed mob terrorize all the citizens here so that they will submit to arrest before going to certain death."

<sup>611</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, June 22, 1894. "The sheriff's telegram was indefinite regarding the riots of the Walston miners, and the governor countermanded his order to the National Guard, awaiting further information from Walston."

they also controlled the town.<sup>612</sup> Civil authority at Walston in 1894, as had been at Homestead in 1892, had been usurped by illegal means. Pattison's only recourse was the use of state power to restore order and the rule of legitimate authority.<sup>613</sup>

The Fifth (Altoona) and Sixteenth Infantry (Franklin) Regiments of the Second Brigade, along with the *Sheridan Troop* (Tyrone), all under the command of Brigadier General John Wiley were ordered to entrain for Punxsutawney, the most convenient railroad junction in the area.<sup>614</sup> Colonel Burchfield of the Sixteenth, advancing from Oil City, and Colonel Hulings of the Fifth, moving from Altoona, coordinated their initial movements perfectly; both regiments arrived in Punxsutawney within one minute of each other, both trains moving into the city from different directions at 6:25 A.M. on June 22.<sup>615</sup> The *Sheridan Troop* of cavalry had traveled with the Sixteenth Regiment so that all of the troops were ready to move out to Walston within an hour of their arrival. Once again the National Guard displayed the logistical efficiency that had become the organization's byword. All necessary stores and tentage had arrived with the troops, and the cavalry's horses were quickly unloaded and saddled.

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<sup>612</sup> Ibid. "Your message of yesterday just now received. Mob still in possession of properties. Have armed pickets out and are controlling the town. I cannot control the situation and again urge the militia to assist me."

<sup>613</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents*, "Governor Robert E. Pattison's Biennial Message, 1895," 24. "I have never permitted the intervention of military power until satisfied that the civil authority has been exhausted in an effort to maintain the peace; and I have never hesitated when this was demonstrated to lend the military arm of the State government to maintain civil order and the supremacy of the law, to protect property from destruction and to prevent riot, arson, and murder."

<sup>614</sup> Many of the men in the ranks were from mining areas themselves and were familiar with the kind of men that they might have to contend with. This is yet one more indication that the Guard was not a upper or middle-class preserve. See *Pittsburgh Post*, June 22, 1894. "The troops ordered out live in counties surrounding the seat of war, and know the kind of men they have to deal with."

<sup>615</sup> *AGR for 1894*, "Report of Brigadier General John Wiley, Commander, Second Brigade," lxxviii.

Their objective, the village of Walston, was a two-mile march from Punxsutawney's train depot, and it was conducted according to the latest directives in the Army's field service manual. The detachment was prepared for combat, and the formation moved with justifiable caution given reports of homemade cannon and heavily armed strikers manning picket and trench lines near the town. The cavalry formed an advance screen, flank guards were projected along the length of the march, and a rear guard followed up the column. When they arrived at the objective, skirmish lines were thrown out into the steep, undulating ground surrounding Walston. The troops found evidence of defensive preparations, but met no opposition from the strikers who had abandoned their positions before the Guard's arrival.<sup>616</sup> The Fifth Regiment marched out to the village of Adrian, a distance of about a mile and set up camp. The Sixteenth Regiment encamped at Walston. Both units quickly laid out their camps and set up their canvas. General Wiley established his headquarters at the Pantall Hotel in Punxsutawney.

Communications between the various commands appeared, at first, to be a difficult matter. Due to the heavily forested and hilly terrain, heliographic and semaphore signals were of no use. Albert Logan, quartermaster of the Second Brigade, explored the feasibility of establishing telephone communications between the outposts. Logan checked with the telephone company, but was told that the National Guard would have to wait several days for the equipment and labor to arrive on site. Logan took matters into his own hands. He secured telephones from the R&P Coal Company and purchased wire from local hardware stores. Work details from the Sixteenth Regiment began stringing the wire on Friday afternoon. Within thirty-six hours Wiley's headquarters in Punxsutawney was in communication with the camps in

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<sup>616</sup> *AGR for 1894*, lxxviii. "A cannon or two were found but everything else had been removed, the knowledge of our coming having been heralded. There was still the evidence of defensive preparations. We met with no opposition."

Walston and Anita. This was the first recorded use of telephone communication in the field by the Pennsylvania National Guard. The fact that it was accomplished in adverse conditions and with inexperienced personnel was a tribute to the guard's openness to innovation and its technical skill.<sup>617</sup>

As in all of the post 1877 Guard mobilizations there was no opposition and very little in the way of resistance during the Walston deployment.<sup>618</sup> Governor Pattison noted that the Guard's high degree of efficiency and professionalism, as well as the rapid deployment of sizeable forces, forestalled the combative urges of most of the mobs that the Guard had to confront.<sup>619</sup> Constant mounted and foot patrols were conducted in order to maintain the peace and give the men practical experience in the field. While there was little in the way of action during the relatively brief tour of duty, there were two occasions that lent themselves to the potential for violence.

The R&P Coal Company used the presence of the Guard as an opportunity to introduce replacement workers into the mines, a move that had been expected by both the strikers and the media.<sup>620</sup> On Sunday, June 24 a locomotive pulling one car filled with a number of sheriff's deputies and a contingent of at least fifty Coal and Iron Police made the run out to the

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<sup>617</sup> Logan MSS, "This, I think, was a great complement to the versatility of the citizen soldier to meet any conditions that may arise."

<sup>618</sup> The official history of the *Sheridan Troop* of cavalry noted that many of the men mobilized were not needed. Francis D. Beyer, *History of the Sheridan Troop and Troop B Pennsylvania National Guard* (Tyrone, P.A.: privately printed, 1962), 21. "Evidently troops had been arriving, but were not employed at once, and the men of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Regiments complain that they do not seem to be needed."

<sup>619</sup> "Governor Robert E. Pattison's Biennial Message, 1895," 26. "As usually happens in these cases, the mere demonstration of the purpose of State authorities to suppress disorder was sufficient to maintain order without the firing of a gun or the loss of a life."

<sup>620</sup> *Pittsburgh Post*, June 22, 1894. "It is accepted as a general conviction that an attempt will be made without delay to put new men in the mines at Walston and Adrian. That is, the company will break the strike while the troops are here."

mine at Adrian. The strikers had been alerted and gathered in large numbers to confront the force. The crowd was particularly agitated and volatile as it looked upon the deputies and police as the precursor to the introduction of replacement workers. Upon their arrival in Walston, Sheriff Gourley and his men were attacked by the crowd before they detrained. Guns were drawn and a lethal response from the nervous policemen seemed imminent.<sup>621</sup> Having been alerted to the quickly deteriorating situation, Companies *A* and *F* of the Fifth Regiment arrived and deployed quickly into a skirmish line with fixed bayonets. The crowd quickly melted away and the danger passed. No further incidents were noted in the outlying villages of Adrian and Anita and the rest of the Fifth Regiment's tour of duty was uneventful. The *Sheridan Troop* of cavalry had more to contend with in their poor choice of a campsite than with any resistance from the striking miners.

The company also attempted to introduce replacement workers at the Walston works. A group of fifty miners and a squad of Coal and Iron Police arrived in Punxsutawney on the afternoon of June 27. They boarded a special train and were taken to Walston. Once their train had reached its destination a crowd of angry women confronted the workers and the police. Rocks and other debris were thrown at the men. But troops from the nearby camp had been alerted and quickly arrived on the scene. The soldiers methodically formed line, fixed bayonets, and pushed the crowd back. A couple of the women suffered cuts to their hands when they attempted stand their ground. After the Guard's show of force the crowd slowly dispersed and

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<sup>621</sup> *AGR for 1894*, lxxxvi. "One coach loaded with deputies in charge of Sheriff Gourley arrived at Adrian, when the car was immediately surrounded by a howling mob of 1,000 or more men, women, and children, who commenced pelting the inmates of the cars with iron pins, stones, cinders, and clubs."

there were no further incidents of violence.<sup>622</sup> In the week following the confrontations in Jefferson County, the UMWA, unable to negotiate an agreement with the operators, called off the nationwide strike and the miners in Walston, Adrian, and Anita returned to work. National Guard troops were relieved from duty and returned to their home stations on July 2, ending an uneventful, but exceedingly well-executed, twelve-day deployment.

## II. “Into the Anthracite Fields: 1897-1902”

In August of 1897 anthracite coal miners in the vicinity of Hazleton, Luzerne County began a work stoppage at the Honey Brook operations of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company. The action was a response to the tyrannical methods employed by the company’s district superintendent, Gomer Jones. Jones, a Welshman, had nineteen years of experience in the anthracite region and little respect for the work habits of the Slavic and Italian miners who

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<sup>622</sup> *AGR for 1894*, lxxxviii. “As the policemen were giving way and the husbands and friends of those riotous women who had congregated on the hills to the number of three or four hundred started to charge down into the fracas, Captain Windsor was ordered to push the crowd back at the point of the bayonet, which he promptly did.”

dominated the work force in the anthracite fields.<sup>623</sup> Most accounts agree that Jones was difficult and irascible character who was under pressure from the operators to enforce labor discipline and reduce costs. Jones immediately introduced cost-cutting measures that eliminated a number of positions. He also instituted draconian work rules and harsh discipline for the recalcitrant, thereby created oppressive working conditions in the Honey Brook colliery. Jones's new policies had a disproportionate effect on the newly arrived Slavic and Italian immigrant laborers who depended on the entry-level positions that had been drastically reduced.<sup>624</sup>

The harsh and unfair treatment that was being meted out by their employers at the Honey Brook mine was not the only cause of resentment in the anthracite region in the fall of 1897. The depression of the 1890s was responsible for layoffs and reduced many of the miners to half-time employment.<sup>625</sup> In addition the Pennsylvania General Assembly had recently passed a series of laws that were largely motivated by a nativist backlash against the relatively recent wave of southeastern European immigrants who concentrated in those parts of the state where heavy industry predominated. One such law required those men seeking a miner's certificate

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<sup>623</sup> Victor R. Greene, *The Slavic Community on Strike* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 129. "When he first noted the work pattern at the Honey Brook Colliery below Hazleton, the easygoing habits of the workers irked him. He particularly could not tolerate the slowness and inefficiency of the Slav." See also: Michael Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer* (New York: Basic Books, INC., 1978), 17. "Gomer Jones was not fond of Irish laborers and liked the Slavs and Italians even less." ; Donald Miller and Richard E. Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal: Work, Enterprise, and Ethnic Communities in the Mine Fields* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 221. "He knew what he could get out of the miners, even the 'slow-moving' Slavs, for which he had nothing but contempt."

<sup>624</sup> Ibid. "In August of 1897 Jones's efforts to cut costs focused on the first jobs that the immigrants usually had: as weighers, air boys, mule drivers, and breaker boys."

<sup>625</sup> Harold W. Aurand, "A Study in Slavs, Strikes, and Unions: The Anthracite Strike of 1897," *Pennsylvania History*, vol. xxxi, no. 2 (April, 1964): 199-215, 201. "A later reason for their dissatisfaction was the poor economic condition of the industry in the next decade. The depression of the 1890s came early to the coalfields and affected the districts severely."

had to appear before a district mining examining board for an oral competency examination.<sup>626</sup> The original statute, known as the Campbell Act, had been passed in 1889 as a means of keeping incompetent, and therefore dangerous, employees out of the anthracite mines. But in 1897 a supplement to the law required all candidates for miner certification to answer questions in the English language, a stipulation that was obviously intended to reduce the increasing number of immigrant miners.<sup>627</sup>

The General Assembly, mirroring the xenophobic and protectionist mood in the rest of the country, passed yet another anti-immigrant measure in 1897 that further increased the tension and frustration in the coalfields and factories of Pennsylvania. The Act's preamble was a frank statement of the legislature's intention to protect the jobs of American citizens and reduce the pool of immigrant labor competing for those same jobs.<sup>628</sup> The law required employers to pay a three-cent per day "tax" for every immigrant worker on their payroll. The revenue acquired from the tax was subsequently placed in the county treasury with fifty per cent of the total collected set aside for county schools.<sup>629</sup> Each violation drew a one thousand dollar fine- a penalty that few owners took lightly. Business owners typically paid the levy by garnishing the

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<sup>626</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1889*, no.160, 143-144.

<sup>627</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1897*, no. 139, 286-290, sec. 5, 289. "... in no case shall an applicant be deemed competent unless he appears in person before said board and answer intelligently and correctly at least twelve questions in the English language pertaining to the requirements of a practical miner." The original anthracite miner certification law, known as the Campbell Act had been passed in 1889:

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 139, 166-168, *Preamble*, 168. "Whereas it is the duty of the government to enact such laws as shall protect the citizen laborers of America against the laborers of foreign nations who are brought into direct competition with our own workmen in nearly all the different branches of employment."

<sup>629</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 1. "That all persons, firms, associations, or corporations employing one or more foreign-born un-naturalized male persons over twenty-one years of age within this Commonwealth, shall be and are hereby taxed at the rate of three cents per day for each day of such foreign-born un-naturalized male person as may be employed."



wages of their workers, a practice that further increased the anger within the embattled immigrant community.

When the tyrannical behavior of Gomer Jones was added to this volatile mixture in August of 1897, the workers in the Honey Brook mine took matters into their own hands. The resulting explosion was initiated by a seemingly trivial incident involving Jones and the mule drivers at the mine. On August 12 the drivers went out on strike as a response to Jones's new and irritating work rules for their particular avocation. The men lined up in front of the mine entrance and barred access to the first shift of the day. Jones walked into their picket line armed with a crowbar and assaulted one of the workers.<sup>630</sup> In the melee that followed Jones was lucky to escape with his life and fled the scene. Within a few days following the incident over eight hundred miners followed the drivers out on strike. The strikers moved to shut down all of the working collieries of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal company in the region by using argument, persuasion, and when all else failed- violence.<sup>631</sup> By the end of the day on August 16 over three thousand miners and laborers were off the job. The grievances of the strikers varied according to their particular employer but their primary demands included: the removal of abusive supervisors, an increase in wages, fair prices at company stores, and fair rents for company housing.<sup>632</sup>

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<sup>630</sup> Greene, *The Slavic Community*, 130. "On about August 12, Jones posted a new work rule affecting mule drivers, chiefly Slavs and Italians. Since it meant additional work with no extra pay, a group of foreigners struck and demonstrated. When Jones went out to break up the picket line with a club, the strikers beat him until he managed to withdraw."

<sup>631</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 222. "Their methods were persuasive. Miners armed with guns and clubs convinced their reluctant colleagues to quit working; the recalcitrant were dealt with roughly

<sup>632</sup> Perry K. Blatz, "Titanic Struggles," 118. "Some strikers walked out over an abusive supervisor, others wanted more than the dollar a so many earned, while others were upset over paying inflated prices for company-store goods."

The strike continued into the first week of September with no end in sight. The number of men on strike swelled to over five thousand as the workers in a number of independent collieries joined the strike either out of solidarity or fear of reprisal. A series of mass marches or striker parades were initiated on September 3. The marches had a festive air, resembling, in many ways, the saint's day religious processions that were ubiquitous in the immigrant communities. They also served to strengthen the resolve of the strikers, display their strength and unity to the owners, and to persuade those still working to join their ranks.<sup>633</sup> Law enforcement had showed uncharacteristic restraint in dealing with the marches, and most town constables provided escorts when the marches wound their way through town and village streets in the Hazleton area. But the patience of the area's independent operators and their concern about dwindling profit margins spurred them into action, especially after the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, a Philadelphia-based corporation, came to terms with their workers. The independent owners, in fierce competition with the corporation, became desperate to end the strike and start up their collieries.<sup>634</sup>

The sheriff of Luzerne County, James L. Martin, was, by most accounts, dragooned by the coal operators to protect their facilities and the workers that had refused to join the strike. Although they were already paying the wages of numerous Coal and Iron Police, the independent operators demanded that Sheriff Martin provide additional security by calling out a *posse*

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<sup>633</sup> Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 132. "Slavs and Italians seemed to enjoy the daily parades, as they tramped in a file behind an American flag, waved their clubs and iron bars, and scared off any non-strikers they could find."

<sup>634</sup> Greene, "Slavs, Strikes, and Unions," 203. Greene notes that the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company had slowly established a virtual monopoly in the southeastern anthracite region and had good relations with their workers treating them fairly and paying them well. "On the other hand, the Lehigh operators were small, individual, independent, and competing fiercely for the trade."

*comitatus*, made up of reliable men who lived in the Hazleton area.<sup>635</sup> Unwilling to negotiate or submit the issues to arbitration, the owners appeared determined to use force to protect their interests. The marches conducted by the strikers had intimidated hundreds of men who either abandoned the breakers and shafts when the striker's columns approached or simply refused to report for work the next day. Local newspapers trumpeted the success that the strikers had in shutting down mining operations- one after another. The owners wanted an end to the marches and they wanted the strike broken.<sup>636</sup>

On Friday, September 10, another march of strikers set off from the village of Harwood. They were intent on shutting down a colliery located near the town of Lattimer. A group of three hundred striking miners, mostly Slavic and Italian immigrants, began to move toward their objective around midmorning, marching resolutely behind an American flag. As long as the men did not trespass on company property the marchers were engaged in a lawful assembly.<sup>637</sup> Sheriff Martin's subsequent provocations certainly violated their rights despite his repeated reading of the riot act. Other men joined the column along the way and the number of participants grew considerably.<sup>638</sup> Sheriff Martin and his deputized *posse* were determined to

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<sup>635</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 224. In Luzerne County the sheriff was the amiable James L. Martin, a man who had worked in the mines long enough to know that he did not want to return to them. Martin also knew whom he had to please if he wanted to remain sheriff. He agreed to put 1,000 men, if necessary, at the disposal of the operators."

<sup>636</sup> Ibid., 229. "The coal operators were not amused; they believed they had a war on their hands."

<sup>637</sup> John Graham Brooks, "An Impression of the Anthracite Coal Troubles," *Yale Review*, no. 6 (May, 1897 to February, 1898): 306-311, 307, n.1. "It is one of the pathetic features of the tragedy at Lattimer, that the miners had been told by speakers that they had a perfect legal right to march in the highways. They had, in other words, been told precisely what any reader of the two ablest papers in Massachusetts (*The Springfield Republican* and *The Boston Herald*) would have gathered as sound opinion from repeated editorials."

<sup>638</sup> *The New York Times*, September 11, 1897. "The strikers organized at Harwood and started out on an expedition with the purpose of closing down all the strippings which were at work

confront the marchers and disband them before they could reach the Pardee Number One works in Lattimer. In a post-shooting interview, Martin declared that his only intention was to prevent what he perceived to be an unlawful assembly that was intent on using violence to disrupt work at the mine that day.<sup>639</sup>

Sheriff Martin was also convinced that the marchers were prepared for violence, and were unconcerned about the potential loss of life that would ensue from a street battle.<sup>640</sup> At about two o'clock in the afternoon the marchers were confronted by Sheriff Martin and his deputies on one of Lattimer's main streets. According to some sources the strikers assaulted Martin while he was in the process of reading the riot act.<sup>641</sup> A minor scuffle began between the sheriff and a striker that he was attempting to arrest. This quickly escalated into a pushing and shoving match between the marchers and several of the sheriff's deputies. Martin later reported that the fury and resistance displayed by the marchers was proof enough for him, at least in that moment, that the crowd was out of control and ready to attack his *posse*. In the days following

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today. At Crystal Ridge and Cranberry others joined the marchers, which swelled the ranks considerably."

<sup>639</sup> The strikers did, in fact, employ coercion and violence to achieve strike solidarity. See Aurand, "A Study in Slavs, Strikes, and Unions," 214. "The immigrant society in crisis coalesced to the extent not only of ostracizing dissenters, but indeed of intimidating and assaulting them, whether fellow-countrymen or not."

<sup>640</sup> Ibid. "I heard this morning that the strikers were going to march to the breaker at Lattimer and compel the men there to quit work. I resolved to intercept them, and if possible, prevent them from reaching the breaker. I fully realized that the foreigners were a desperate lot, and valued life at a very small figure"

<sup>641</sup> Henry Edward Rood, "A Pennsylvania Colliery Village. A Polyglot Community," *The Century*, vol.55, no.6 (April, 1898): 809-822, 818. "Five times in four days had this brave officer risked his life by reading the riot act to mobs; and he was reading it for the sixth time when he was disarmed, knocked down, and trampled upon."

the shooting, Martin continually insisted (as a man under indictment for murder would) that he and his men were the real victims and had only defended themselves.<sup>642</sup>

In later testimony it was unclear if a specific order to fire had been given, but once the first shot had been fired the deputies continued to pour several volleys into the closely packed column of unarmed men.<sup>643</sup> As the panic stricken crowd wildly dispersed, eleven men were killed instantly and thirty-nine more were wounded. Eight more men would later succumb to their wounds. Subsequent witness reports, obtained from the residents of Lattimer, indicated that Sheriff Martin's provocative words and actions in the tense moments leading up to the gunfire, moved the *posse* to open fire.<sup>644</sup> Events in the Hazleton area, at least to this point, revealed that former Governor Hartranft's often-stated confidence in the abilities of county sheriffs and the *posse comitatus* was misplaced.<sup>645</sup>

News of the bloody event quickly made the rounds in the Hazleton area. The Anglo-Saxon community feared that the miners and their sympathizers would initiate a wave of killings and arson throughout the area to avenge their dead. But except for ransacking the residence of Gomer Jones, the area remained tense but peaceful.<sup>646</sup> Popular opinion, expressed in a public

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<sup>642</sup> Ibid. "I also saw that parleying with such a gang of infuriated men was entirely out of the question, as they were far too excited to listen to reason, and that myself and my Deputies would be killed if we were not rescued or if we did not defend ourselves."

<sup>643</sup> Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 229. Novak notes in the trial record that Martin's attorney emphatically rejected the charge that his client had given the order to fire: "No man was more surprised at the firing than the Sheriff himself, and no man more horror-stricken."

<sup>644</sup> *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch*, September 11, 1897. "Martin halted them and read the riot act to them, and, brandishing a revolver above his head, ordered them to go back. The strikers answered that they were not doing any harm and began to brush by him. Immediately a volley was fired, and when the smoke cleared, eleven dead and thirty-eight wounded were stretched on the ground."

<sup>645</sup> See chapter two, part three.

<sup>646</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 235. "Yet except for the attack on Jones's house, the immigrants carried out no major reprisals. Instead they poured out their grief and sorrow in massive funeral demonstrations."

meeting the very evening of the shootings, was strongly against the use of state troops. Overwhelmingly, residents of the area, both immigrant and non-immigrant, condemned the actions of Sheriff Martin and his deputies and sympathized with the miners.<sup>647</sup>

Sheriff Martin made his request to the governor for the assistance of the National Guard at 10:30 P.M. on the day of the incident. The adjutant general's report indicated that Martin constructed such a wildly exaggerated description of the shootings and their aftermath that Governor Hastings had little in the way of options to deal with the situation.<sup>648</sup> Despite the dire forecasts presented by Martin, Hastings still wanted confirmation that the problem merited state intervention. But for the first time in the history of National Guard interventions there was an indication of collusion between Guard officers and local elites that precipitated a mobilization that mostly served private, rather than public, ends.

After sending his request for troops to the governor, Sheriff Martin and his attorney, George S. Ferris, immediately contacted Colonel C. Bow Dougherty, the commander of the Ninth Regiment, headquartered in Wilkes-Barre and gave him much the same misinformation that they had given Governor Hastings.<sup>649</sup> Dougherty then called the executive mansion where the governor, adjutant general, and state attorney general had set up a headquarters. Dougherty

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<sup>647</sup> Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 147. "The sentiment in Hazleton was bitterly against calling the National Guard, and the deputies must have begun to feel frightened by the force of the public's hostility to them. Many went into hiding that night, and some were not to be seen in the area for weeks."

<sup>648</sup> *AGR for 1897*, "Special Report of the Adjutant General on the Industrial Disturbances in Luzerne County," 121. "In this collision a number of persons were killed and injured, and the situation became so threatening and likely to result in further loss of life and destruction of property and security of the citizens of the Commonwealth in their rights under the Constitution and the laws of the State."

<sup>649</sup> *AGR for 1897*, "Report of Colonel C. Bow Dougherty, Commander, Ninth Regiment," 149. "Late in the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup>, Sheriff Martin called me to meet at the office of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, Coal Exchange building, Wilkes-Barre, to confer with him as to the necessity of calling out troops to prevent further violence and bloodshed at Hazleton."

essentially reiterated the line Martin had laid down for the governor in that first communication earlier in the evening. But Pattison was reticent; he wanted more information before he would commit the Guard. Colonel Asher Miner of the Governor's military staff was sent to Wilkes-Barre and personally conferred with Dougherty and Martin. In the meantime, Hastings had received a resolution from "leading citizens" in Hazleton that testified to the dire conditions that existed in the region in the wake of the Lattimer shootings. The immigrant horde was clearly out of control and arming and organizing itself for bloody retribution on the "American" population. The Hazleton elite demanded the intervention of the National Guard to prevent bloodshed and suppress rampant lawlessness. The most prominent signature on the resolution was that of John Markle, a powerful independent mine owner.<sup>650</sup>

In his later message to the General Assembly Hastings reported that he was compelled by his prior experience with the "foreign element" and their well-known proclivity for violence to order out a contingent of the National Guard.<sup>651</sup> Blaming the foreigners for strikes and labor violence was a relatively new theme that emanated from the Pennsylvania executive. Governor Pattison had set this tone in his biennial address in 1894 after the most recent labor troubles.<sup>652</sup> After telephone consultation with Colonels Miner and Dougherty, Governor Hastings ordered General John Gobin to move his entire command to Hazleton. Orders were immediately

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<sup>650</sup> *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch*, September 11, 1897. "The resolutions are signed by John Markle and other prominent citizens of Hazleton."

<sup>651</sup> Violence was ubiquitous in the immigrant worker communities in Pennsylvania as every reader of popular periodicals could attest. See: Jay Hambidge, "An Artists Impression of the Colliery Region," *The Century*, vol.55, no.6 (April, 1898): 822-828, 822. "Truly this is a land where life is held cheap. Constant familiarity with powerful forces makes men fearless of danger and callous to suffering."

<sup>652</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents*, "Governor Robert E. Pattison's Biennial Message 1895," 26. "The riot of January 27<sup>th</sup>, in Mansfield, ... was largely due to the impulses of a population, alien to our laws and language to destroy life and property. Like influences inspired the spirit of destructiveness which permeated the strike of the coke workers in the Connellsville region."

transmitted to regimental and company commanders by telephone, telegraph, and bicycle messengers. For his part, Gobin believed he was taking his men into hostile territory.<sup>653</sup> Gobin also ordered sharpshooters placed in the locomotives moving his troops into Hazleton. The Third Brigade was moving into Luzerne County on a war footing. But despite the histrionic reports of Sheriff Martin and Colonel Dougherty, the troops found Hazleton in a calm and peaceful state when they arrived in the early morning hours of September 11; their presence regarded more with curiosity than animus on the part of the townspeople.<sup>654</sup>

Despite the current of calm and order, General Gobin was determined to deploy his 2,500 troops for action. By nightfall of September 12 Hazleton resembled an armed camp, with sentries posted at major intersections, and patrols sweeping the side streets. As his troops began to disperse to their campsites in the coal fields, Gobin assured reporters that the Guard was not in Hazleton to take sides, and that he was indifferent to both the grievances of the workers and the demands of the coal operators.<sup>655</sup> National Guard intervention did not blunt the growth of the strike. By September 14, over eleven thousand men were idle and fourteen mines operated by independent owners were shut down.

Gobin's first actions in Hazledton were highly controversial. Arrest warrants had been sworn out for Sheriff Martin and a number of his deputies for their complicity in the

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<sup>653</sup> *AGR for 1897*, "Report of Brigadier General John Gobin, Commander, Third Brigade," 124. "The entire section of country in and about Hazleton, comprising a large number of mining villages, was in a very high state of excitement. Meetings were held at which inflammatory speeches were made."

<sup>654</sup> *The New York Times*, September 12, 1897. "The Incoming of the State troops, which began at an early hour this morning, served to quell the strikers and their sympathizers, and no further demonstration was made than the gathering at street corners of knots of men and women in muttered but intense discussions of the shootings. The commander was also gratified at the absence of hostility shown to the incoming troops."

<sup>655</sup> *Ibid.* "My mission here, and the mission of the soldiers, is to maintain law and order. I have nothing to do with what the men are striking for, nor what the operators are asking for. Sop far as I am officially concerned I do not care."



Lattimer shootings. The warrants had been issued by the Luzerne County district attorney and were served by Hazleton's town constables. General Gobin, apparently predisposed to support Martin and his deputies, decided that the "public climate" posed a danger to these men, and that to turn them over to the authorities would be murder rather than justice. The general was also somewhat perplexed over the degree of animosity that most of the people of Hazleton had directed at the sheriff and his men.<sup>656</sup>

Despite the reigning atmosphere of calm, Gobin explained to Constable Boyle that any arrests would inflame the situation and bring about a clash between rioters and the troops, a breach of the peace that he would not allow.<sup>657</sup> Gobin simply refused to recognize the validity of the warrants or the authority of the constables who were serving them. As far as Gobin was concerned the sheriff of Luzerne County, just like the sheriff in Allegheny County during the Homestead affair, trumped all other officials. But unlike the situation in Homestead where an unauthorized, extra-legal body was operating as a shadow government, the district attorney of Luzerne County was acting as a *bona fide* agent of Hazleton's local government, and was well within the scope of the law and his authority when he issued the warrants. Gobin's recalcitrance in this matter was widely reported in the national press, but he received no official reprimand and the silence of the Guard's judge advocate general in this matter apparently placed the state's seal of approval on his actions.<sup>658</sup>

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<sup>656</sup> *AGR for 1897*, 129. "I soon discovered great bitterness against the sheriff and his deputies, augmented and excited by agitators; threats of violence were frequent, and I learned that a number of them had secreted themselves for fear of their lives."

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid.* "To permit him to make an arrest at this time would be turning them over to the mob for assassination, which would undoubtedly bring a collision between the rioters and the troops; and that I could not permit."

<sup>658</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, September 12, 1897. "For all intents and purposes Hazleton is under martial law. General Gobin declared to-night that in spite of the warrants issued, neither constables nor any civic authority will be permitted to arrest deputies."

One of the deputies named in the warrant was A.E Hess, a former officer of the Guard's Ninth Regiment. He went to the Ninth's camp at Hazle Park, one step ahead of the constables carrying the warrant for his arrest. When the constables attempted to enter the camp they were turned away and told to direct their protests to General Gobin's headquarters. Gobin refused to see these men and later embellished his report to the adjutant general with reports of a crowd on the street that was acting in concert with the deputies.<sup>659</sup> Gobin kept Hess under guard and dispatched a special detail to protect Hess's home and family. One over-zealous constable, by the name of Duser, was placed in the guardhouse when he tried to serve an arrest warrant on another deputy under National Guard protection. Hazleton attorneys spent hours negotiating with Gobin for the man's release.<sup>660</sup>

Although martial law was never in effect during the Hazleton deployment, General Gobin assumed many of its prerogatives. This was especially evident during the course of the funeral ceremonies for the men killed in Lattimer. It was assumed by many that the funerals would attract thousand of grief-stricken and angry mourners and thus incite further violence.<sup>661</sup> The potential for further bloodshed was greatly increased by the volatile combination of emotion-charged crowds and 2,500 heavily armed Guardsmen.<sup>662</sup> General Gobin called the clergy who would officiate at the funerals for a special meeting on the day before the

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<sup>659</sup> Ibid. "I refused to see these men, and my staff officers reported crowds of excited men on the streets, evidently in collusion with them."

<sup>660</sup> Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 161. "Duser was still fuming about being arrested while a man wanted for murder went free under the protection of armed troopers."

<sup>661</sup> Greene, *The Slavic Community*, 169-170. "This laying-to-rest of one deceased normally affected the community deeply; the peasant mind grieved not only for the loss but also over burial in alien soil, far from his village. Moreover, here in Shenandoah was added the sentiment that their countrymen died for a cause, justice at the work place."

<sup>662</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, September 13, 1897. "There is strong reason to fear a conflict between the strikers and the militia tomorrow, and there are indications that from five to seven thousand more miners will join the malcontents."

ceremonies. He presented them with a list of guidelines for their funeral sermons, a blatant infringement of both free speech and religious rights. Although he later reported that he presented his demands in the form of “suggestions”, he essentially dictated to the priests what they could include in their homilies and eulogies.<sup>663</sup>

General Gobin was also concerned about the presence of uniformed, armed men in the funeral processions. Burial societies, whose members wore distinctive dress and carried ceremonial sabers, much like the Knights of Columbus, were a ubiquitous feature of funeral services in the Slavic and Italian immigrant communities. A funeral service on Sunday, September 12, included a colorful array of uniformed men armed with ceremonial cavalry sabers. The men served as an honor guard throughout the requiem mass and the graveside service.<sup>664</sup> General Gobin looked upon the ceremonial garb and military accoutrements as a provocation likely to incite the mourners and onlookers. He summarily banned all “foreign” military-style clothing and weapons of any kind.<sup>665</sup>

In a further effort to reduce the potential for violence, Gobin ordered all drinking establishments to be closed on the day of the funerals. Despite the presence of thousands of people who poured into Hazleton to attend the funerals and march in the processions, the proceedings passed without incident. But on at least two counts Gobin’s explicit orders were

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<sup>663</sup> *AGR for 1897*, 130. “I stated to them all, that I had no desire to interfere with the proper burial of the men who had been shot on the previous Friday, but I requested that in their sermons everything of a vengeful or vindictive character or calculated to provoke a breach of the peace should be omitted.”

<sup>664</sup> Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 162. “The members of the St. Joseph’s National Slovak Society, wearing white, blue, and red sashes across the right shoulder, and the Italian St. Peter and Paul’s Society members wearing blue and gold uniforms and carrying silver cavalry sabers, began to form ranks. Behind them formed the Polish Socrasa Fondadta wearing gray uniforms and carrying traditional sabers, and a fourth group, in silver and green.”

<sup>665</sup> *AGR for 1897*, 130. “I further stated that under no circumstances would I allow armed men clothed in the uniform of a foreign nation to appear in these funeral processions; ... warlike bodies I would not permit.”

ignored by the priests and the funeral escort. Addressing more than three thousand mourners, Father Richard Aust of the Polish St. Stanislaus Church asserted that in an unjust world the only recourse they had was to understand that God's justice would ultimately prevail either in this world or the next.<sup>666</sup> The Italian St. Peter and Paul's Society appeared dressed in ceremonial regalia replete with swords, an act of defiance that especially infuriated General Gobin, but one that he was powerless to punish after the fact.<sup>667</sup>

In most of the earlier Guard interventions- Connellsville, Homestead, and Jefferson County- the presence of the troops was used as a cover by the owners to break the strike by importing replacement workers and hiring private security guards to protect them. But in the Hazleton strike most of the independent operators decided at a very early point to address the grievances of the strikers and reach some kind of compromise. The striking miners were, in most cases, willing to accept the increase in wages and the other concessions made by the owners. By September 16, the trickle of men returning to the mines turned into a flood and the strike was effectively ended.<sup>668</sup> Support for the continuation of the strike had little traction outside of the Polish community. The Guard had little more to do than patrol the mining villages and make their presence felt at the collieries until all of the strikers had returned to work. Most of the units used the time to practice marches, drills and ceremonies.

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<sup>666</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 235. "From the pulpit in the tiny, stifling church Father Aust exhorted his listeners to trust in God's wisdom and in His ultimate justice. Some of those present thought they heard the priest say that God would punish the deputies."

<sup>667</sup> *AGR for 1897*, 131. "It was reported to me that one of them [Father Aust] did not keep his word, as I soon learned afterward from a newspaper man in attendance that a detachment of men in full uniform of the Italian Army and armed with sabers was stationed at the door of one of the churches."

<sup>668</sup> Aurand, "A Study in Slavs, Strikes, and Unions," 210. "Also, when all the operators except the stubborn Coxe Brothers agreed to readjust their pay scales, the inevitable back to work movement began on the 16<sup>th</sup> (Sept.)."

There was one notable confrontation with a contingent of female “dead-enders” who marched to various mining operations demanding that the men stop work and join the holdouts. Insults, taunts, threats, and rock throwing accompanied their crude insistence on solidarity. The leader of “women’s brigade” was Mary Septak, a local boardinghouse owner and wife of a miner. She was a formidable presence in the area and had a committed band of seventy-five female followers that marched with her on the collieries.<sup>669</sup> On at least three separate occasions the women had confrontations with Guard cavalry patrols. These incidents were reminiscent of similar actions that occurred during the Jefferson County deployment in 1894. During the strikes in the Walston region the women had been the main instigators of violence and their actions proved exasperating to the troopers and their officers. Dealing with a mob of men was all in a day’s work for the Guard, but handling a mob of “Amazons” proved problematic.<sup>670</sup> One last “clash” between the women and the Guard troopers occurred on September 18. The women, when faced with a bayonet laden skirmish line, wisely dispersed and went back to their homes. This anticlimactic, almost comic affair ended the Hazleton strike and the National Guard deployment. The adjutant general began to relieve various units and send them back home. General Gobin’s use of constitutionally questionable prerogatives as well as professional demeanor and service of the Guard had preserved the peace in a dangerous and volatile situation. Once again, as in all of the Guard’s post 1877 mobilizations, the mere presence of troops on the ground served to forestall further trouble and restore calm.

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<sup>669</sup> Jay Hambidge, “An Artist’s Impressions,” 825. “Mary is by far the most formidable and picturesque character in all the mining region. In her peculiar way she is queen, and rules with a high hand. During the strike Mary was the most troublesome of all the foreigners.”

<sup>670</sup> *Wilkes-Barre (PA) Record*, quoted in: Novak, *The Guns of Lattimer*, 177. “‘They know their sex protects them,’ complained General Gobin. ‘I thought we came Hazleton to fight men.’”

The strike, which had begun with the explosion of violence in Lattimer, had been ended by the wage settlement and the inability of the pro-strike faction to maintain worker solidarity. The immediate threat had been defused rather quickly, but the atmosphere in the anthracite region remained filled with tension, as there were no immediate remedies for the profound problems that remained in the mines, in the coal industry, and in the immigrant worker community. The potential for future strikes and labor violence that had long afflicted the anthracite coal industry had been greatly increased by the unjustifiable use of deadly force at Lattimer.<sup>671</sup>

General Gobin's Third Brigade returned to the anthracite region in 1900 during yet another bitter dispute between miners and operators in the Shenandoah region. Between 1897 and 1900 the UMWA had worked vigorously to organize the anthracite miners. In the summer of 1897 the union offered to engage the owner's in a joint conference to discuss longstanding worker grievances, but the coal operators rejected the offer.<sup>672</sup> In mid-September the UMWA called a comprehensive strike aimed at shutting down all anthracite operations. Roughly two-thirds of mine employees walked off the job.<sup>673</sup> In a letter circulated among the membership, the president of the UMWA, John Mitchell warned against the use of violence. Such tactics would lose public sympathy and place the union in a disadvantageous position at the bargaining

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<sup>671</sup> Brooks, "An Impression of the Anthracite Coal Troubles, 311. "Police are expensive and \$30,000 per week for soldiers is not economy. And yet these are the bills that will continue to be paid, probably in an increasing ratio, until the masters, who have shown power and skill enough to bring order out of chaos in the case of their merchandise, give also some fair share of mastery to the human side of the problem- to the conditions of a decent existence among the men and the families of those who do their work."

<sup>672</sup> Mark Wardell and Robert L. Johnston, "Class Struggle and Industrial Transformation, 1820-1902," *Theory and Society* 16, no.6 (Nov., 1987): 781-808, 798. "The companies ignored an invitation for a joint meeting. After several unsuccessful attempts to meet with the railroad representatives, the UMWA called a strike in September."

<sup>673</sup> Blatz, "Titanic Struggles," 119-120. "About two-thirds of the work force of 142,500 responded initially, and nearly all of the remaining workers joined the walkout."

table.<sup>674</sup> This was an especially critical juncture for the union, for in addition to promoting the miner's cause, the UMWA was fighting for recognition by the anthracite operators.

Despite the best efforts of Mitchell and UMWA district leaders violence did erupt in the vicinity of Shenandoah City in southern Schuylkill County, an area where the mine workers were fiercely divided along ethnic lines. A majority of the miners in the region were Slavic and Italian immigrants who were, for the most part, loyal to the UMWA and the strike. But a significant number of Irish, Germans, and Welsh- the "American" miners- stayed on the job. Typical flare-ups occurred. Some significant damage was done at a few of the collieries and intimidation frightened a number of men to abandon work. On Wednesday September 20, groups of immigrant workers took to the streets to intercept men on their way to the facilities near Shenandoah City. Minor, non-lethal incidents continued throughout the morning as Coal and Iron Police escorted workers to the pits through crowds of jeering strikers. Sheriff Toole of Schuylkill County and a force of deputies, stationed at the Indian Ridge mine, attempted to escort a group of miners home. The workers and the deputies were surrounded by a large crowd of strikers and shots were exchanged. One striker was killed and several were wounded. Many of the residents believed that the situation was spiraling out of control.<sup>675</sup>

Sheriff Toole followed the well-established procedure for requesting the assistance of the National Guard. He reported the confrontations and the potential for even greater violence if

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<sup>674</sup> *The New York Times*, September 13, 1900. The *Times* quotes Mitchell's circular letter: "Be law-abiding, self-respecting, and quiet; do not allow any person, whose interest it may be to provoke you into quarrels and violations of the peace. That is one of the most common methods used by large employers to destroy public sympathy and defeat our cause."

<sup>675</sup> Greene, *The Slavic Community*, 168. "The days events horrified Shenandoah. Besides the usual property damage the final toll was two dead and a score injured. And since the authorities had not restored order, few dared to venture into the streets. New spread that the 'Rocks' people were determined to stop all work the next day."

no state assistance was forthcoming.<sup>676</sup> Toole also emphasized that he had used all of the resources at his disposal and could do no more to stem the violence. He also wired the affidavits of prominent citizens that verified his assessments.<sup>677</sup> Sheriff Toole had followed the proper procedure, supplied the supporting documentation, and said all of the right things in his telegram to the executive mansion. Governor Stone ordered General Gobin's Third Brigade to Shenandoah to restore the peace. Due to their proximity to Schuylkill County, most of Gobin's command arrived in the area in the early morning of September 22.

As in their previous deployment three years earlier, the men of the Third Brigade encountered curious townspeople and unhappy strikers but no resistance.<sup>678</sup> Gobin noted that while the reception had been without incident, the large number of strikers made the situation unstable. Instead of dispersing his command into multiple supporting detachments, as had been the case in previous deployments, Gobin concentrated his forces in a centralized location and made plans to disburse them quickly to any threatened location.<sup>679</sup> Arrangements were made with the railroad companies to provide immediate transport on demand. Crews and special trains were placed on stand-by status for the duration of the deployment.

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<sup>676</sup> *AGR for 1900*, "Industrial Disturbances in Schuylkill County," 5. Sheriff Toole's telegraphic message: "Situation here serious. Mobs patrolling streets and attacking workmen. Send four companies of troops here immediately. Answer."

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. The message to the governor from "leading" citizens of Shenandoah: "It is the opinion of the undersigned citizens that to save life and property it is absolutely essential that troops be sent to Shenandoah at once."

<sup>678</sup> *AGR for 1900*, 73. "We were received by a large portion of the population with acclamation, with sullen looks, but no demonstration on the part of the others."

<sup>679</sup> *Ibid.*, 74. "Having established guard lines, and looked over the country for some time, I concluded that if there was to be any collision it would be a serious one, because of the large number of men on strike. I therefore determined that the best method of meeting any trouble was to keep my troops concentrated and be prepared to move in any direction as speedily as possible."



General Gobin's used his authority and his forces with a lighter touch and a greater professional competency than had heretofore been exhibited in any previous National Guard strike intervention. The troops were employed judiciously during the course of their six-week strike deployment, and Gobin and his staff did not allow pressure from local authorities and business owners to obscure their better judgment. On a number of occasions, nervous law enforcement officials demanded the dispatch of troops to their jurisdictions because they were unable to cope with local disturbances.<sup>680</sup> On numerous occasions mine operators requested troops to secure their operations against striking miners. Gobin refused to allow the Guard to be employed as security guards or private police, and he would not allow the troops to be seen as taking the part of the operators and protecting their business interests.<sup>681</sup>

For its part, the UMWA maintained made a concerted effort to keep the strike under control and continually urged the men to avoid violence and provocation.<sup>682</sup> But despite the best intentions and efforts of the union there was an outbreak of violence that at Coxe Brothers mines near the small towns of Oneida and Sheppton. As in the previous conflicts between miners, this affair was motivated by both long-standing ethnic tension and lack of solidarity among the workers. A number of "Anglo-Saxon" miners refused to join the work stoppage and continued to work the Oneida Number 2 mine. The strikers, mostly Slavs and Poles set up picket lines to

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<sup>680</sup> Ibid. "Numerous telephonic and telegraphic dispatches were received indicating that danger was apprehended in so many localities that I was compelled to exercise the greatest caution on the reception of the news."

<sup>681</sup> Ibid. "Another feature that aggravated the situation was the attitude of some of the coal operators. They apparently regarded the troops as policemen, who were to be called upon whenever their particular properties were supposed to be threatened by marching bodies of strikers. Requests for companies or battalions to be stationed at various localities were their remedy for the evil. I declined all these propositions believing that such action would be certain to create trouble, and result in frequent collisions."

<sup>682</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 252-253. "But compared with previous strikes, this one was singularly peaceful. Despite the intimidating presence of the Coal and Iron Police and troops, the region remained relatively calm during the six-week strike."

keep the non-strikers out of the pits. Coal and Iron Police formed a gauntlet to protect the men that went to work on the morning of October 8. The police guard, armed with revolvers, fired shots into the crowd of strikers, wounding several. This sizeable group of strikers, including a number of women, charged the police line that subsequently broke ranks and began a hasty retreat. In the resulting melee two of the hated policemen were caught by the mob. One was killed and the other was seriously wounded.<sup>683</sup> The striker continued their campaign of intimidation by parading in the streets of Oneida and surrounding the homes of non-strikers. General Gobin was not alerted to the gravity of the situation until later in the afternoon. He hurried over to Oneida with the *Governor's Troop* and cleared the streets. The troopers assisted Sheriff Toole in the arrests of those who had been identified as participants in the assault on the policemen.<sup>684</sup>

Gobin had begun to withdraw many of his men from the area even before the Oneida riot, in the belief that he could control the area with a smaller force. He concentrated his remaining troops in those localities where trouble was most likely to occur, and except for a false alarm at Panther Hollow, the rest of the deployment passed without incident. The remaining units were withdrawn when the strike ended in the last week of October. During this deployment the Guard once again served as an impartial peacekeeper. For the most part the strike was nonviolent and the owners made no attempt to employ replacement workers. General Gobin did not bend to the pressure of the operators to provide security for those operations that continued to

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<sup>683</sup> Greene, *The Slavic Community*, 172. "The enraged Slavs, eventually caught two of the policemen, Ralph Mills and George Kellner. A company official later found Mills dead, shot twice in the back, and Kellner unconscious from a head wound."

<sup>684</sup> *AGR for 1900*, 75. "A riot having occurred at Oneida resulting in the loss of life, and after visiting the place with Sheriff Toole, I examined the situation and dispatched the Governor's troop to that place and had them remain there until everything was quiet, and the rioters, or such as them as had been identified, had been arrested

mine coal with non-striking workers. The 1900 deployment indicated that the Guard had profited by both its previous experiences in labor disputes and its ongoing efforts at training and instilling greater professionalism. But once again the Commonwealth had to pay a high price for its services. The expenses incurred during the several weeks of the Guard mobilization was \$113, 842.52, the bulk of which was allotted for individual pay.<sup>685</sup> The Guard was an efficient, but expensive, peacekeeper throughout the decade of the 1890s, and many politicians were searching for an alternative with the enthusiastic support of many National Guard Officers.<sup>686</sup>

But the Guard returned to the anthracite region during the great 1902 strike. The UMWA had made a concerted effort to increase its membership among the anthracite miners, and by the summer of 1902 the union leadership felt that the time was ripe for a strike that would win for the eastern anthracite industry the same benefits that had already been secured in the bituminous mines in the west. The success and influence of the emerging UMWA in organizing the anthracite fields contributed greatly to the length and contentiousness inherent in the 1902 strike.<sup>687</sup> Mine operators had previously asserted that they would neither deal with the union nor submit any contentious issues, such as a twenty percent increase in wages, the eight-hour day, and recognition of the union, to arbitration.<sup>688</sup> By midsummer of 1902, over 150,000 miners

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<sup>685</sup> Ibid., 8-14. "Expenses Incurred and Paid by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania In Suppressing 'Industrial Disturbances' in Schuylkill County, September and October, 1900."

<sup>686</sup> Jones, "American Cossacks," 28. "Not only did the decade of class conflict result in the National Guard doing regular and extensive strike duty, that duty cost the State of Pennsylvania over 1,700,000.

<sup>687</sup> Perry K. Blatz, *Democratic Miners: Work and Labor Relations in the Anthracite Coal Industry, 1875-1925* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 121. "The strike of 1902 was so long and so bitter because of the threat posed by the mine workers under the leadership of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) to the operators' control of the work force and their business."

<sup>688</sup> Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987), 181. "The mineowners, led by George F. Baer-president of the

were on strike in the anthracite region, and thousands of these soon left the area to seek employment elsewhere.<sup>689</sup>

For the most part the first months of the strike, despite the obvious tension and sense of desperation, were uneventful. As in the 1900 strike, the leadership of the UMWA made a concerted effort to maintain the good will of the American public by eschewing any and all acts of violence. In the early weeks of the strike UMWA president John Mitchell, John Fahy, and other union officials made the rounds in the coal towns and constantly emphasized the need for law and order throughout the duration of the strike. Mitchell's personal appearances and public relations efforts paid great dividends as the public increasingly began to lend its support to the union's cause.<sup>690</sup> The miners staged marches and picketed those few operations that were being worked by non-strikers. There were incidents of intimidation and spontaneous acts of random violence, but for the most part the region remained tranquil.

But as the weeks turned into months strike solidarity began to weaken. Men began to return to work in order to provide for their hard-pressed families. Mine operators apparently had a plan to break the strike by opening some of the mines in July and protecting their workers with troops of the National Guard, whose annual encampment, by division that year, at Gettysburg

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Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal and Iron Company-refused to bargain with the miners."

<sup>689</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 261. "Many miners and their families settled in for a long siege, but many left the region, fearing that they would be unable to ride out the strike."

<sup>690</sup> Robert H. Weibe, "The Anthracite Strike of 1902: A Record of Confusion," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 48, no.2 (Sept., 1961): 229-251, 240. "By disassociating himself from unpleasantness in the field-marches on operating collieries, coercion of non-strikers, the nastiness of local boycotting-he kept clean hands before the public. And, in general, peace did reign in anthracite, where the immigrant miners whom Mitchell called 'cattle' devotedly followed the union and its president."

would have been underway at that time.<sup>691</sup> Operators and their local sympathizers had gone to considerable lengths throughout the early weeks of July to convince Governor Stone that National Guard troops were the only way to preserve order in the region. George Baer, representing the coal operators, sent a personal communication that essentially demanded National Guard protection.<sup>692</sup> Certainly it was the fact that as in all previous strikes in the region, there were sporadic outbreaks of violence as union men used every means at their disposal, including assault and threat, to bring their wayward brothers back into the strike camp. But these incidents were few, and well within the ability of local officials to handle without state assistance. In each case Governor Stone relied on the assessments of local Guard officers and refused to send in the troops. On July 10, the sheriff of Carbon County sent the governor an urgent plea for help in which he reported the occurrence of violent assaults on Coal and Iron Police and a terror-stricken populace. He felt that he could no longer protect the citizens or their property.<sup>693</sup> Upon investigation, the incidents were deemed of little consequence, and Governor Stone told the sheriff that no troops would be forthcoming.

On July 30 deputies were in the process of escorting a group of miners to their homes when they were set upon by an angry mob of strikers. In the melee that followed one of the deputies was beaten to death and the others fled for their lives after firing a few shots into the

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<sup>691</sup> *The New York Times*, July 5, 1902. "With the entire National Guard of the State in camp at Gettysburg, the operators know that it would be a matter of only a few hours, should trouble occur, to get troops in plenty to the scene of the trouble. In ordinary circumstances it would take several days to get enough troops together to cope with a mob of strikers."

<sup>692</sup> *AGR for 1902*, 8. "I am compelled to advise you that it is impracticable to maintain the peace in the coal regions without your aid. We have done all we can through the employment of coal and iron police, to protect our properties and the lives of our employees, the sheriffs are unable to cope with the situation."

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid.* "I find that I am absolutely unable to protect the citizens and their lives and property, and therefore must place the lives and the property of the citizens of Lansford and Summit Hill in your hands, and must call upon you for troops to protect them."

crowd. Sheriff S. Rowland Beddall of Pottsville then sent a frantic telegram to Governor Stone requesting National Guard troops. Beddall emphasized that the rioters had destroyed property and were responsible for a number of assaults. The law-abiding populace was paralyzed by a veritable reign of terror that had been unleashed by the malicious “foreign element”. Beddall’s hyperbolic account of the incident was at odds with the true state of affairs, but it did appear that events had escalated to the point where he had lost both his nerve and his ability to control Shenandoah and its immediate environs with his force of deputies. As in each previous use of Guard troops, (except for Walston in 1894) violent confrontations between strikers and local law enforcement personnel or company security guards had ended in bloodshed and death. And, typically, county sheriffs and local constables were unable to impose order on a situation that had the potential to escalate with each passing hour.

But Governor Stone did not act precipitously. He wanted more specific information from Sheriff Beddall and evidence from prominent citizens as to the true extent of the riot before he would commit to a mobilization of the National Guard.<sup>694</sup> Beddall’s reply was specific- both as to casualties and his inability to obtain testimony from the town’s citizenry on the extent of the riot.<sup>695</sup> The sheriff’s telegram was followed by a communication from a number of citizens who resided in Schuylkill County. The “representative citizens” verified Beddall’s estimations

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<sup>694</sup> *AGR for 1902*, 8. Stone’s reply to Beddall: “What is the extent of riot and bloodshed? How many, if any, have been killed or wounded? What have you done to suppress disorder? In addition to this your call should be supported by evidence from prominent citizens and your co

<sup>695</sup> *The New York Times*, July 31, 1902. Text of Beddall’s telegram: “Deputy Sheriff and two assistants surrounded and one killed, three of mob shot by Sheriff, three local police officers shot, one possibly fatal. Town is without police protection, and local government terrorized, threatened by mob if they sign petition. Mine workers admit foreign element beyond their control; situation requires greatest haste.”

of the crowd's size, murderous intent, and its subversion of the peace.<sup>696</sup> Governor Stone did not act immediately. He made additional inquiries among a group of private citizens who lived in Schuylkill County and whose information was reliable. Their assessments also buttressed the accounts from the sheriff and the leading citizens of Shenandoah. Governor Stone conferred with Adjutant General Stewart, and at 2:10 A.M. on July 31 two infantry regiments-the Eighth and the Twelfth-along with two companies from the Fourth Regiment and the *Governor's Troop* entrained for Shenandoah. Once again Brigadier General Gobin took troops from his Third Brigade into the anthracite fields in response to a riot that originated in an industrial dispute. All of Gobin's 1,500 troops, in yet another display of logistical and organizational efficiency, were in Shenandoah along with all of their equipment within sixteen hours of the mobilization orders.

The UMWA leadership immediately condemned the violence and lawlessness at Shenandoah, and moved quickly to distance the union from the perpetrators.<sup>697</sup> Daily patrols by Gobin's men kept the peace, but the strike continued. Although the owners could claim a few scattered successes in starting up a colliery here or there with men desperate for work, the strikers maintained their solidarity and resistance. A contingent of the UMWA's District Nine leadership met with Gobin in an effort to have the troops withdrawn. District Nine's president, Miles Dougherty, led the group. Despite his well-earned bellicose reputation, Gobin treated the men with respect and heard them out in a forty-minute meeting. Dougherty's offer of one thousand special deputies to help in keeping the peace in the wake of a Guard withdrawal was

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<sup>696</sup> *AGR for 1902*, 9. "Mob threatens the town. Sheriff advises that he is unable to do anything to preserve the peace. It is absolutely necessary to have troops sent to Shenandoah to protect life and property."

<sup>697</sup> *The United Mine Workers Journal*, August 1, 1902. "It is greatly to be regretted that the peace of the anthracite region was broken yesterday at Shenandoah, where a serious collision occurred between the authorities and a reckless mob that disregarded the advice of the Mine Worker's Union and proceeded to take the law into their own hands."

politely declined. Gobin emphasized that his orders came from his superiors in Harrisburg, and despite the restoration of peace to the area he believed that the troops were still necessary.<sup>698</sup>

A second flare up of violence occurred on August 14, at the Warnke Washery Company's facility in Duryea. Coal and Iron police were providing security for a small group of workers who were attempting to put the washery back on line. One account noted that stones were thrown inside the plant's fences by the strikers and landed in and around the workers and their guards. The Coal and Iron police responded by firing blanks, but when the crowd began to press against the fence they opened fire with live ammunition.<sup>699</sup> One striker was killed instantly and the guard who fired the fatal shots was set upon by the enraged mob and beaten to death. The Coal and Iron police were being backed into the fence when the borough police arrived on the scene. The policemen acted quickly, and within minutes the fifteen Coal and Iron policemen were placed under guard and taken to the Duryea jail.

A large crowd descended on the town and gathered in the vicinity of the jail. Its leaders called for retribution and vigilante justice, and there was a great fear that the Coal and Iron police were about to be lynched. The incident at Duryea is notable because no request for assistance was sent to any Guard command then in place around Shenandoah. The local chief of police was able to defuse the situation with the assistance of sheriff's deputies who arrived in time to disperse the crowd and prevent further bloodshed. Once Governor Stone was informed of the prompt action of local authorities in this matter he rejected the request that the county

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<sup>698</sup> Ibid., August 14, 1902. "Dougherty said that he could furnish at once 1,000 law-abiding men who would undertake to maintain order in and about Shenandoah, and there is not the slightest necessity for keeping the soldiers here at a great cost to the State and to the annoyance of the people of Shenandoah, a majority of whom, the miners claim, do not want the troops here even over night."

<sup>699</sup> *The New York Times*, August 15, 1902. "The trouble was precipitated by the throwing of stones at the men working inside the stockade. The guards fired a few blanks to intimidate the crowd and the latter became angry and jumped the stockade."



sheriff had made for military assistance.<sup>700</sup> The fifteen Coal and Iron policemen were transferred to Wilkes-Barre without incident where they were charged with manslaughter.

The anthracite region was tense but quiet until the end of September. Frustration and hunger had created a veritable civil war in the coalfields. Men continued to go back to work and union members continued to use force to maintain strike solidarity. These divisions created both long and short-term animosity and hatred within the small villages adjoining the mines.<sup>701</sup> The impending hardships of the coming winter added yet another note of desperation to the efforts of the strikers to enforce the work stoppage. Despite the continued pleas of Mitchell and Fahey to avoid lawlessness in any form, property damage and mob violence pervaded the region. County sheriffs sent up urgent pleas for Guard troops as violence continued to spread. By the end of September troops were on duty in seven counties: Carbon, Columbia, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Susquehanna. During the first week of October Governor Stone ordered all remaining units of the National Guard to the troubled area.<sup>702</sup> The governor's "General Order No. 39" emphasized that the Guard was not only in the field to preserve life and property, but also to provide protection for those workers that decided to break ranks with the

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<sup>700</sup> Ibid. "At present the town is in a riotous state, and the Chief Deputy stated to the correspondent that Sheriff Jacobs had already asked the Governor to send troops to this point, as he was unable to cope with the situation."

<sup>701</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 269. "The strike, like a civil war, sometimes divided families. Two brothers left their homeland together, lived together, and shared their earnings equally but became bitter lifelong enemies when one went on strike and the other stayed on the job."

<sup>702</sup> *AGR for 1902*, 13. "Disorder was increasing, and over a territory so large that the troops then on duty, seemed an insufficient force to meet the demands for life and property. It was decided to place the remaining portion of the division on duty."

union and go back to work. The order noted that most of the strike violence erupted when strikers and “scabs” confronted one another.<sup>703</sup>

The troubled region was divided into three-command zones-one for each brigade. On October 10 the division headquarters was removed from Harrisburg and set up in the field at Pottsville. At the height of its deployment the Pennsylvania National Guard had over eight thousand troops in service in the anthracite region’s seven counties. Many of the men thought that the deployment had proceeded with the precision and efficiency of the division encampments. For many there was no action during their time in the coalfields. Most of their time was spent in the dull routine of camp life; drills, parades, and fatigue duties filled their waking hours.<sup>704</sup> Serving with the Second Troop, *Philadelphia City Cavalry*, Private Stewart Cullin recorded that the evening hours before “taps” were filled with the normal soldier pastimes- drinking and gambling with occasional outbreaks of song.<sup>705</sup> For the men of *Sheridan Troop*, on duty in Hazleton, the deployment proved so uneventful that the men took time to vote in the national elections and improve their marksmanship at a local firing range.<sup>706</sup>

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<sup>703</sup> Ibid. “As tumults, riots, mobs, and other disorder usually occur when men attempt to work in and about the coal mines, he [the unit commander] will see that all men who desire to work and their families have ample protection.”

<sup>704</sup> Stewart Cullin, *A Trooper’s Narrative of Service in the Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902* (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Co., 1903), 17. “Camp duties and camp life proceeded at once with the same regularity and much the same routine as at the State encampment at Gettysburg.”

<sup>705</sup> Ibid., 21-22. “The commonest of all amusements was a ‘porch party’. For this the only requisite was a bottle of whiskey, which poured in a large tin cup, was passed from lip to lip, the potations being alternated by choruses from popular songs.”

<sup>706</sup> Beyer, *A History of the Sheridan Troop*, 22. “On the tour, the unit encountered no serious difficulty with the strikers, and it was arranged that the men could participate in the voting on November 4 by field election procedure. Arrangements were also made for the use of the 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment range at Olyphant, at which 30 men qualified with the revolver and 25 with the carbine.”

By the third week of October the strike had been settled. The strong presence of the National Guard had eliminated most of the violence that had plagued the region in the latter months of the strike. Some collieries were up and running before President Roosevelt's mediated settlement took effect. The owners had consciously planned to manipulate tension and turbulence in order to break the strike with National Guard protection. But throughout the strike both national and local newspapers noted that the presence of the Guard did not precipitate massive defections in the ranks of the strikers, and that troops were indeed serving as impartial peacekeepers.<sup>707</sup> In the face of remarkable steadfastness and solidarity shown by the UMWA membership only a small number of men crossed over the picket lines. The National Guard's massive presence served only to preserve order in the troubled region. Despite the intimation of a pro-corporate attitude on the part of some officers that surfaced at Lattimer, the Guard did not break the strike.<sup>708</sup>

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<sup>707</sup> *The New York Times*, August 19, 1902. "Just now a small detachment [Gobin's Third Brigade] of the National Guard of Pennsylvania is on duty in the coal district. They are not there to suppress as strike or to oppress or terrorize honest miners who are voluntarily idle."; *Scranton (PA) Truth*, July 30, 1902. "We do not think the Shenandoah outbreak will spread to the other localities, nor do we believe that the calling out of the troops in that section will settle the strike."

<sup>708</sup> Blatz, *Democratic Miners*, 135. "Overall, the presence of the National Guard had very little impact on the walkout." ; Jones, "American Cossacks," 31. "The presence of so many Coal and Iron Police and the entire National Guard did not, however, result in victory for the operators and defeat for the strikers."

### III. “Relieving the Guard”

The National Guard’s service to the Commonwealth in the 1902 coal strike came at a high cost to the taxpayers. Some of the units had been on duty over one hundred days. After all the expense vouchers had been submitted, the General Assembly authorized payments totaling \$993, 856.46 to the National Guard.<sup>709</sup> During the 1890s the National Guard had been mobilized five times for service during industrial disputes: Connellsville (1891), Homestead (1892), Jefferson County (1894), Schuylkill County (1897), and Schuylkill County (1900). The total cost of utilizing the Guard on all of these occasions, including the 1902 long strike, was \$1,700,000.<sup>710</sup> The National Guard was quite obviously an expensive solution the problem of maintaining public order in the midst of labor disputes, and the employment of an existing alternative, the Coal and Iron Police, was extremely problematic.

The Coal and Iron Police actually had its organizational genesis in an 1865 statute, Act 228, which granted railroad companies in Pennsylvania the right to maintain private police forces. Companies were required to make application to the governor for commissions for each policeman.<sup>711</sup> The Railroad police were granted the authority to enforce Commonwealth laws on railroad property, including the rights of way through all sixty-seven counties of the state, in effect, creating a floating jurisdiction with amorphous contours. Those who received

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<sup>709</sup> *AGR for 1902*, 14.

<sup>710</sup> Jones, “American Cossacks,” 28.

<sup>711</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1865*, no.228, sec.1, 15. “That any corporation owning, or using a railroad in this State, may apply to the governor to commission such persons as the corporation may designate, to act as policemen for said corporation.”

commissions exercised the same powers as any policeman in the city of Philadelphia.<sup>712</sup> Although they possessed commissions issued by the state and exercised the state's authority, the Railroad police were hired, paid, directed, and discharged by their employers. The police power of the state was placed in the hand of a private interest that exercised it for its own benefit rather than for the people of the Commonwealth.<sup>713</sup> Coal operators and metal foundry owners were given the same privilege by the General Assembly's supplement to Act 228 that passed in 1866.

The Coal and Iron police created controversy and conflict in each of the post 1877 coal strikes that would ultimately require the imposition of the National Guard.<sup>714</sup> Some of the mutual animosity between miners and policemen was based on ethnic and social differences. The coal regions were typically multi-ethnic enclaves while many of the Coal and Iron police officers were recruited from areas outside of the anthracite and coke regions.<sup>715</sup> Although the companies were required to put forward men of suitable disposition and character for commissions, it was often the case that interviews and background checks were wholly neglected, and men of the worst sort were folded into the ranks of the Coal and Iron police.<sup>716</sup>

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<sup>712</sup> Ibid., sec. 3. "... and such policemen, so appointed, shall severally possess and exercise all the powers of the policeman in the city of Philadelphia, in the several counties in which they shall be authorized to act aforesaid."

<sup>713</sup> Stephen H. Norwood, *Strikebreaking and Intimidation: Mercenaries and Masculinity in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 121. "The state gave the coal and iron policeman no indication that he owed it any allegiance; to him, the employer was the law."

<sup>714</sup> James P. Shalloo, *Private Police With Special Reference to Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1933), 58. "It may be safely stated that no other police organization in recent times has given rise to such bitter and determined opposition by so many different groups as the coal and iron police of Pennsylvania."

<sup>715</sup> Miller and Sharpless, *The Kingdom of Coal*, 142. "Since they [Coal and Iron police] were recruited from among the Pennsylvania Germans and other groups outside the region, they had little in common with the ethnically different miners."

<sup>716</sup> Norwood, *Strikebreakers and Mercenaries*, 121. "Many coal and iron policemen in the 1902 Pennsylvania anthracite strike testified before a federal investigating commission that they had not been questioned about their character and background when hired and admitted having

The Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, appointed by President Roosevelt to arbitrate the 1902 anthracite strike, issued, in its final report, an analysis of the factors that contributed to the chronically contentious relationship between the miners and the operators. One part of the report made special reference to the Coal and Iron police and their proclivity for inciting violence in the coalfields.<sup>717</sup> The Commission also noted that the Coal and Iron Police were not impartial officers of the law; they were essentially individual private contractors who were obligated to their employers alone, and under no obligation to the community at large. This “hired gun” status denied the Coal and Iron police the respect that was traditionally given to other duly authorized peace officers such as county sheriffs, town constables, municipal police, and the troops of the National Guard.<sup>718</sup> The Commission recommended changes in the laws of Pennsylvania that would eliminate the Coal and Iron Police and create some type of county or state constabulary police force. Such a police force would tend to mitigate the violence and lawlessness that accompanied the recent strikes in the Commonwealth.<sup>719</sup>

In 1905 Governor Samuel Pennypacker addressed many of the same concerns expressed by the Anthracite Strike Commission regarding the Coal and Iron police in his message to the General Assembly. He noted that companies tended to hastily demand hundreds,

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served prison terms for offenses including assault and battery with intent to kill, larceny, and burglary.”

<sup>717</sup> United States, Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, *Report to the President on the Anthracite Coal Strike of May-October, 1902* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 84. “Their presence is an irritant, and many of the disturbances in the coal regions during the late strike grew out of their presence.”

<sup>718</sup> Ibid. “The employment of this body of police is authorized by law, but they are really the employees of the coal companies, and thus do not secure the respect and obedience to which officers of the law are entitled.”

<sup>719</sup> Ibid. “Should this matter be remedied by legislation, so that the laws could be enforced and peace preserved by a regularly constituted constabulary, appointed and paid by the county or the State, the Commission believes that much of the disorder which accompanies strikes would be avoided.”

or even thousands of commissions in times of labor trouble with little concern for the type of men who would carry those commissions and act in the name of the state. In 1901 Governor Stone had signed 570 commissions for Coal and Iron police. But in the year of the great strike, 1902, some 4,512 commissions were granted to the various operators in the anthracite region, a largesse that flooded the troubled area with a veritable army of company enforcers of dubious reputation and temperament.<sup>720</sup> Pennypacker observed that the government evaded its constitutional obligations to the citizens of Pennsylvania when it “outsourced” its duty to preserve life and property to private contractors.<sup>721</sup> Pennypacker reiterated the recommendation for the establishment of a new state constabulary that had been made by the president’s anthracite strike commissioners. The governor believed that such a force would eliminate the evils associated with the employment of Coal and Iron police, while the cost of maintaining a constabulary would be considerably less than the expense incurred when the National Guard had to be mobilized for duty during industrial disputes.<sup>722</sup>

The State Constabulary was established as an all-purpose law enforcement agency in 1905. Although the Guard had handled its strike-related duties with exemplary professionalism and a high degree of efficiency, it did not regret the loss of this mission to the Constabulary.

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<sup>720</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents, 1905*, “Message of the Governor: Samuel Pennypacker,” 8.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid, 9. “The State stands above interests in controversy and its powers ought not to be used by either of them. In case of disturbance, no confidence can be placed in the discreet use of the power of the State by persons dependent on others for their positions.”

<sup>722</sup> Ibid. Stephen Norwood erroneously asserts that one of the principal motivations for the creation of the state constabulary was the politician’s concern that the working class members of the Guard were unreliable during labor disputes because of their sympathy for the strikers. Aside from a few second-hand, gossipy newspaper accounts of fraternization at Homestead, no evidence exists to support this contention. Norwood, *Strikebreakers and Mercenaries*, 123. “The fraternization between Pennsylvania militiamen and strikers during the 1902 coal strike had greatly alarmed state authorities and business leaders.”

National Guard units in a number of other states expressed similar sentiments.<sup>723</sup> Those who viewed the Guard as a ready reserve for the Regular Army saw strike duty as extraneous to the Guard's real mission and a hindrance to recruiting adequate numbers of qualified men to fill its ranks. Most Guard authorities agreed that policing labor disputes was beneath the martial dignity of the organization.<sup>724</sup> In addition, strike-related duty was having a deleterious effect on recruiting.

Increasingly the major trade unions perceived the National Guard as their enemy and a tool of business interests, a perception that Pennsylvania Guard leaders did not share, but one that they readily understood.<sup>725</sup> In the midst of the 1902 anthracite strike a union convention entertained motions in favor of an outright ban that would prohibit union members from serving in the National Guard.<sup>726</sup> Numerous labor unions issued directives that discouraged Guard enlistment among their rank and file.<sup>727</sup> A Pennsylvania regimental commander noted that his companies were experiencing difficulty in attracting recruits because of the attitude of organized labor in his mostly urban base of operations.<sup>728</sup> Major C. W. Kennedy, a Regular Army officer

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<sup>723</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 151-152.

<sup>724</sup> *Our State Army and Navy Journal*, December, 1905. "The Constabulary would relieve the soldiers from a very unpleasant duty. Little riots, such as those engendered by labor troubles, are not up to the dignity of that service which the real military arm should be required to perform."

<sup>725</sup> Ibid. "Many men hesitate and many other men refuse, to join the ranks of the National Guard, because they do not want to be placed in the light of aiding corporations, owing to strikes, and the employment of non-union workmen."

<sup>726</sup> *The New York Times*, August 18, 1902. "He [delegate Quinlan of the Pipe Caulker's Union] proposed that President Mitchell of the UMW be requested to see that members of the union in future do not join the National Guard."

<sup>727</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 151. "Organized labor intensified the campaign it had initiated in the late nineteenth century to deter workingmen from enlisting."

<sup>728</sup> *AGR for 1906*, 89. "I am creditably informed of the strong objection raised by the labor unions to their members becoming members of the National Guard, and to the objection of merchants having their employees members of the National Guard."



detailed to work with the Pennsylvania Guard, observed that union opposition to enlistment forced captains to accept less than desirable men as members.<sup>729</sup>

After a good deal of serious debate, Governor Pennypacker signed the bill authorizing the establishment and maintenance of the Pennsylvania State Constabulary in May of 1905. Much of the opposition, led in the Senate by Democrat William T. Creasy, was motivated by fiscal concerns, but a number of House members saw the bill as a chance to repeal the legislation that allowed the continued existence of the controversial Coal and Iron Police. This faction, however, was resisted by those whose sentiments and votes were in alignment with the state's corporate interests. Although the target of considerable criticism during debate on the State Constabulary bill, the Coal and Iron police survived, and would remain a part of the Pennsylvania industrial landscape well into the twentieth century.<sup>730</sup>

The statute authorized the creation of four companies of each containing fifty men and two officers, a captain and a lieutenant. Applicants had to pass physical and mental examinations similar to those given to applicants to the police forces of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. In addition to possessing good moral character, recruits also had to prove their horsemanship. Horses were the proven mode of transportation, necessary for mobility when patrolling the rural areas and of proven utility in breaking up threatening crowds in times of

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<sup>729</sup> Ibid., 284. "It forces a captain, in order to keep up his numerical strength, to accept undesirable men who lower the standards of the organization. This is a very vital question in Pennsylvania."

<sup>730</sup> Philip M. Conti, *The Pennsylvania State Police: A History of Service to the Commonwealth 1905 to the Present* (Harrisburg, P.A.: Stackpole Books, 1977), 6. "Creasy was joined by others who evaluated the bill solely on the basis of cost, and not on its benefits to the state insofar as law and order were concerned. Some House members wanted the bill specifically to do away with the Coal and Iron Police, while others, serving the interests of corporations, were successful in blocking such amendments

disorder.<sup>731</sup> The State Police were authorized to make arrests and issue warrants issued by competent local authorities. They were also to serve as forest, fire, game, and fish wardens in their specific districts, a duty that proved overly burdensome and that was eventually given to local constables. The statute also makes clear that the new police force was intended to take the place of the Coal and Iron Police.<sup>732</sup>

The first commander of the State Constabulary was John C. Groome who was an officer with twenty-three years of service in the National Guard's *First City Troop* of Philadelphia. Groome had a reputation as a no-nonsense disciplinarian who had brought the *City Troop* to the highest levels of efficiency and professionalism.<sup>733</sup> Groome soon enlisted his four companies with preference given to men with prior service in either the National Guard or the Regular Army.<sup>734</sup> The troops lived in barracks and were subject to military discipline and posted to units outside of their home communities to avoid any possibility that parochial relationships and interests would interfere with their duties. Within a short period of its foundation the Pennsylvania State Constabulary had established itself as a formidable force in labor disputes. They developed a reputation for rapid deployment and indiscriminate violence in coalfield villages and city streets.<sup>735</sup>

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<sup>731</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1905*, no. 278, sec.3.

<sup>732</sup> *Ibid.*, sec.5. "... and are intended, as far as possible, to take the place of the police now appointed at the request of various corporations."

<sup>733</sup> Katherine Mayo, *Justice to All: The Story of the Pennsylvania State police* (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 17. "Again, in the great Anthracite Strike of 1902, the City Troop showed such a high attainment in every point that indicates a fine commanding officer that its reputation took another upward bound."

<sup>734</sup> Norwood, *Strikebreakers and Mercenaries*, 75. "The state police force was subjected to strict military discipline. Such discipline was far easier to enforce than in the militia, since 90 percent of the men in the Constabulary were veterans of the regular army or navy."

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid.* "The black-uniformed, black-helmeted Pennsylvania Constabulary quickly developed a reputation as a highly mobile, efficient strikebreaking force, armed with automatic weapons, who 'fire[d] to kill'. They were hated and dreaded by Pennsylvania's trade unionists, who called

It appears then, from the available contemporary sources and modern literature, that the State Constabulary was recruited as a labor police force that could be utilized in a more aggressive way against strikers than its National Guard predecessor that had, for the most part, maintained a stance of strict impartiality in the deadly disputes between labor and capital. And, as the Commonwealth was about to embark on two decades of increasingly more violent labor strife, the newly established Constabulary was a more perfect instrument for the times. No less an authority than General John Gobin, veteran of the anthracite strikes, commended the new State Constabulary on its service, and noted with gratitude that it had relieved the National Guard of the unpleasant duties related to policing strikes.<sup>736</sup>

From 1877 until 1905 the Pennsylvania National Guard was the most effective, but seldom employed state agent for quelling riots and preserving law and order during industrial disputes. To some observers the Guard had performed this duty so well that it seemed that it was consciously formed, recruited, and maintained to be the state's "policeman of labor". The works of Holmes, Kuritz, and Jones have solidified this conceptualization, and it has been reiterated in numerous monographic studies of labor history during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. If one relied on the evidence and conclusions presented in these works the Pennsylvania National Guard was indeed a tool of various administrations that maintained close alliances with business interests. But an examination of Guard mobilizations during Commonwealth labor disputes belies the popular perception of their role in these events.

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them the "Black Cossacks" or "Black Hussars," nicknames that associated them with czarist and Hapsburg brutality and despotism."

<sup>736</sup> *AGR for 1906*, 68. "The success of the State Constabulary seems to be pronounced, and it can be welcomed by the National Guard as a great conservator of the peace. Its operations in no way interfere with the Guard Service. Its rapid movements and decisive action in emergencies will doubtless relieve the Guard in many instances from riot duty."

The Pennsylvania National Guard was mobilized just six times, either partially or in whole, for strike-related duty in the years 1878-1905. This number of interventions is almost insignificant when compared to number of strikes that actually occurred in the time period in which the National Guard supposedly earned its reputation as labor's policeman. The Pennsylvania Secretary of Internal Affairs kept a complete record of strikes and included the data in the department's annual reports to the General Assembly. In the years 1881-1886 there were 389 strikes in all industries and the National Guard was not called up on a single occasion.<sup>737</sup> During the period 1887-1890 there was a total of eighty-nine strikes, and again, not one required the mobilization of the National Guard.<sup>738</sup> In the year of the Homestead strike, 1892, there were twenty-nine separate strikes throughout the Commonwealth, yet only Homestead had a Guard intervention. In the year before Homestead there were fifty-three total strikes, with thirty-four in coal mining and nine in iron and steel manufacture. Yet once again, not one of these "heavy industry" strikes required the use of the Guard. In the year following the Homestead mobilization there were twenty-nine strikes with no National Guard interventions.<sup>739</sup>

In the six strikes that did necessitate the use of National Guard there were no indications that the mobilization was arbitrary or unnecessary. In most of the strikes violent incidents accompanied by bloodshed precipitated an intervention. In Connellsville, Homestead, and Lattimer gunfights resulted in numerous casualties when strikers battled, depending upon the location, deputy sheriffs, Pinkertons, or the Coal and Iron Police. The continued maintenance of law and order proved to be impossible after these affairs as local authorities did not possess

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<sup>737</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents for 1888*, "Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs: The Statistics of Strikes, 1881-1888," vol.4, 19-47.

<sup>738</sup> *Pennsylvania Official Documents for 1890*, "Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs: Statistics of Strikes and Lockouts From 1867-1890," vol.3, 121-187.

<sup>739</sup> These statistics are found in the Secretary of Internal Affairs Reports for 1891 and 1893.

adequate forces for those purposes. On several occasions, Pennsylvania governors demanded verifiable proof from county sheriffs and civic leaders that they had indeed adequately employed all of the local resources at their disposal. Once convinced of the need for the Guard, governors were required by law to commit the troops to suppress disorder. In point of fact Pennsylvania authorities displayed remarkable restraint in their use of the National Guard in labor disputes, despite the pressure applied by the various industrialists whose interests were threatened by the strikers.

At least one major study of the National Guard in this period portrayed the organization as a tool of industry because the majority of its personnel were drawn from the propertied and managerial classes that naturally identified with the business interests.<sup>740</sup> While Holmes acknowledged the difficulty of making generalizations from available data, his study focused on the social backgrounds of National Guard officers in elite, socially prominent urban units such as Philadelphia's *First City Troop* and Reading's Thirteenth Regiment. The use of such data and the generalizations about the men in the ranks that were drawn from it are tantamount to identifying the class status of Vietnam era infantry officers with the men in the rifle companies.

Anecdotal evidence drawn from newspapers and the adjutant general's reports indicated that skilled and semi-skilled workers were represented in the ranks in significant numbers, and strike duty made the recruitment of such men problematic for most commands after 1902. Numerous reports before 1900 commended various units for their performance of strike duty in spite of the high number of working class men on the muster rolls. The push for an increased number of company drill nights and an augmented yearly encampment had to contend

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<sup>740</sup> Holmes, "The National Guard of Pennsylvania," chap.6, *passim*.

with the unwillingness, exhibited by many of the men and noted by company commanders, to take time off from work. The Pennsylvania National Guard, contrary to Holmes's assertion, was not a businessman's organization between 1870 and 1905.<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>741</sup> Ibid., 252.

## Chapter Six

After the 1902 Anthracite strike the Pennsylvania National guard entered a period filled with formidable challenges and significant change. The Guard formed the core of the Pennsylvania volunteer regiments called up by the president in 1898 for the war with Spain. Pennsylvania troops, unlike those of many states, mobilized quickly and efficiently for war service. The difficulties that the men had to endure were generated by the miscalculation and miscommunication that was generated on the federal level. Pennsylvania officers and men had long been accustomed to the near flawless operation of Guard logistical personnel during their annual encampments and maneuvers. Their time in federal service was marked by disease, poor transport facilities, and lack of adequate rations. But despite these negatives, the Pennsylvania troops that experienced the battlefield performed their service in an exemplary fashion

The 1903 Dick Act and subsequent legislation at the federal and state level served to modernize, professionalize, and reorganize the National Guard and place it in the forefront of the nation's defense policy. Pennsylvania was in the vanguard of legislative efforts that firmly tied the National Guard to the Regular Army so as to prepare the state troops for their reserve mission. Of course, the Pennsylvania Guard had been preparing for this role since the 1880s. The new laws simply recognized what many Guard officers had so long assumed- the Guard was the first line reserve for the Army.

While most observers agree that the Guard mobilization for service on the Mexican border in 1916, the record established by Pennsylvania troops in this endeavor is exemplary. As

in the 1898 mobilization, the Guard handled itself with a high degree of efficiency and professionalism. National Guard troops did not see action during the Mexican deployment. Although they had no combat role, Pennsylvania's troops took every occasion to learn from the Regulars. The 1916 deployment was a dress rehearsal for the massive effort that would come in the spring of 1917, after the United States declared war on Germany and hastened to construct a multi-million man Army for service on the western front.

### I. "United States Volunteers"

Unlike the greatly enhanced and technologically sophisticated American naval forces, the ground forces of the United States, the Regulars and the National Guard, were not prepared to fight a war against Spain in the spring of 1898.<sup>742</sup> For years a small number of Regulars had manned the scattered forts and coastal defenses of the continental United States. The Army's primary military purpose since the end of the Civil War was Indian fighting, keeping the peace in the western regions, and providing security for Reconstruction in the former Confederate states.<sup>743</sup> The measures instituted to expand the regular Army for the war with Spain and provide a mechanism for the incorporation of volunteers, came in the wake of the often contentious Congressional wrangling over the Hull bill. In the weeks leading up to President McKinley's

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<sup>742</sup> Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard," 112. "Despite the strong indications for war, the War Department made no practical plans for the mobilization of the Guard. Indeed, it even failed to make preparation for mobilizing the Regulars."

<sup>743</sup> James I. Abrahamson, *America Arms for a New Century: The Making of a Great Military Power* (New York: The Free Press, 1981), 7. "Should some unforeseen crisis call for the emergency creation of an expanded force, the army had no system for mobilizing and training men. As in the past, it would rely upon hastily trained civilians who's large numbers might compensate for lack of experience."



war message to Congress, the War Department, with the support of Representative John Hull of Iowa, attempted to use the increasing likelihood of war with Spain to pass legislation that would both permanently reorganize Army ground forces and create an expansible enlisted force that did not rely on the personnel of the National Guard or state volunteers.<sup>744</sup> Both reforms had long been on the agenda of the more progressive elements within the War Department and the Army's officer corps. The proposed legislation gave the President the power to mobilize troops and expand the Army without a declaration of war. Although the establishment of permanent reform was uppermost in the minds of the bill's sponsors, the immediate intention of the bill was to provide for a rapid assembly of troops for the impending campaign in Cuba.

Theoretically, at least, the National Guard was an available pool of trained manpower that could be incorporated into the regiments that the Army was raising for war service. Many state Guard advocates assumed that the organization's primary mission was to stand ready as the nation's first line reserve. As previously detailed, the bulk of the reforms instituted in the National Guard of Pennsylvania since 1877 prepared it for field service in the event of war, and unlike the woeful condition of many state Guard organizations, the Pennsylvania contingent was actually prepared to fight in 1898.<sup>745</sup> But the Hull bill would have eliminated any significant active duty role for the Guard. Army reformers and their sympathizers in the War Department and Congress wanted to relegate the National Guard to strictly domestic support duties such as

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<sup>744</sup> Millet and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 272. "Intended as a permanent reform, the Hull bill proposed an expansible 104,000-man Army that would eliminate the need for state manpower."

<sup>745</sup> Graham Cosmas, "From Order to Chaos: War Department, The National Guard, and Military Policy, 1898," *Military Affairs* 29, no.3 (Autumn, 1965): 105-122, 107. The inadequacies noted here by Cosmas certainly do not apply to the Pennsylvania Guard: "Few states taught their troops such elementary military arts as cooking and pitching tents in the field; and what battle exercises the Guardsmen conducted often followed Civil War tactics which would have been suicidal against modern weapons."

manning U.S. coastal defenses. Guardsmen, if they desired a combat role, were urged to enlist in the expanding regular Army regiments as individuals. Guard officers would have to give up their state commissions and enlist just like all the other anonymous recruits. In short, there was no place in this new Army, as envisioned in the Hull bill, for either the Guard or organized bodies of state volunteers.<sup>746</sup>

The Hull bill had the support of the administration and it emerged from the House Military Affairs Committee with its essential features intact, but with an important amendment that required a Congressional declaration of war before the president could expand the Army to War strength. A second amendment affirmed the American tradition of military economy by immediately reducing the Army to peacetime level after the cessation of hostilities. But state National Guard organizations in alliance with their governors ultimately doomed the Hull bill. Guardsmen were adamant in their opposition to the bill because it eliminated their participation, as intact organizations in the war that was looming on the national horizon. There was also the very real possibility that they would be permanently on the periphery of American defense policy. After several days of negotiations the Army and the National Guard came to an agreement that scuttled the Hull bill and that reserved a key role for the citizen-soldiers of the states in the imminent mobilization. The bill that passed declared that the land forces of the United States, in time of war, would be composed of the “Regular Army” and the “Volunteer Army.”

The Congress of the United States issued a declaration of war against Spain on April 21, 1898. President William McKinley, following the precedent of Abraham Lincoln, quickly

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<sup>746</sup> Stephen Skowronek, *Building the New American State*, 113. “The bill had been designed to prevent the organized guard from entering offensive action as a national reserve with its own units intact.”

made an appeal for 125,000 volunteers to expand the miniscule Regular Army so as to provide sufficient force to eject Spanish military forces from Cuba. The bill approved by Congress on April 22 authorized the president to expand the regular Army to 104,000 men, fleshing it out with a volunteer force by assigning a manpower quota to each state.<sup>747</sup> The high number called out by President McKinley guaranteed that the Guardsmen who wanted to serve would have the opportunity, although the regular Army high command and the War Department doubted that such a huge force would be necessary to defeat Spain.<sup>748</sup>

State National Guard units were the force of choice to fill the volunteer quotas because they were already trained and organized to some degree. Constitutional restrictions pertaining to the use of the Guard prohibited its employment outside of the United States and its territorial possessions. To solve this dilemma the bill stipulated that as long as National Guard units volunteered as a body they would serve together as U.S. Volunteers under their own officers. Volunteers were liable to three years of service, and state governors were given the authority to commission field officers upon the certification granted by state-appointed officer review boards. General and staff officer appointments were placed in the hands of the president. Unit organization, discipline, and pay would conform to regular Army standards. These conditions allowed the states to maintain several traditional prerogatives, but the mark of increased federal control over what had been autonomous state organizations is unmistakable. In

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<sup>747</sup> Millet and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 272.

<sup>748</sup> Cosmas, "From Organization to Chaos", 119. "The change in the plan appalled General Miles and other Regular officers, who saw no need for such a large force and knew that the War Department was not prepared to equip it...."

addition to control over general and staff officers, the federal authorities prescribed the manpower quotas for each state.<sup>749</sup>

On April 25, Secretary of War Alger sent a request to the state governors for troops. Each state had been given a manpower quota that was supposed to be organized into a specified number of regiments, troops, and batteries.<sup>750</sup> Pennsylvania, unlike the federal government, had been preparing for war for months, and was ready to mobilize its National Guard upon receipt of the executive order.<sup>751</sup> After receiving Alger's telegram, the Governor ordered the entire Pennsylvania Division to assemble at Mount Gretna on April 28. The morning roster for that day indicated that ninety-six percent of the command was present for duty.<sup>752</sup> Medical officers, who had been mustered in before the men arrived, administered physicals to prospective volunteers on May 6. Federal regulations required that each officer and enlisted man who volunteered for service had to pass a thorough physical examination. A number of officers and men were declared physically unfit for service, but for most of the units such losses were negligible.<sup>753</sup>

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<sup>749</sup> Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1971), 92. "In line with Regular Army doctrine, however, it also increased federal control over the organization and officering of the Volunteers."

<sup>750</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization*, 156. "The number of men was to be apportioned, as far as practicable, among the states, territories and the District of Columbia, according to the population."

<sup>751</sup> *AGR for 1898*, 3. "The probabilities of war with Spain seemed to be increasing and in accordance with the directions of the Governor all necessary and advisable steps were taken to prepare the National Guard of the State to respond promptly should a call be made by the President for troops."

<sup>752</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-18. "Consolidated Morning Report of the Division, National Guard of Pennsylvania," 13-18.

<sup>753</sup> The results of the Fifth regiment physical examinations are typical. *Ibid.*, "Report of the Commander, Fifth Regiment of Infantry," 186. "The physical examination of the remaining four hundred and thirty-three (433) enlisted men resulted in the rejection of only nineteen."

Each member of the Guard was required to take the oath that committed him to serve as a U.S. Volunteer. Before the mustering officer administered the oath he read a proclamation from the Governor stating that service was wholly voluntary and that the Commonwealth would excuse those personnel whose family obligations or other pressing commitments precluded volunteer service.<sup>754</sup> Fully seventy percent of those present for duty on April 28 eventually took the oath and were mustered in as U.S. Volunteers.<sup>755</sup> Much to the relief of state authorities, the men were the financial responsibility of the federal government once they had been mustered into service.<sup>756</sup>

The President requested that Pennsylvania supply 10,800 men for service in the Army ground forces. Ten regiments of infantry and four batteries of artillery were organized on the basis of twelve companies per regiment of infantry, 81-101 men per company, and 204 officers and men per battery of artillery. As the aggregate strength of the Guard was less than the federal quota every regiment had to launch an immediate recruitment drive to fill out their twelve companies with the minimum number of personnel. Each Guard unit desired to enter federal as

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<sup>754</sup> F.H. Reichard, *The American Volunteer: A History of the Fourth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers in the Spanish-American war of 1898* (Allentown: The Author, 1898), 27. "The necessity of the situation does not require that any member of the National Guard of Pennsylvania shall consider himself bound by such membership to enlist in the service of the United States, if such enlistment shall impose upon him personal sacrifices not made necessary under the limited call of the President, or hardships upon those who are dependent upon him for support."

<sup>755</sup> *AGR for 1898*, 246-247. (The numbers are broken down according to rank-officers, non-commissioned, and privates. Each regiment's volunteer totals are reported as well); Beyer, *A History of the Sheridan Troop*, 24. "The roll was called and all the officers and 59 men were sworn into the service of the United States. One man dissented and was returned home."

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*, 9. "All absolutely necessary expenses for the subsistence, transportation, sheltering and generally the maintenance of volunteers, during the interval between their enrollment, enlistment and their muster (or being sworn) will be met by the Government of the United States from the proper appropriation at the disposal of the several Staff Departments of the Army."

an integrated unit so they rushed to bring their numbers up to the required level.<sup>757</sup> The patriotic response to the President's call quickly filled the ranks. The Third Regiment began recruiting on May 5 and within six days it had the required number of recruits. Unfortunately for these new recruits, the Commonwealth did not have enough weapons, uniforms, and other military accoutrements to outfit them. Most would have to wait until they reached the federally designated camps to receive their kit. The addition of raw recruits challenged the logistical capabilities of both the Guard and the War Department, and in some cases, the new men reduced the overall preparedness and efficiency of most of the Volunteer outfits.<sup>758</sup>

As the Pennsylvania Volunteer regiments began to take shape, Governor Hastings and his military staff addressed two "injustices" that had been created by War Department's personnel policy. Pennsylvania contributed infantry and artillery units to the Volunteer force but no cavalry. The horse soldiers would have to serve as either infantrymen or artillerymen if they wanted to be a part of the Volunteer Army. Pennsylvania authorities were also upset that its division commander and brigadier generals, officers with long and distinguished careers in the National Guard, were not given Volunteer commissions.<sup>759</sup> The War Department acquiesced on the addition of cavalry units, but would not capitulate on the commissions for Pennsylvania's general officers.<sup>760</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> Ibid., 19. "All the organizations of the National Guard desired to enter the service as organized, the ranks to be filled by recruiting, until the quota was reached."

<sup>758</sup> Cosmas, 119. "Instead Guard commanders brought their regiments up to the minimum strength needed for muster by filling their ranks with new recruits, most of whom had no previous military experience and some of whom were later found medically unfit for duty."

<sup>759</sup> *AGR for 1898*, 46. "They had rendered valuable service to the State in training the men of the National Guard and in placing the military institution of the State in the very front rank of the citizen soldiery of the nation."

<sup>760</sup> Brigadier General John Schall accepted a Colonel's commission and led the Sixth Regiment during the conflict, Brigadier Generals Wiley and Snowden would serve as regimental commanders.

Only a few of the Pennsylvania Volunteer units would actually perform overseas duty during the ten-week conflict with Spain. Most of the Pennsylvania Volunteers had to endure the drudgery and hazards of camp life in places like Camp Thomas, located in the Chickamauga National Military Park. Federal authorities had given some thought to leaving the state Guard units in their respective muster camps for logistical reasons, but in the end the War Department decided to concentrate the Regulars and the state Volunteer units in the newly created federal camps. These camps, however, had neither the facilities nor administrative apparatus to deal with the overwhelming numbers that they would have to process, equip, house, and feed.<sup>761</sup>

Conditions at Camp Thomas were poor, and Pennsylvania Volunteer officers were quite vocal in their criticism of the Regular Army officers who did not seem to care about the health and welfare of the troops in camp. The terrible state of medical and material support must have come as a surprise to Pennsylvania officers who were used to the high standards of the commissary and subsistence personnel in the Guard.<sup>762</sup> Colonel Willis Hulings of the Sixteenth Pennsylvania blasted the incompetence of the Regular Army's logistical system and its personnel. Hulings was certain that the citizen-soldiers of the Pennsylvania National Guard could have taught the War Department a thing or two about the supply and subsistence "business".<sup>763</sup>

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<sup>761</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 298. "Transportation of supplies would be easier for a few camps than for many; the militia ought to be exposed to the influence of the Regulars; and the militia ought to be divorced as soon as possible from the parochial influences of their homes."

<sup>762</sup> *AGR for 1898*, "Report of Colonel C. Bow Dougherty, Commander Ninth Regiment U.S.V. Infantry," 216. "The Regular Army officers, while equipped with splendid technical ability, seemed entirely devoid of administrative and technical ability. We were left to our own resources in many instances, in some we were strictly enjoined- these latter instances proved often to the disadvantage of the health and care of the men ..."

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.*, "Report of Colonel Willis Hulings, Commander, Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry," 284. "The absurd system of issues and accounts were the cause of much of the delay

Health and sanitation problems were just as great as supply problems. In point of fact disease, and not enemy fire, proved to be the greatest killer of Americans during the war. Sanitary and health conditions in the training camps and in the field were abysmal. Outbreaks of communicable diseases were rampant. Typhoid fever and cholera struck the camps with particular ferocity in the summer months. At the conclusion of the hostilities, President McKinley appointed the Dodge Commission to investigate the military deficiencies that impeded the American war effort. The Commission's report heard testimony and investigated the abuses at the root of the poor health conditions and the high mortality rates.<sup>764</sup> The sanitary abuses ran the gamut from bad food and water, to overcrowding, liberal use of liquor, prostitutes, and poor sewage and garbage disposal. The Commission concluded that poor, or non-existent planning had combined with outright negligence to create a health nightmare in Camp Thomas.<sup>765</sup>

Pennsylvania's Volunteers, the men of the National Guard and the new recruits, faced the same conditions as the other volunteer units in the camps. Many soldiers wrote back home and informed their relatives, friends, and neighbors about the filthy conditions and the outbreaks of disease in Camp Thomas. The people back home in the Commonwealth responded to the plight of their soldiers and took matters into their own hands. On August 19 they sent a train

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and the inefficiency. And if that jungle of red tape could be abolished and the simple and business-like and efficient system of our N.G.P. were adopted instead, and then put in the hands of men of affairs, such as have administered our system in the past, the service would be greatly improved."

<sup>764</sup> United States Congress, *Report of the Commission Appointed by the President to Investigate the Conduct of the War Department in the War with Spain* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 178.

<sup>765</sup> Ibid. "The responsibility for the conditions at Chickamauga rests upon those who assembled over 60,000 raw levies and kept the great mass of them together for weeks, and upon those whose duty it was to inspect, advise, and order- officers, medical and military, regimental, brigade, division, corps, and of the camp, and the higher the authority the greater the responsibility."



outfitted as a hospital to take care of the sick.<sup>766</sup> Private groups arranged for two more hospital trains to be sent to Georgia to care for Pennsylvania soldiers. Governor Hastings arrived with one of the trains and took a number of soldiers back to Philadelphia with him after he reviewed the Pennsylvania regiments.<sup>767</sup> It was a tiny, grassroots effort, but the citizens did as much as they could to protect their National Guard troops from what they perceived to be the neglect and incompetence of an unsympathetic federal authority that exacted service from the men, but did not provide them with basic necessities or adequate medical care.

Only three of Pennsylvania's Volunteer infantry regiments saw active duty overseas during the war. The Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, under Colonel Willis Hulings, sailed for Puerto Rico on July 22. The Fourth Pennsylvania Infantry, assigned to Major General John R. Brooke's First Corps, sailed from Newport News to Puerto Rico on July 27. Conditions on the transports were wretched; the men were literally crammed into every available space below deck in an atmosphere that was dark, dirty, hot and suffocating. Fresh water stores were so contaminated by rust that they were rendered unfit for human consumption.<sup>768</sup> The Fourth's commander, Colonel David B. Case observed that the ships of the convoy had to make their own way to the island without naval escort, despite the fact that Spanish naval forces were still

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<sup>766</sup> *AGR for 1898*, 148. "It was thoroughly fitted out with everything necessary for the care and comfort of the sick and was accompanied by several physicians and trained nurses from the different hospitals in Philadelphia."

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.* "August 27, 1898, a second hospital train arrived in charge of Governor Daniel H. Hastings, and conveyed all of the remaining sick men of the regiment to Philadelphia."

<sup>768</sup> Reichard, *History of the Fourth Regiment*, 116-120; Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 192-193. Cosmas thoroughly described the conditions on Cuba bound troop transports, Reichard noted much of the same: "In vessels so ill fitted and then overcrowded, the week-long, 1,000-mile journey to Santiago became for soldiers an ordeal of jammed decks and passageways, scanty, uncooked food, smelly, ill-vented bunkrooms, and putrid water."

supposedly operating in the southwestern Atlantic.<sup>769</sup> Despite the lack of escort, the transports reached their objective, the small port city of Guanica on the south coast of Puerto Rico on August 2. The Fourth thus joined the Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, the *Governor's Troop*, the *Sheridan Troop*, and Artillery Batteries A and C, all Pennsylvania units that had arrived at the island one day before the Fourth Regiment.

The Sixteenth Regiment took the towns of El Coto and Juan Diaz. These were bloodless encounters; Spanish troops in the town garrisons had withdrawn as the Americans approached. The men of the Sixteenth exchanged their .45 caliber Springfields with their black powder cartridges for the Army-issued Krag-Jorgensen box-magazine rifle on August 7. The Pennsylvania Guard's perennial focus on marksmanship quickly emerged as the troops, in the midst of a war zone, immediately set themselves to target practice with their new pieces.<sup>770</sup> On August 9, the Sixteenth executed a night march and a river crossing. They had been ordered to take the Spanish entrenchments at Coamo as part of General Miles' plan to push Spanish forces back toward San Juan in the north. These maneuvers were executed in conditions that no Pennsylvania Guardsman had ever encountered before- all but impenetrable jungle combined with stifling tropical heat and humidity. Despite the adverse conditions the Sixteenth reached its starting point on time and initiated a flank attack, covered by artillery fire, on the strong Spanish entrenchments. The Sixteenth attacked over open ground and into withering Spanish fire. Miraculously only one man was killed, although several were wounded. After an intense

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<sup>769</sup> *AGR for 1898*, "Report of Colonel David Case, Commander, Fourth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry," 181. "We left without any armed convoy and without a gun on board either ship for defense. I believe ours was the only expedition of that kind sent out during active hostilities."

<sup>770</sup> *Ibid.*, 287. "On the 7<sup>th</sup> of August we received the Krag-Jorgensen rifles, and the men were instantly set to practice on the range."

firefight that lasted over one hour the Spaniards surrendered. Colonel Hulings was justifiably proud of the accomplishments of his Pennsylvania regiment.<sup>771</sup>

The Sixteenth was made up of Guardsmen from northwestern Pennsylvania and some of the hastily recruited volunteers. The successful action at Coamo required the Guard to execute a series of difficult and hazardous maneuvers that would have taxed the abilities of Regulars. But the military professionalism and battlefield efficiency of both officers and men, the result of long hours spent in summer camp maneuvers, on the firing ranges, and in the armories, prepared the Guard to accomplish the novel and difficult assignments that they were entrusted with at Coamo.<sup>772</sup> The Fourth Regiment, along with the Pennsylvania cavalry troops and artillery batteries, did not get into the fight. They were moving into support positions for the final assault on San Juan when the armistice was declared on August 13. All the Pennsylvania volunteers, except for the Sixteenth Regiment, left the island in the first week of September and returned home. The Sixteenth shipped out on October 11, and landed in New York on October 17.

The Tenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, under the command of Colonel A.L. Hawkins, was the only other Commonwealth unit involved in combat operations during the war. The Tenth was originally ordered to Camp Thomas, but on May 17 the regiment was sent to San Francisco and attached to Major General Wesley Merritt's Eighth Corps that was assembling for an invasion of the Philippines. At least two "official" sources indicated that the assignment of

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<sup>771</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>772</sup> Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 237. "The western column under General Schwan made the most spectacular advance. In eight days, Schwan's men marched 92 miles, fought two sharp skirmishes, captured nine towns, and took 192 Spanish prisoners. The column sent through the mountains along the newly discovered trail also achieved its objective without difficulty."

the Tenth Regiment to the Philippine Campaign was the result of political ambition on the part of its two highest-ranking officers and the influence they employed to accomplish their purposes.<sup>773</sup>

War Department mobilization orders called for all east coast units to be sent to Cuba, and Midwestern and western units were designated for the Philippines. It was, therefore, rather extraordinary for the Tenth Pennsylvania to be part of the Philippine expedition, in fact it was the only eastern unit so “privileged”. Colonel Alexander Hawkins, successful businessman, prominent Republican committeeman, and commander of the regiment, was a candidate for the Pennsylvania Senate at the time of the Tenth’s muster into federal service. The official accounts infer that Hawkins wanted to get his regiment into the war quickly and garner the political *bona fides* that would accrue from his war service.<sup>774</sup> Hawkins contacted President McKinley’s brother, a practicing attorney in Somerset County, and enlisted his help to persuade the War Department to reassign the Tenth to the Philippine expedition. He wanted to get the regiment into combat before the other Pennsylvania units had even left their U.S. training camps.

Lieutenant Colonel James Barnett, second in command of the Tenth, also had political aspirations. He had been deputy secretary of the Commonwealth and was planning a run for state treasurer when the war began. Barnett allegedly pressured his political connections in Harrisburg to obtain the influence of Pennsylvania’s two powerful Republican senators, Boies Penrose and Matthew Quay. Hawkins and Barnett apparently succeeded; while the rest of the

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<sup>773</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, *History of the 10<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Its Forbearers and Successors in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean Emergency* (Allentown, P.A.: Miers Lithographic Service, 1966), 65; Clarke, *Official History*, vol.1, 234. The 10th’s historians commented: “The Army will always have the grapevine and the latrine rumors. It is strange the number of them that turn out to be true.”

<sup>774</sup> John B.B. Trussell, “A Pennsylvanian in the Philippines: Extracts From the Letters of Corporal William S. Christner, 1898-1899,” *Pennsylvania History* 44, no.2 (April, 1977): 117-144, 119. “Certainly with the clear example of the influence of Civil War service on political fortunes, no political aspirant could have been insensible to the potential value of an active combat record.”

Pennsylvania units went into camp in Georgia, the Tenth Regiment entrained to San Francisco to join the Eighth Corps.

The Tenth spent approximately three weeks at “Camp Merritt” in San Francisco’s Richmond district. The men spent their time training and gathering the unit’s equipment. They shipped out on June 14, and after a pleasant stop in the Hawaiian Islands the warships of Admiral Dewey’s Pacific Fleet escorted the expeditionary force from Wake Island to Manila Bay.<sup>775</sup> Lieutenant Colonel James Barnett observed that the voyage was a pleasant one. Certainly it did not encounter the miserable conditions that the Cuban expedition had to deal with on their transports. The men were even treated to a luncheon and musical performance while the transports took on coal in Honolulu. It was obvious that transportation officers of the Eighth Corps had outperformed their counterparts in east.<sup>776</sup>

The Tenth disembarked and marched into “Camp Dewey”, some six miles south of Manila, and within a few days went into entrenchments, formerly manned by insurgent forces, that were adjacent to the Spanish fortifications that screened Malate, a suburb on the outskirts of Manila. The Tenth was in the line performing outpost duty on the night of July 31. In the midst of a torrential rain, the acting commander, Major H.C. Cuthbertson, thought he detected a line of

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<sup>775</sup> *AGR for 1898*, “Report of Lieutenant Colonel James E. Barnett, Acting Commander, Tenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry,” 233. “The expedition touched at Honolulu on June 24<sup>th</sup>, and while the vessels were coaling the troops marched to the Royal Hawaiian gardens, and there treated to a fine lunch by the Royal Hawaiian band, sailing from that place on June 25<sup>th</sup>.”

<sup>776</sup> Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 182. “The authorities at San Francisco carefully prepared the transports for their month-long 7,000-mile run to the Philippines. Upon the charter of each vessel, officers from the Quartermaster and Medical departments and from the line, inspected her, determined her passenger capacity, and specified in detail the alterations needed to fit her for carrying troops.”

Spanish infantry approaching the American position.<sup>777</sup> Although no other officer sighted the Spanish troops, Cuthbertson was certain that the Spanish were mounting an attack of some kind. The American line was the target of steady rifle fire and the Tenth was taking casualties. Cuthbertson, a veteran National Guard officer, coolly ordered his outpost detail back into the line and brought up his reserve company.<sup>778</sup> The Pennsylvanians returned fire until dawn. The rising sun and the sudden silence revealed that the Spanish had broken contact. Although participants later claimed a much larger action, and a significantly more bloody result, the Tenth had stood up to an enemy night assault and had fought like Regulars.<sup>779</sup>

The Philippine insurgents grew hostile toward their erstwhile American allies after the Spanish surrender. President McKinley indicated the administration's intention to annex the Philippines and this announcement initiated numerous clashes between the frustrated insurgents and American forces. The rebels probed the U.S. positions ringing the city of Manila on a nightly basis. The Tenth Pennsylvania came under fire on the night of February 4, and eventually had to hold off three rebel attacks on their position. The divisional commander, Brigadier General Arthur MacArthur, ordered a general assault on insurgent positions on February 5. The Tenth began its attack after an artillery barrage softened up the enemy front. The Pennsylvanians quickly achieved their objective, an old mission church and cemetery, with a

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<sup>777</sup> Ironically, neither Hawkins nor Barnett were present when the "battle" began. Hawkins was severely debilitated by the effects of late stage cancer and back in his tent; Barnett was in Pennsylvania recruiting additional personnel.

<sup>778</sup> Pennsylvania National Guard, 10th Volunteer Infantry, *Official History of the Operations of the Tenth Pennsylvania United States Volunteer Infantry in the Philippine Islands* (n.p., 1963), 9. "Seeing this danger, major Cuthbertson withdrew the pickets and outposts, advancing the reserve line under the command of Major Bierer."

<sup>779</sup> Trussell, "Pennsylvania in the Philippines," 126. "Whatever the facts, the Pennsylvanians had held their ground against what they believed to be a full-scale assault. This was no mean achievement for Volunteers in their initial combat-indeed, in the initial combat of the entire force."

daring and dangerous frontal assault.<sup>780</sup> The Tenth lost only one man killed and six wounded while it had killed forty-two of the enemy. The small number of casualties is surprising given that other American forces participating in the general assault had 337 total casualties. Once again the Tenth Regiment had performed superbly under fire and displayed a high degree of courage and professionalism. They had participated in a combined arms action as part of a division-sized offensive. The Pennsylvania Guardsmen, of course, had experience in large unit maneuvers. They had engaged in such large-scale exercises before (minus the live artillery and enemy fire, of course) in the National Guard summer camps. The regiment would essentially duplicate this same kind of frontal assault against a fixed insurgent position on March 25 near Malinta.

The Tenth Pennsylvania was relieved from the line on April 25, 1889, and spent its remaining days in the Philippines doing garrison duty in Cavite. On June 10 the regiment was ordered to return to the United States. A grand review was held in their honor on August 22, and they paraded in Pittsburgh before thousands of grateful citizens. President McKinley arrived in time to give a welcoming address in Schenley Park.<sup>781</sup> General Hawkins was not on the reviewing stand that day to address his troops and bask in the reflected glory of the numerous political and military *glitterati*. The Colonel had died at sea during the return voyage. Naturally

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<sup>780</sup> Richard R. Sauers, *Pennsylvania in the Spanish-American War* (Harrisburg: Capital Preservation Committee, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1998), 72-73.

<sup>781</sup> *AGR for 1898*, 243. "The regiment was received and escorted through Allegheny and Pittsburgh by several military organizations of the State, and upon reaching Schenley Park passed in review before President McKinley, Governor Stone, General Merritt, General Greene and other notable men, who afterwards addressed the men in the same park."

he, along with his fine war record, would not be a factor in the upcoming state senatorial election.<sup>782</sup>

The poor performance of both the Regulars and the Volunteers during the Spanish-American War has been endlessly chronicled by successive generations of historians. The National Guard in particular has drawn heavy criticism for its lack of preparedness, equipment, efficiency, and usefulness in combat.<sup>783</sup> Pennsylvania's volunteers, the bulk of which were Guardsmen, did creditable service. In response to the President's call the state was able to mobilize its entire division and assemble it in camp in a very short period of time. For the most part the Pennsylvania units that went into federal service had their own uniforms, weapons, field equipment, and commissary and subsistence stores. It is not likely that the War Department would have been able to recruit and assemble a similar volunteer force as quickly as Pennsylvania did. The Guardsmen already had a modicum of military training and most were qualified marksmen. They immediately conformed to military discipline and, for the most part, stoically accepted the harshness and privations of camp life. The Pennsylvania volunteer units that did face combat maneuvered adequately and fought well under fire.

For at least two decades military theorists and senior officers in the Regular Army had, at least theoretically, projected the National Guard units of the several states as the nation's first line reserve in the event of war with a significant foreign power. Pennsylvania Guardsmen had for years devoted a significant amount of time and effort to prepare themselves for just such a mission, and the Pennsylvania General Assembly had provided generous appropriations for

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<sup>782</sup> General Hawkins was memorialized with a statue that stands today at the west end of the Panther Hollow Bridge.

<sup>783</sup> T. Harry Williams, *The History of American Wars* (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 322. "Even more unprepared for modern war was the National Guard, whose members knew little more than the rudiments of close-order drill."



pay, uniforms, and equipment primarily to support that same mission. When the alarm sounded in 1898, the Pennsylvania National Guard enthusiastically answered the call of duty and proved to the skeptics that they were not “holiday soldiers,” but soldiers in fact, prepared and ready to serve the nation.<sup>784</sup>

## II. “The Militia Act and The National Guard”

The armed forces of the United States achieved a quick and economical victory over Spain. The ease and speed with which the Spaniards were dispatched could not gloss over the serious defects that hampered the mobilization and logistical efforts of the ground forces. The Dodge Commission, bolstered by the testimony of serving officers and War Department personnel, revealed the glaring deficiencies of the “improvised” American war effort.<sup>785</sup> The Army, as it stood in the immediate aftermath of the war, was certainly not capable of protecting the newly acquired territories or projecting American power on a global basis. The new imperialism inherent in American foreign policy would involve the country in a predatory environment long dominated by the heavily armed European powers.

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<sup>784</sup> *AGR for 1898*, “Report of Colonel Henry Coursen, Commander, Thirteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry,” 253. “To that class of persons who have looked upon the National Guard largely as holiday soldiers, a great thinning out of the companies was looked for by applicants for discharge and other causes, but, instead of that no one went out and applications for membership came rushing in, and the several companies were almost immediately filled up to the maximum, and dozens of applicants waiting for some one to drop out.”

<sup>785</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 309. Weigley notes that the U.S. war effort reflected the realities of American society at the turn of the century: “The unplanned, helter-skelter mobilization of 1898 was consistent with the whole unplanned, helter-skelter nature of American life in the late-nineteenth-century heyday of governmental *laissez faire*.”

President McKinley, taking his lead from public's outrage over the more glaring and spectacular examples of the War Department's administrative and logistical failures, appointed Wall Street lawyer Elihu Root, a Republican party insider, to head up the War Department and build a military system that could support American foreign policy and discharge imperial responsibilities. Root spent much of his first year in office developing and American colonial policy and crafting a system for colonial government and administration.<sup>786</sup> But when he did turn his attentions to Army reorganization and reform, Elihu Root initiated fundamental changes in U.S. land force policy that not only had the momentum to outlast his tenure as Secretary of War, but also to serve as a foundation for the more ambitious reforms of the future.

Root, of course, was a "machine lawyer" from New York who had scant knowledge of military affairs and few, if any, military connections prior to his appointment as Secretary of War. Root, however, was part of a growing political and intellectual reform movement that recognized that the more frequent outbursts of industrial violence and increasing populist agitation against corporations and government threatened the established social and political order.<sup>787</sup> An astute military historian noted that the poor performance of the Army in the recent war was another aspect of an increasingly frustrated civilian society that demanded reforms that would create a rational order from chaos.<sup>788</sup> Despite his lack of experience in military affairs,

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<sup>786</sup> Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, 118. "He spent his first eighteen months in office working on the legal problems of colonial policy and administration. New initiatives on behalf of army reorganization were put off until after the imperial designs of the Republican Party were affirmed at the polls in 1900."

<sup>787</sup> Arthur Ekrich, Jr., "The Idea of a Citizen Army," *Military Affairs* 17, Issue 1 (Spring, 1953): 30-36, 32. "Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Elihu Root, Alfred Thayer Mahan, and Leonard Wood were militant statesmen who saw the vision of a world unfamiliar in the younger more carefree America of the nineteenth century."

<sup>788</sup> Russell F. Weigley, "The Elihu Root Reforms and the Progressive Era," in: *Command and Commanders in Modern Warfare*, William Geffen, ed. (Headquarters USAF: Office of Air Force History, 1971), 15. "In the Army it was the Spanish-American War that accomplished the

Root brought managerial expertise, a lawyerly diplomacy and willingness to learn to the War Department in 1899.

One of Root's primary guides for Army reform was the works of the late nineteenth century military reformer General Emory Upton.<sup>789</sup> In his two principal works, *The Military Policy of the United States* and *The Armies of Europe and Asia*, Upton advocated a profound series of structural reforms that would modernize and professionalize Army ground forces and place them on an equal, if not superior, footing with their European counterparts. Traditional American defense policy was built on the two-tiered foundation that combined the small regular Army and the mobilization of the great mass of citizen soldiers of the states in the event of war. Upton believed that this policy, though adequate to meet the nation's needs in the past, could not meet the challenge posed by the massive, modernized armies of Europe.<sup>790</sup>

The centerpiece of Upton's reform program was the establishment of a centralized administrative department made up of the Army's best and brightest officers. Upton's General Staff concept lies outside the scope of this study, but his expansible army concept had a direct effect on Root's eventual reforms and the Militia Act of 1903. Upton proposed to expand the number of regiments, troops, and batteries to wartime levels and man them in peacetime with only a number of personnel. These "skeletonized" units would be based throughout the country, each unit in a specific geographical region. Regular Army officers would command these units

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equivalent result, dramatizing the inadequacy of the invertebrate army mobilization for war, especially for the type of overseas war that seemed implicit in industrialized America's world power."

<sup>789</sup> Norman Cantor, "Elihu Root and the National Guard: Friend or Foe?" *Military Affairs* 33, Issue 3 (Dec., 1969): 361-373, 362-363. "When Root had Upton's study of American military policy printed as an official federal document, he wrote a preface for it, pointing out how closely he had attempted to follow Upton's recommendations."

<sup>790</sup> Skowronek, *Building A New American State*, 91. "In Upton's view, American military history showed that this system was administratively and tactically debilitating, and he appealed to authorities from George Washington to John Calhoun to support this position."

and train the reserves, drawn from that particular region that would ultimately expand the unit to full strength in time of war. The regiment or battery would be, in the time of war, a fully integrated force, consisting of professionals and well-trained reservists. The reservists would take the place of the hastily trained levies and the inept state militias. Despite support from influential officers and War Department administrators, the core of Upton's reform program was rejected in the course of the "Burnside" Congressional hearings in 1878.<sup>791</sup>

As Elihu Root turned to issue of military reform, he turned to the works of Emory Upton. Upton's books served as an inspiration and guide for his military policy formulations.<sup>792</sup> While he understood Upton's trained reserve concept, Root also knew that the professional reserve cut deeply against the grain of the American tradition of the citizen volunteer, a tradition that was embodied in the spirit and mission of the "new" National Guard. Root recognized that any statutory reform that marginalized the National Guard would meet overwhelming resistance from the powerful Guard lobby, the Interstate National Guard Association, its many supporters in the Congress. The Guard Association had recently flexed its muscle in 1900 when it pressured Congress for an increase in the annual National Guard appropriation from \$400,000 to one million dollars.<sup>793</sup> Secretary Root developed a close working relationship with the Guard

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<sup>791</sup> On the details of Upton's reform concepts: Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917); Richard Brown, "General Emory Upton, The Army's Mahan," *Military Affairs* 17, no. 3 (Autumn, 1953): 125-131; David Fitzpatrick, "Emory Upton: The Misunderstood Reformer," (Ph.D. diss., The University of Michigan, 1996).

<sup>792</sup> Cantor, "Elihu Root and the National Guard," 362. "Root made no secret of his reliance Upton for his understanding of much of the military. He acknowledged Upton's works in a letter to his biographer: 'They gave me the detail on which I could base recommendations and overcome my ignorance as a civilian.'"

<sup>793</sup> Since 1887 and the passage of RS 1661 U.S., the federal appropriation was divided between the eligible state militias. The states received the grant in the form of arms, clothing, and camp equipment from federal stores. See Chapter 1, part I.

Association and its key Congressional advocate, Representative Charles Dick from Ohio, the Chairman of the House Militia Affairs Committee.

The Dick Militia Act of 1903 was hybrid. It went to great lengths to accommodate the demand of the National Guard to be the first line reserve force, and the Army's need for greater control over this same reserve. The legislation was also the first comprehensive revision of the antiquated Militia Act of 1792. The act recognized two distinct militias. One was composed of the pool of all able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, and was designated as the Reserve Militia. This force would be mobilized in only the most extreme of national emergencies such as an invasion of the territorial United States. The National Guard organizations of the states that had been funded under the provisions of R.S. 1661, passed by Congress in 1887, were the National Guard units legally designated by their states as the "Organized Militia."<sup>794</sup> The statute imposed the standards of the Regular Army on the National Guard. Units had to adopt the organization, armaments, and discipline of the Regular Army within five years from the date of the approval of the Act. The new law provided financial benefits to the National Guard. Congress bestowed a one-time federal grant of two million dollars for arms, equipment and clothing, an annual appropriation of \$60,000 to subsidize summer encampments, and an annual grant in arms and equipment to each state National Guard organization.

The Dick Act specified the types of service that the National Guard was required to render to the nation. The statute insisted that the Guard was a domestic force, and that the President would mobilize it in the event of invasion, rebellion, or to execute the laws of the United States. The Act also recognized the Guard's role as the primary reserve force for the

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<sup>794</sup> *Statutes at Large* 32 (1903): 775-780.

Regular Army; in time of war the President had the power to mobilize the Guard for actual service for no longer than nine months.<sup>795</sup> This federal obligation, among the others enumerated below, were unprecedented innovations that directly tied the National Guard to the federal government. In exchange for the statutory recognition of the Guard's first line reserve status and financial support, the voluntary character of the Guard's national service, displayed in the recent mustering for the war with Spain, was eliminated. Guardsmen were required to report for duty when their units were called into actual service by Presidential order. Failure to respond to the summons for duty was punishable by court-martial. In addition to the service obligation, state units were required to hold an annual summer encampment and were further obligated to hold twenty-four drill days per year.<sup>796</sup>

Because federal funding was directly linked to compliance with the new requirements, the new Militia Act established an annual armory inspection regime that was supervised by Regular Army officers. The War Department detailed both commissioned and non-commissioned to inspect the personnel, equipment, and weapons of the National Guard and to insure that each unit was fit for active service and therefore eligible for federal subsidy. Regular Army officers had been detailed to the states that requested them as since the early 1880s. But this relationship was, at least on the part of the states, informal. The earliest observer reports from the 1880s are filled with complimentary assessments mixed with gentle criticism. The post Dick Act observations are no- nonsense, unvarnished professional evaluations of Guard

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<sup>795</sup> Abrahamson, *America Arms for a New Century*, 109. "To eliminate several weaknesses and ambiguities in the earlier law, a 1908 amendment removed the nine-month limit on the period a military unit might be called into federal service and made the then constitutionally questionable assertion that the Guard could be used outside the territorial limits of the United States."

<sup>796</sup> Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 110. "The 1903 act appropriated a one-time \$2 million dollar grant to give the Guard modern arms and ordnance equipment. More importantly, it allowed states to use R.S. 1661 funds (formerly restricted to issues of weapons, clothing, and camp equipment) to transport, subsist, and pay state soldiers attending summer training camps."

efficiency that must have been tough reading for many staff and field officers. This new arrangement, like so many other components of the Militia Act, had taken what had once been voluntary and loosely structured and made it compulsory and systematized.

In the years following the passage of the Militia Act of 1903 and subsequent legislative initiatives further cemented the federal–state military relationship. The Secretary of War took direct control over the Division of Militia Affairs, the central office that had previously reported to the Adjutant General of the United States. The DMA supervised the distribution of arms and equipment and assessed National Guard training, organization, and discipline. It also coordinated National Guard participation in the joint maneuver and instruction camps that had been established to permit Guardsmen and Regulars to train and work together in the field.<sup>797</sup> The DMA also served as the National Guard’s advocate in the War Department, and represented it in the Army general Staff planning discussions. The DMA also gave Guard officers the opportunity to participate in the formulation of the nation’s military policy at the highest levels. The Secretary of War regularly assigned National Guard officers to tours of duty in the DMA.<sup>798</sup>

Pennsylvania National Guard officers and their Congressional delegation were among the staunchest supporters of the Militia Act.<sup>799</sup> During House debate on the bill a number of

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<sup>797</sup> Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 110. “Beginning in 1903, the War Department paid for joint Army-Guard maneuvers and instruction camps, with Congress providing \$1 million for extensive maneuvers in even-numbered years through 1912.”

<sup>798</sup> Prior to the Militia Act of 1903, militia affairs were divided between the various War Department Bureaus depending on the militia’s needs of the moment. The DMA remained attached to the office of the Secretary of War until 1910, when its chief was ordered to report directly to the Army’s Chief of Staff. The National Defense Act of 1916 renamed the DMA, the “Militia Bureau of the War Department” and once again placed it under the direction of the Secretary of War. The 1916 legislation also gave the President the power to permanently appoint two National Guard officers to the Bureau, a significant benefit to the Guard as it gave it a greater influence in the formulation and administration of the policies that affected it

<sup>799</sup> Cantor, “The Creation of the Modern National Guard,” 224. “Pennsylvania, which had one of the best Guard units in the country, and was one of the strongest proponents of the measure... .”

representatives, mostly from southern states, objected to the sections of the statute that gave the federal government greater control over the Guard and, in their minds, trampled on the prerogative of the states to maintain control over military the military organizations which they had built and maintained at great expense to the taxpayers. The “states’ rights” faction also objected to the president’s assumption all state military prerogatives after mobilization. The War Department also took control of assessing the qualifications and abilities of candidates for officer commissions when the president called out the Organized Militia. State governors, therefore, lost a prerogative that they had possessed since the colonial period, a further sign, at least to its opponents, that the Militia Act was tantamount to a federal confiscation of state assets. Representative Robert J. Adams of Pennsylvania, one of the most vocal proponents of the Militia Act, stated that Pennsylvania Guardsmen were not just willing, but eager, to drop their parochial concerns in exchange for the reserve role in national defense. These remarks certainly reflected the attitudes, organization, training, and doctrine that had been prevalent in the Pennsylvania Guard for the two decades prior to the passage of the Militia Act of 1903.<sup>800</sup>

One of the immediate effects of The Militia Act was the increase in federal financial support to the Pennsylvania National Guard. The federal subsidy for arms and other equipment amounted to \$203,450.72 for 1904, and \$276,158.10 in 1905 1905. The federal appropriation for summer camp \$60,000 in 1905.<sup>801</sup> The subsidy allowed the state to modernize its weapons and ordnance following the passage of the Militia Act. Within three years the entire Guard was well

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<sup>800</sup> *Congressional Record*, 57<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1902, 35, pt. 8: 7710. “Whatever state pride these men might have had in their individual organizations, they are willing to yield freely to this national scope for the second line defense for the preservation and safety of our country.”

<sup>801</sup> *AGR for 1905*, 23-24. To contextualize the Dick Act financial windfall it is necessary to remember that as late as the 1890s annual federal support for the National Guard was \$400,000 divided between all of the states based on the size of their Congressional delegation. Congress also supplied camp equipment and clothing from surplus federal stores for use at summer encampments. See: Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 91.



armed with standard Army rifle- the Krag-Jorgensen. Pennsylvania's three artillery batteries took possession of ten of the most modern rifled field artillery pieces in 1906.<sup>802</sup> This allowed one of the batteries to "retire" its Gatling Guns and begin to drill with the new light artillery pieces. The elimination of the Gatling guns was yet another indication that the National Guard had relinquished its riot suppression and crowd control. Modern high velocity firearms and high-explosive light artillery are yet another indication that the National Guard are no longer regarded as an industrial police by either the Congress or the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. The new high explosive artillery ammunition could never have been used in place of the Gatling guns during strike duty or urban crowd control missions. New saddles and other "horse equipment" replaced worn out gear that the state had issued to cavalry troops in the 1880s.<sup>803</sup>

The Militia Act of 1903 formed an even closer working relationship between the Regular Army and the National Guard. The War Department established an instructional summer camp at Mount Gretna that benefited both Commonwealth troops and Guardsmen from surrounding states. The camps gave the troops an opportunity to live and train with Regular Army units and learn the basics of camp construction, maintenance, and small unit field maneuvers.<sup>804</sup> In 1907 the Guard encamped by brigade and each camp had two Regular officers from the Leavenworth School on hand to provide instruction. Guard officers indicated that this

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<sup>802</sup> The guns were of two calibers, the heavier 3.2-inch, and the lighter 3-inch guns for the light artillery battery.

<sup>803</sup> *AGR for 1906*, 12. "This issue equips the cavalry arm of the service with the latest U.S. Army equipment, adding very materially to their appearance and efficiency and it is duly appreciated by both officers and men."

<sup>804</sup> *Ibid*, 23. "The War Department established a Camp of Concentration and Instruction at Mount Gretna, Pennsylvania, where organizations of the United States Army and of the National Guard jointly participated in a tour of duty embracing camp instruction and maneuvers."

program had great merit due to the professionalism and dedication of the instructors.<sup>805</sup> As a result of the preparations and lessons learned at the camp, the Guardsmen were able to participate in joint maneuvers with the U.S. Army in the fall of 1907.<sup>806</sup> Army artillery units also began to hold joint exercises with their Pennsylvania Guard counterparts. The artillerists learned the intricacies of direct and indirect fire, range finding, and how to support advancing infantry in an assault on a fortified position, a set of skills that Guardsmen had never had to master in the past. For the first time in their organizational history, the artillery batteries practiced with live rounds instead of powder charges.<sup>807</sup>

The War Department assigned numerous noncommissioned officers for long-term assignments with Guard units. These men were assigned to a particular geographic region so that they would have continuous contact with the same companies.<sup>808</sup> In some cases sergeants returned year after year to the same military region of the state. During the winter months they provided instruction in small unit drill and maneuver in company armories. During the summer they traveled with “their” companies to the rifle ranges and the annual encampment. They were particularly helpful in schooling their noncommissioned Guard officer counterparts in the art of instructing raw recruits in the basic evolutions of the “school of the soldier” and the “school of

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<sup>805</sup> *AGR for 1907*, 77. “The officers and men of the Regiment derived great benefit from the active, energetic, efficient work of Lt. Roger C. Fitch of the U.S. Army, who had been detailed to our regiment for the encampment... a thorough soldier and a gentleman.”

<sup>806</sup> *Ibid.*, 89. “For the first time in the history of the National Guard of Pennsylvania, army maneuvers on a small scale were indulged in.”

<sup>807</sup> *AGR for 1909*, 99. “Target practice with field pieces proved both gratifying and instructive. Indirect as well as direct firing clearly demonstrated the importance of accurate laying of the pieces and a thorough knowledge necessary to gain proficiency.”

<sup>808</sup> *AGR for 1910*, 71. “A schedule has been arranged by which he gets in touch with all the original companies of the Regiment, and it is proposed as soon as possible to make such changes as will enable him to visit both Bellefonte and Lewistown at least once per month.”

the company". This basic instruction paid big dividends during inspections and camp maneuvers.<sup>809</sup>

In accordance with the Militia Act, National Guard officers were given the chance to attend the Army schools of instruction. Officers received *per diem* pay according to their rank, post housing, and a subsistence allowance while they attended the schools. Captain George C. Jack, a squadron commander in the *Governor's Troop*, attended the cavalry school of instruction at Fort Riley, Kansas in the summer of 1910.<sup>810</sup> The typical service school tour was thirty-days, a period of time that few officers could spare from business and family concerns, a factor that explains the fairly low rates of attendance for National Guard personnel. But those officers who had the opportunity to attend these schools received the same (albeit in concentrated) practical and theoretical instruction that Regular Army officers received.<sup>811</sup> The medical officers of the Guard were also able to participate in similar schools of instruction initiated by the Army Medical Corps and conducted in Antietam, Maryland.<sup>812</sup>

The National Guard was required to conform their organization to Regular Army standards within five years of the passage of the Militia Act. Pennsylvania had to expand its division from three brigades to four. Signal, cavalry, artillery, and engineer units were separated

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<sup>809</sup> *AGR for 1909*, 86. "The detail of Sergeant Frank A. Wagner, 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry, U.S.A., as instructor of noncommissioned officers and enlisted men, will, it is believed, materially improve the rating of the companies in guard duty, advance and rear guard, in the spring inspection and prove of further benefit at the annual encampments."

<sup>810</sup> *AGR for 1910*, 61. "The officers of the Troop attended the School of Instruction for Mounted Officers at Fort Riley, Kansas, from June 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. The instruction received at this school was very beneficial, especially the field work."

<sup>811</sup> *Ibid.*, 78. "The work was laid out according to program and consisted of theoretical instruction in camp, and practical work on the ground in map reading, patrolling, out-posts marches, advance and rearguards, infantry in defense and in attack. Practical talks on these and other subjects were given by the instructor, and a number of tactical walks were given, in which instruction was practically illustrated and carried out on the ground."

<sup>812</sup> *AGR for 1909*, 8-9. Nineteen doctors from the various brigades attended the five-day school in the summer of 1909.

from their respective brigades and attached to the Headquarters of the Division. This reorganization reflected Regular Army structure that balanced combat arms with support units such as engineers, signal, and medical corps. National Guard units also tended to be heavy with infantry and light in the other arms of the service such as artillery and cavalry. It was difficult for the Army to construct coherent war plans with so many discrepancies in force structure between the Regulars and the Guard. But Pennsylvania did make a considerable effort to accommodate the War Department's request as to the types of units that ought to be contained in the division, despite the fact that the federal authorities had no power to demand that the states organize specific types of units.<sup>813</sup> An engineer company was organized in the First Brigade in 1909, and the Commonwealth's medical colleges were tapped to provide doctors for the expanded medical corps.

The Commonwealth increased its support for the National Guard by founding the State Armory Board by Act of Assembly on May 11, 1905.<sup>814</sup> The Armory Board consisted of the Governor, Adjutant General, and five other individuals appointed by the Governor. At least three of the political appointees had to be National Guard officers. The expressed purpose of the Armory Board was to provide financial aid so that companies could purchase land and construct appropriate facilities. The Board also provided funds for the management and maintenance of armories. The maximum amount that could be expended for a company of infantry was \$30,000. Cavalry and Artillery units could receive up to \$40,000. The General Assembly's annual appropriation for the work of the Board was \$250,000. The Armory Board was able to provide a great deal of relief for financially strapped units that had trained in dilapidated, unsuitable

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<sup>813</sup> Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 116. 'The War Department could not order states to organize specific units, but it could force them to form existing ones according to Army tables, as the law had required since 1903.'

<sup>814</sup> *Laws of Pennsylvania for the Session of 1905*, no. 307, 442-444.

buildings or rooms that they had rented out of necessity.<sup>815</sup> The Armory Board had to choose from the many applications that various units submitted each year. The Board did not fund every building proposal, and some units had to rely on partial funding combined with money from generous benefactors and fund drives in their communities.<sup>816</sup> The creation of the Board and the annual appropriation attested to the legislature's commitment to the Guard's continued growth and modernization. The new armories, either completely or partially built with state funds, became the property of the Commonwealth.

Prior to the passage of the Armory Board legislation, armories had been ad hoc backwaters, rented spaces that the units could afford to rent, or in a few cases actually purchase. Well-funded outfits like Reading's Thirteenth Infantry Regiment, or Philadelphia's *State Fencibles*, had lavishly appointed armories built according to the "urban castle" model described by Robert Fogelson.<sup>817</sup> But most Pennsylvania Guard armories were found in warehouses, skating rinks, and the upper floors of urban retail establishments. Few, if any of these would have overawed a mob bent on creating mayhem and rebellion. But with the creation of the Armory Board National Guard units would eventually obtain the space and facilities adequate for military training. The General Assembly's Armory Board legislation created a systematic armory-building plan after the National Guard's constabulary function had been handed to the Department of State Police. Pennsylvania's legislators affirmed, with the establishment of the Armory Board, their consistent support of the Guard's national reserve mission.

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<sup>815</sup> *AGR for 1906*, 95. "It is to be hoped that the Legislature will, at the earliest opportunity, make such liberal appropriation as will quickly provide for each organization in the State a comfortable Armory. Not only will this add to the spirit and discipline of the troops, but inspire enlistments and proficiency in drill."

<sup>816</sup> *AGR for 1907*, 100. The commander of the Eighth Regiment lamented: "My Regiment is disappointed and some companies were disheartened from the fact that the Armory Board did not give it one armory out of the last appropriation for armories."

<sup>817</sup> Fogelson, *America's Armories*, Chapter 7, *passim*.

Reorganization often created tension within the Guard due in large part to the elimination of units and personnel from the rolls. In 1909 the Fifth Regiment was deactivated and several of its companies were transferred to other regiments. In many cases officers who had long and exemplary careers in the Guard had to resign their commissions because the adjustments that had been made in order to conform to the Regular Army's tables of organization had left them without a command.<sup>818</sup> Pennsylvania's compliance with War Department directives was an indication of its commitment to its reserve role as well as its desire to make sure that federal dollars continued to flow to its state forces.<sup>819</sup> In 1909 the division commander noted that the Pennsylvania National Guard was in the vanguard of progress in the areas of force structure and its adherence to Regular Army standards in training and discipline.<sup>820</sup>

In 1915 a number of significant changes appeared in the military code of the Commonwealth. Several of the changes were no doubt inspired by the movement to bring the Guard into greater conformity with Regular Army standards. The General Assembly, long a supporter of the Guard's reserve role, reaffirmed its commitment with quick passage of the revamped military code. The 1915 code eliminated the election of officers above the rank of Second Lieutenant. War Department officials and Army officers had long pointed to the election system as a fundamental weakness in the National Guard system in every state. Most inspectors and observers insisted that the elimination of officer elections would increase the National

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<sup>818</sup> *AGR for 1909*, 7. "The plan of reorganization was duly approved by the Division of Militia Affairs, War Department, and was accomplished with the minimum of disappointment, although it was necessary to place some valuable and competent officers on the supernumerary list."

<sup>819</sup> Cooper, *Rise of the National Guard*, 130. "The lack of money mattered a great deal, for Guardsmen could not meet militia law requirements with the funding the nation and their states provided."

<sup>820</sup> *AGR for 1909*, 43. "The National Guard of Pennsylvania, or the Organized Militia, as it is called by the War Department, is thus nearly ideally organized as it is possible under the circumstances, and having thus come by reason of conforming to Federal legislation on the subject, the organization has taken a great step forward."

Guard's usefulness to the nation.<sup>821</sup> The 1915 legislation went to considerable lengths to comply with Army recommendations by abolishing the election system. That the move generated no protest and little discussion at any level is an indication that the movement for greater centralization, at both the state and federal levels, moved forward with minimal opposition.

The 1915 code also adjusted the ranks of staff officers at all levels to grades comparable to those serving on Regular Army staffs. A plan was put forward to convert several infantry companies into artillery units, but this particular effort gained little momentum.<sup>822</sup> In addition, the support arms of the service were authorized to increase both numbers of units and personnel. An engineer battalion composed of three companies was added to the table of organization along with a two-company signal battalion that contained headquarters, wire, and radio units.

The National Defense Act of 1916 significantly increased federal control over the Guard. It required the states to increase their training days from twenty-four per year, to forty-eight. Summer camps were extended to fifteen consecutive days per year. Troops would receive federal pay for drill and summer camp attendance. The Regular Army assumed the responsibility of supplying the Guard with instructors, equipment, and supplies. The Act gave federal authorities the power to prescribe the number and types of units that states were required to organize. Over time the Guard was required to increase its strength from 100,000 to 400,000 men. All units of the Guard were required, in the event of mobilization, to recruit personnel to meet war strength troop levels. Theoretically a regiment of National Guard infantry would

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<sup>821</sup> *AGR for 1904*, 337. Colonel James Regan, Colonel, U.S.A., indicated that the system was "so deep-rooted that it will never be eradicated." Regan decried that officers were usually men that were popular with the men in the ranks, a factor that made for indiscipline and inefficiency: "An officer should not be permitted to get his position on popularity alone."

<sup>822</sup> When the Guard was federalized in 1917 for WW I, the War Department rapidly converted infantry and cavalry units into combat arms support units such as artillery and engineers.

muster as a homogeneous unit, but hundreds of untrained “strangers “ would eventually be added to the rolls in order for the regiment to meet War Department strength requirements.

The War Department was given the authority to set the medical, intellectual, and efficiency standards for both enlisted men and officers. Enlistments were subsequently increased to three years of active service and three years in reserve. A dual loyalty oath solved the thorny problem of overseas deployment. The National Guard recruits took the state and federal oaths when they joined their companies, obligating them to state and federal service. The Mexican intervention in 1917 was to be the test case to gauge the effectiveness of both the Militia Act of 1903, and the National defense Act of 1916.

But the progress that had been achieved by the Pennsylvania National Guard over the past twelve years was enormous. After its limited and restrained interventions in the labor strife of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was no longer used for constabulary duty. The new State Constabulary and the increased employment of Coal and Iron police removed this onerous duty from the Guard. It was given the freedom to devote all of its time and energy to the type of military training that would make it a more efficient adjunct for the Regular Army. As the new century began state and federal authorities and the Guard itself agreed that it was an integral part of the national military establishment.



### III. "Mexican Border Service"

Since 1914, President Woodrow Wilson had been attempting to intervene in the ongoing revolution in Mexico. American naval forces had blockaded the Mexican ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz. American troops were sent to occupy Vera Cruz after an altercation between Mexican authorities and the U.S. Navy. The occupation, although short-lived, provoked an outpouring of anti-American sentiment in Mexico. A Mexican revolutionary leader, Pancho Villa, led his forces into New Mexico and killed a number of Americans in a raid on the town of Columbus. President Wilson ordered five thousand American troops, under Brigadier General John J. Pershing, to pursue Villa and his men into Mexico and bring them to justice. The incursion only served to increase the anger and resentment of the legitimate Mexican government who opposed this violation of its sovereignty.<sup>823</sup>

The president called up the National Guard of Texas and Arizona as the crisis deepened in early May of 1916. The Guardsmen were supposed to provide security on the border while Pershing and the Regulars hunted for Villa in the desert and mountains of northern Mexico. Border security became an even more critical matter after Villa's raid into Texas in April. The rush to get troops in the field did not give many individual soldiers time to give adequate notice to employers.<sup>824</sup> A number of Texas Guardsmen refused federal service and

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<sup>823</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 348. "With Carranza threatening war unless Pershing got out and the government unwilling to withdraw Pershing while Villa menaced American towns, war seemed almost inevitable."

<sup>824</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization*, 199. "Guard organizations were dispatched to the border as soon as they were in any degree of readiness."

were court-martialed without delay. Guardsmen were to discover that the oath that obliged them to national service had sharp teeth.<sup>825</sup>

The border state Guardsmen were hardly an adequate force for the task of securing a border that stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. General Pershing's force in Mexico had several brief, but sharp encounters with Mexican troops as it ranged over the rugged terrain of northern Mexico. War seemed imminent when President Wilson mobilized the remainder of the National Guard on June 16. Pennsylvania responded with alacrity, and when state authorities discovered that two regiments of infantry were not mobilized, they approached the War Department with a request to mobilize the entire Guard. As was the case with the partial mobilization in May, the general mobilization was conducted in a hasty, haphazard manner in many states.<sup>826</sup> Pennsylvania's division staff officers arrived at Pennsylvania's designated mobilization point, Mount Gretna, on June 22. Mount Gretna was the same location that had been used for the 1898 muster. It was also the site of the periodic division summer encampments, and as such, it was more than adequate to serve as a mobilization point. In 1914 the War Department had encouraged states to prepare adequate space and facilities for mobilization. State authorities were put on notice that any repeat of the 1898 camp debacle

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<sup>825</sup> *The New York Times*, April 27, 1916. "The court-martial ordered in the case of the Texas militiamen who disobeyed the President's call to duty is the first really serious action taken by the Federal Government to enforce the authority over the State troops bestowed on it in the Dick law of 1903 and the amendments of 1908."

<sup>826</sup> War Department, Militia Bureau, *Report on the Mobilization of the Organized Militia and National Guard of the United States, 1916* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 4. "The demand for additional troops on the border being urgent, department commanders were directed to expedite their muster in, and to send organizations to the border as soon as they could be made ready. This injunction, along with the desire of National Guard officers and men to make a good showing caused some undue haste."

would be attributed to the states, not the War Department.<sup>827</sup> Although states like Pennsylvania and New York had adequate space and facilities to mobilize their forces, many states simply did not have adequate resources to prepare their troops for deployment.<sup>828</sup>

Physical examinations reduced the number of Guardsmen required to perform federal service. The 1903 Militia Act mandated that all personnel of the National Guard, officers and men, pass a thorough physical examination. The results, in many cases were disappointing. Many of the officers and men failed to meet the Regular Army physical standards. On the date of the President Wilson's mobilization order, the Militia Bureau noted that there were 95,000 enlisted men on the rolls of all state National Guard organizations. During the "transition" period from state to federal service, 47,657 men vanished from the rolls. Of this number, 28,721 men were dropped for medical reasons, and 7,258 had not even reported to the mobilization center. In some state units, medical discharges reached extraordinary levels.<sup>829</sup> The Bureau indicated that the states actually underreported the number of physically unfit and shirkers.<sup>830</sup>

Most National Guard units were far below their mandated war strength, and would remain so even during their service at the border. The War Department was inundated by

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<sup>827</sup> Ibid., 22. "State authorities should be encouraged in every way possible to provide permanent mobilization camps and should be impressed that they alone will be responsible for any discomforts, suffering, or criticism that may result from lack of adequate preparation in peace time for such camps."

<sup>828</sup> John P. Finnegan, *Against the Specter of the Dragon: The Campaign for American Military Preparedness, 1914-1917* (Westport, C.T.: Greenwood Press, 1974), 166. "Many camps proved to be ill-chosen. It became clear that numbers of troops were reporting without weapons and equipment, and some even without uniforms. It took an agonizingly long time to pull assembled Guardsmen into military units fit for service."

<sup>829</sup> Ibid., 166-167. "Although all but a few states had theoretically adopted Army standards of physical fitness for their militia, federal authorities had rejected over 18 percent of all Guardsmen who reported on medical grounds. In one National Guard company, 77 percent of the troops flunked the federal physical."

<sup>830</sup> War Department, Militia Bureau, *Report on the Mobilization*, 95-96. "The numbers reported as having failed to respond to the call or as having been discharged for physical disability on muster in may have been understated."

requests for individual discharges, both during mobilization and after Guard units had deployed to the border. Discharges further depleted unit strength, and made recruiting a necessity. The Guard would eventually field 158,664 men, some 100,000 short of their authorized full war strength. Recruiting efforts fell considerably short, even in states whose Guard organizations that were considered to be among the best in the nation.<sup>831</sup> Recruiting, even in the rare cases where it had some limited success, filled the ranks with men who had never served in the Guard. There was a noticeable decline in enlistments once the various state units reached their stations on the border. During the mobilization period, when patriotism and enthusiasm were high, recruiting was not a difficulty. But once the reality of border service- its monotonous grind of guard duty and drill in the hot Texas sun- was made public, recruiting declined precipitously. Another factor in the decline of National Guard enlistments was the federalization of the recruiting process once the Guard had left its home stations. Regular Army officers replaced National Guard officers in the recruiting stations, an innovation that depersonalized the enlistment process and reduced enlistments significantly.<sup>832</sup>

The story was much the same for the Pennsylvania Guard. It had great difficulty bringing its units up to prescribed war strength. According to War Department directives each infantry regiment was to contain a minimum of 1,100 men. The typical Pennsylvania National Guard infantry regiment numbered around 600 men in peacetime. Each Pennsylvania regiment had to recruit some 500 new personnel to meet the War Department minimum for an infantry regiment. The aggregate strength of the Guard was 10,151 officers and men before the

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<sup>831</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization*, 200. "The recruiting parties were unsuccessful for the most part; in a state like New York, whose National Guard was above average, only 351 recruits were obtained in August 1916 at an average cost of \$40 per recruit: in Massachusetts, in August and September, only 189 recruits volunteered although twenty National Guard recruiting stations were maintained at Government expense."

<sup>832</sup> War Department, Militia Bureau, *History of Military Mobilization*, 15.

presidential call up in the spring of 1916.<sup>833</sup> During the length of its deployment on the border some 15,198 men would ultimately serve in Pennsylvania's Seventh Division, indicating that 5,047 additional men needed to be recruited to reach the required strength. Even with the additional personnel, the Pennsylvania Guard managed to achieve just 52 percent of its prescribed war strength of 30,093 officers and men. Only 37 percent of the Pennsylvania men that were sent to the border had served in the unit they were assigned to on the date of call up. In the event of hostilities only about one-third of the "Pennsylvania Division" would be made up of National Guard members.<sup>834</sup> This was nothing less than the expansible Army concept that had been espoused by Calhoun, Upton, and Hay, with the National Guard assuming the place of the National Reserve Army. Perhaps the only consolation for the Guardsmen was the fact that Pennsylvania men, recruited from the unit's home stations, were still added to the Pennsylvania Division by enlistment.

National Guard troops were sent to the border region as soon as they had been mustered and reasonably outfitted. As was noted above, the War Department did not wait for units to be trained. As the first troops began to entrain for the border, many National Guard organizations, inexperienced in mass movements of supplies and personnel on short notice, and over long distances, had considerable difficulty.<sup>835</sup> Raw recruits and veteran Guardsmen traveled to the border, leading some critics to accuse the government throwing untrained, disorganized, barely equipped, civilian mobs into a potentially dangerous environment. The

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<sup>833</sup> War Department, Militia Bureau, *Report of the Chief of the Militia Bureau to the Secretary of War, 1916* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 1,092-1,101.

<sup>834</sup> Moses Thisted Papers, Center for Military History, Carlisle, PA

<sup>835</sup> Finnegan, *Against the Specter of the Dragon*, 167. "The first regiments began to entrain from their state mobilization camps at the beginning of the July amid scenes of some confusion. It took hours and days for inexperienced units to load up their trains, which lumbered off to the front at a government-dictated forty miles per hour."

Secretary of War, Newton Baker, observed that the crisis called for fast deployment, and that there was no time to train the men. He also noted that the National Guard was the nation's only reserve, and that they would have an opportunity to train in "combat conditions."

Pennsylvania's deployment, as it had been during the war with Spain, was much more efficient and timely than that of most of the states. The Pennsylvania National Guard had a great deal of experience in moving large numbers of men and their supplies for distant service in the field. Colonel C. Bow Dougherty, President of the Wilkes-Barre branch of the National Security League, and a retired officer of the Pennsylvania National Guard, reported to the membership of the his organization that Pennsylvania had been commended by the War Department for its rapid mobilization and deployment to the border. The War Department's mobilization report, published late in 1916, catalogued the mountain of errors, misunderstandings, miscommunications, and outright stupidities that attended the mobilization of state troops.<sup>836</sup>

Most Pennsylvania units reported that the trains had more than adequate space, and that for the most part the Army was able to feed and see to their other needs. Despite the fact that troops were needed at the border, Army transports did not have priority over civilian and freight trains. Troop trains were frequently diverted to sidings.<sup>837</sup> As travel time lengthened, rations, supplied at the mobilization centers, ran low. During a layover in Kansas City, Lieutenant Colonel Charles P. Hunt of the First Pennsylvania National Guard's Infantry

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<sup>836</sup> The official report, cited in this chapter, is a redacted version. The names of units and their state designations are blanked out so it is impossible to use the information for the purposes of comparative analysis. The manager of this record group at the National Archives stated that the information was "likely still classified!"

<sup>837</sup> Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 351. The Pennsylvania National Guard quickly discovered that they were not on the P.R.R.: "The railroads proved incapable of handling the efficient movement of 150,000 men and their efficient supply to the Mexican border, suggesting that drastic federal controls might be necessary in a greater war to prevent repetition of the fiascoes of 1898."

Regiment, was forced to ask the mayor of Kansas City for food to feed his 1,814 men.<sup>838</sup> City officials and the good citizens of Kansas City responded with enough food to last the men until they reached their camp in El Paso. Most of the units affected by the food shortages that occurred in transit, blamed the Army for not supplying sufficient rations to last them until they arrived at the border camps. The Army, in turn, blamed untrained National Guard officers and a lack of discipline on the part of the men themselves for the food problem.<sup>839</sup> Lack of rations, the inability of the War Department to clothe, arm, and equip new recruits- all of these hardships, in the view of the Pennsylvania troops, were the fault of the Regular establishment. Pennsylvania had always taken care of its National Guard, and it seemed that from almost the moment that they were mustered into federal service, Pennsylvania Guardsmen discovered that the Army had much less concern for their safety, welfare, and comfort than the politicians and people of the Commonwealth.

Once they had detrained at El Paso, the Pennsylvania Guard settled into its camp near Fort Bliss and became acquainted with units from other states. Not surprisingly, two of highest rated National Guard organizations, New York and Pennsylvania, provided more than one-half of the troops deployed by the Eastern Department<sup>840</sup> The troops slowly settled into the dull routine of camp life in the peacetime Army.<sup>841</sup> Very few of the National Guard units were

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<sup>838</sup> *The New York Times*, August 13, 1916. "Lt. Colonel Hunt declared that his men had been practically on one-half rations since leaving the home station Friday, and since yesterday had been almost without food."

<sup>839</sup> *Ibid.*, July 17, 1916. "Inexperience of National Guard officers is supposed to be responsible for the conditions complained of in certain instances, but the view in army circles is that the men themselves are to blame for any shortage of food that existed while they were in transit."

<sup>840</sup> *The New York Times*, August 13, 1916. "Of the 35,000 men from this department now on the border, more than one-half come from the States of new York and Pennsylvania."

<sup>841</sup> Finnegan, *Against the Specter of the Dragon*, 169. "The Guardsmen had marched out with flags flying to throw back the Mexicans; all they encountered were the monotonies of peacetime soldiering."

detailed south of the border to assist General Pershing's forces in the pursuit of Villa's *banditti*. The First Troop, *Philadelphia City Cavalry's* polo team was the only Pennsylvania Guard unit to deploy south of the border during the Mexican incursion. The Philadelphia horse troopers had an experienced team that handled all of the competition in the Texas border area with ease. Weekly matches were held that were reminiscent of the "picnic soldiering" of the Guard's not so distant past. General Pershing arranged for the Pennsylvania team to play a match against the Mexican Punitive Expedition team in Mexico. The Pennsylvanians lost to an experienced Army squad that was captained by Lieutenant George S. Patton.<sup>842</sup>

Many of the Guardsmen resented the fact that there were no Mexican regulars or irregulars for them to fight. During the call up they had been under the impression, an erroneous one, that this was a war and that they had been called out to repel an enemy attack on their country or invade Mexico. Border duty was not war service. Many of the men doubted the wisdom of the mobilization and deployment and speculated as to the president's real agenda.<sup>843</sup> The Army did not want to let the Guard deployment go to waste. Guardsmen were soon engaged in a regular cycle of drill, exercise, and outpost patrols. Regular Army instructors took the Guard in hand and transformed their border service into one giant maneuver camp.<sup>844</sup> Many of the state troops chaffed under the endless rounds of drill, route marches, small-unit maneuvers,

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<sup>842</sup> Moses Thisted Papers, Center for Military History, Carlisle, PA.

<sup>843</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 159. "Most believed they had been called to fight Mexicans, either to drive them out of the United States or to invade Mexico along with Pershing. That they were to remain in the United States to patrol the border and deter regular or irregular Mexican forces from crossing it blunted the enthusiasm with which many Guard members greeted the initial June 18 call."

<sup>844</sup> Jeff Jore, "Pershing's Mission in Mexico: Logistics and Preparation for the War in Europe, *Military Affairs* 52, issue 3 (Jul., 1988): 117-121, 120. "For most it was their first exposure to the rigors of Army life. The National Guard learned all about how monotonous camp life could be as well as gaining an appreciation for the finer points of transporting, training, supplying and handling large bodies of troops in the field."



and more drill in the heat and dust of the high Texas summer.<sup>845</sup> Certainly few of the Guard's officers and men knew at the time that the training that they received on the Texas border in 1916 was their initial exposure to the types of skills that they would have to master if they were to endure the hazards of combat on the western front in 1918.

The men of the Pennsylvania National Guard had to endure the same training schedules, weather, boredom, and privations as their fellow Guardsmen from other states. But for the most part, if unit histories contain even a remote semblance of the truth, Pennsylvania units applied themselves to training opportunities with a high level of enthusiasm and commitment. Even units that were not part of the initial mobilization wanted to get down to Texas even as late as August 1916, when the worst aspects border service were public knowledge. Colonel Asher Miner of the Ninth Infantry Regiment badgered the Governor and the war Department to deploy his unit to Texas. Miner was informed that the only way that the Ninth could be deployed was if it converted itself into an artillery unit. On July 27 the Ninth was transformed into the Third Field Artillery, and mobilized at Mount Gretna. It was mustered into federal service on September 8, and entrained to El Paso on September 30.<sup>846</sup> Despite the fact that the worst aspects of border service were well known by the public, the Ninth still wanted to serve. That they did so stood as a testament to their sense of obligation and enthusiasm.

Like the other Guardsmen the Pennsylvania units engaged in an exacting training regimen. Training marches in the intense heat and choking dust in full field gear were fairly

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<sup>845</sup> Clarence Clendenen, *Blood on the Borders* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company, 1969), 292. Clendenen notes that the Guard was quickly disabused of the notion that they were there to fight: "Instead, they found themselves in a daily grind of drill, drill, shoot, shoot, fatigue, fatigue and more fatigue. There were long marches designed to harden the men and instill march discipline so that they could be maneuvered if war should come."

<sup>846</sup> Moses Thisted Papers. There was bitter disappointment among the officers and men of the Ninth at being left behind, but eventually the "unremitting efforts of Colonel Asher Miner prevailed."

commonplace, as were live-fire, combined arms maneuvers under Army supervision. There was even time set aside for the Guard's specialty- reviews and parades.<sup>847</sup> The *First Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry* unit history declared that the training that the organization received on the border was of inestimable value to the troopers. They had never received so thorough a course in the basic components of cavalry drill and the maintenance and care of animals in the field.<sup>848</sup> For years Pennsylvania National Guard officers had complained that their men, in all arms of the service, were chronically unschooled in the basic components of drill and fieldwork. Six months or more of border service helped to remedy the defects that could not be addressed in ten years of armory and camp instruction. Even the long journey home was used as a training opportunity. Pennsylvania Guardsmen were a significant part of newly organized division of 24,000 men from all states. In November of 1916, the division engaged in war games in Texas that involved brigade-sized units maneuvering against each other in conjunction with cavalry and artillery support. The culminating exercise in the games was a convoy problem that the Pennsylvania Guardsmen conducted on the way back to the Mount Gretna demobilization center. All remaining Pennsylvania troops were released from border duty in March 1916.

The National Guard's border mobilization was rife with mistakes, miscalculations, and misunderstandings that most critics blamed on the Guard's lack of preparation and training. The men had to endure hardships and privations in federal service because over decades most of the states had done a poor job of maintaining their Guard organizations. State troops, despite the influx of federal dollars from the Militia Act and the National Defense Act, could not repair the

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<sup>847</sup> Francis Beyer, *History of the Sheridan Troop*, 43. "The work at this camp was on a traditional schedule which included hikes, close-order drills, small maneuvers, a little rifle practice, and in a few cases parades, one of which was through the streets of El Paso, and given in compliment to the commander of the El Paso district, Brig. Gen. George T. Bell."

<sup>848</sup> Moses Thisted Papers.

damage done by years of starvation diets imposed by stingy state legislatures. It is small wonder, then, that so few state Guard units were actually prepared when presidential order called them into federal service. Pennsylvania troops, acquitted themselves well for the most part. Most of the difficulties that arose during the Pennsylvania Guard's mobilization and deployment could invariably be traced back to a lack of preparation by the War Department's lack of preparation and the Army's administrative bungling. An even greater test loomed on the horizon in the coming spring of 1917. In Mexico the Guard had cut its teeth; in 1918 it would have to use them on Europe's western front.

## Epilogue and Conclusion

The Pennsylvania National Guard was mobilized for the second time in less than year immediately following the Congressional declaration of war on Germany that passed with near unanimous consent on April 6, 1917. Several Pennsylvania units had just been demobilized after their Mexican border service in the early months of 1917. Some infantry regiments were actually called back into service as early as March as the possibility of hostilities increased with each passing day. A number of men went into immediate training while others were sent off to guard strategic assets against possible German sabotage. These assets included bridges, factories, power plants, and federal arsenals located throughout the Commonwealth. It was impossible for the Guard to cover all such locations with the limited manpower available to it.

By midsummer all the regiments of the Pennsylvania National Guard had been called into federal service. Enlistments brought the Pennsylvania division close to the war strength level that had been established by the War Department. The War Department and the Army were given a difficult task. The nation had to simultaneously prepare for war and wage it at the same time. The Army that went to France was a hastily constructed entity built, maintained, and composed of amateurs.<sup>849</sup> American divisions were the smallest integral units that contained all combat arms and services. General Pershing's "square division" plan called for American divisions to be roughly twice the size of their European counterparts. Its four infantry brigades plus supporting arms and services would number some 27,000 men and a thousand officers.

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<sup>849</sup> Byron Farwell, *Over There: The United States in the Great War, 1917-1918* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 19.

Pershing believed that the increased manpower would give American divisions the necessary “staying power” they would need to survive the attrition rates on the western front.<sup>850</sup> In the race to construct this formidable military machine the National Guard divisions had somewhat of an advantage over their Regular Army counterparts. They existed as military organizations, at least in theory, on organizational tables and state rolls, while the Army’s other divisions had to begin from scratch.

Pennsylvania’s National Guardsmen who had been called up for service formed the core of the AEF’s Twenty-Eighth Division, which, in turn, was composed of two infantry brigades, the 55<sup>th</sup> and the 56<sup>th</sup>. Each brigade contained two regiments, the 55<sup>th</sup> incorporated the 109<sup>th</sup> and 110<sup>th</sup> Regiments; the 56<sup>th</sup> incorporated the 111<sup>th</sup> and 112<sup>th</sup> infantry regiments. The 8,500 officers and men of the Pennsylvania National Guard provided a trained cadre for each regiment. Eight of the Guard’s old infantry regiments were equally divided between the four new brigades of the Twenty-Eighth Division. The remaining infantry regiments of the “old” Guard were disbanded and reconstituted with new designations as machine gun, artillery, and mortar units. The rest of the division was filled out with volunteers and draftees to reach war strength. Most of these men were from the state of Pennsylvania.

While still in a formative stage the Twenty-Eighth Division was dispatched to Camp Hancock, Georgia for basic and advance training. There was some residual bitterness due to the breakup of the traditional regimental system. Officers with years of service in the National Guard to their credit were summarily dismissed as unfit for service. For one officer in particular the experience was a bitter one. Brigadier General Albert Logan left with 110<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment for Camp Hancock at the beginning of the summer. He was a veteran commander

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<sup>850</sup> John S. D. Eisenhower, *Yanks: The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I* (New York: The Free Press, 2001), 62.

who led Pennsylvania volunteers in the Spanish-American War and in the just concluded Mexican border deployment. Once in camp he and other Guard officers had to submit to a rigorous medical examination conducted by Army doctors. Logan was one of scores of National Guard officers who were found medically unfit for duty and subsequently discharged from federal service.<sup>851</sup> Regular Army officers rushed in to fill the empty command slots.

The dismissal of veteran officers and the disbandment of traditional units, some with histories that went back to the Revolution obvious indicative of the position of the National Guard on the eve of the AEF's overseas deployment. The Guard had given up its autonomy and its identity as a state force when it accepted the role it was assigned as the nation's primary military reserve. The Dick Act of 1903, and the National Defense Act, tied the Guard firmly to the Regular Army. The Guard received numerous financial benefits and opportunities to modernize and become a more professional military force. But the legislation and the new relationship placed the Guard's very existence, in the event of war, in the hands of the War Department and the Army General Staff. In 1917 the Pennsylvania National Guard simply disappeared into the vast army that the United States raised for service in France. The Guard had, in a sense, been in training for this mission since the 1880s. Over the years the leadership of the Guard had insisted that the Guard was a military force in training to work along side the Regular Army in the event of war. Styling itself the "elementary school" of the Army, the Pennsylvania National Guard was about to receive its higher education in the military arts in the Chateau-Thierry sector on the western front. By war's end the Pennsylvania's Twenty-Eighth

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<sup>851</sup> All of the general officers of the Pennsylvania National Guard who were drafted into federal service, save one, were ultimately dismissed from the service or tendered their resignations before the division sailed for France. Brigadier General William Price commanded the 53<sup>rd</sup> Brigade through the war and to its demobilization in 1919.

Division suffered the highest number of casualties of any of the National Guard divisions in the AEF.<sup>852</sup>

The Pennsylvania National Guard in 1917 was far removed from its origins as loosely organized volunteer militia companies after the American Civil War. Increased state funding and increased public interest in militia service helped to support the organization through the lean years between 1865 and the early 1870s despite the organization's lack of a clearly defined mission. The militia was called out to contend with the volatile railroad strike and riots in 1877. Its deployments in Pittsburgh and other strike hotspots were characterized by nonexistent logistical support lack of command and control, and clumsy tactical maneuvering.

The 1877 debacle initiated reform within the organization that greatly increased its efficiency, material resources, and sense of professionalism. But for all of that, the state did not use the Guard again for almost a dozen years after the railroad riots, despite the hundreds of strikes that took place in the state from 1877-1889. A number of American labor historians erroneously concluded that the Guard willingly assumed a role as the policeman of corporate interests in return for state recognition and funding. Their research infers that the government of the Commonwealth and its National Guard had aligned itself with the forces of capital and against the interests of the working class.

The governor of Pennsylvania authorized a limited deployment of National Guard troops to assist in the unprecedented humanitarian relief effort in the Johnstown region after the devastating flood of 1889. Guard logistical and managerial expertise provided timely relief for victims and assisted local authorities in returning the city to a semblance of normalcy. The Guard was mobilized for labor troubles in the 1890s when violence and general disorder

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<sup>852</sup> The Twenty-Eighth sustained 14,139 total casualties. In comparison New York Twenty-Sixth Division had 8,334. The Regular Army's First Division lost 22,320.

threatened the lives of citizens and their property. In each case governors mobilized the troops reluctantly and after all other means failed to restore peace and order. The state authorities viewed the Guard as an instrument of last resort and it could not be ordered about by corporate interests to break strikes or intimidate the working class. Throughout the decade companies increasingly resorted to the use of private, company-paid police forces for the precise reason that they had no control over the National Guard. When they were deployed for strike duty they arrived in force, and with a deft touch they restored order quickly. Ultimately, in 1905, the Pennsylvania State Constabulary assumed the police function throughout the Commonwealth. It would, of course, garner a dubious reputation for the violence it so readily employed against strikers.

The National Guard throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century continued to receive more state funding and support as it trained and reorganized itself to become a military, rather than a police organization. During the 1880s Pennsylvania Guardsmen sought stronger ties with the Regular Army. Army officers assisted Commonwealth troops as advisors, trainers, and inspectors. Most Guard officers believed that the Guard's primary mission was to stand as the Army's front line reserve. Pennsylvania Guardsmen served the nation during the War with Spain and acquitted themselves well in limited combat roles in Cuba and the Philippines. The 1903 Dick Act further cemented the relationship between the National Guard and the Army. In return for increased federal support the Guard assumed the reserve role that it had coveted for so long. The 1916 National Defense Act sealed the Army-National Guard relationship. The Mexican border mobilization in 1916 was a disappointing dress rehearsal for the mobilization for the Great War in 1917. Federal duty as part of the largest military force ever constructed by the United States was a logical terminus for the Pennsylvania National Guard, an organization that



had, since 1877, envisioned itself as the “elementary school” of the Army rather than the “policeman of industry.”

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