EARLY in the summer of 1892, when negotiations collapsed between the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers and Henry Clay Frick, chief administrative officer of the Carnegie company, one of the most famous of all capital-labor confrontations was in the making at Homestead, Pennsylvania. That story—at least as it affects the Amalgamated leadership, Frick, and Andrew Carnegie—earns a chapter in virtually any study of our nation's labor-management relations. It also receives extended treatment in Leon Wolff's _Lockout_, a highly readable re-creation of the violence that shattered summer's tranquility along the banks of the Monongahela.¹

The story that has not been told, except in barest outline, involves the mobilization, deployment, and employment of the state's National Guard. It was summoned to duty by a Democratic governor in the wake of the capitulation of a force of some three hundred Pinkerton detectives, dispatched by Frick to secure the Carnegie plant on the morning of July 6th. On the scene, though all but ignored, was William McCleary, the sheriff of Allegheny County. His contribution to the day was a telegram addressed to Governor Robert E. Pattison warning not only of the gravity of events but of the inability of the deputies at his disposal to cope with future bloodshed or the destruction of property.²

¹This paper was delivered at "Victorian Album: Aspects of American life, 1865–1900," a conference sponsored by the Victorian Society in America at The National Archives, Washington, D.C., 21–24 March 1979.

²The text of the telegram is quoted in George Harvey, _Henry Clay Frick_ (New York: Scribner's, 1928), p. 129.
Pattison procrastinated in calling upon the National Guard despite the scores of telegrams and letters—including a terse request from Frick himself—to do just that. Then, on July 10th, in the wake of yet another telegram from the sheriff indicating that a large disciplined force was necessary to contain the situation, the governor capitulated. In a telegram to McCleary, he stated, "Have ordered Maj. Gen. George R. Snowden with the division of the National Guard of Pennsylvania to your support at once."^3

Among the recipients of Snowden's mobilization order was Captain Fred E. Windsor, commanding officer of Co. I, 16th Infantry Regiment in Warren, Pennsylvania. Windsor was, to be sure, a very junior figure in the Guard's hierarchy, but he was one of a comparatively few officers to soldier throughout the entire investment of Homestead. He also left a hitherto unseen visual record of peacekeeping along the Monongahela. Homestead, viewed in this pictorial record, as well as from the perspective of Windsor and his peers, is the story of a generation of "soldier boys" come into maturity in the afterglow of Appomattox.^4

Born too late to have earned the estate of manhood in their fathers' war, they were bent on its acquisition at Homestead, described variously for them as the "seat of war" and the "front."^5 Boys in spirit and in deed, Pennsylvania's guardsmen successfully transformed a complex industrial and human drama into a suitably melodramatic scenario with themselves in the leading roles. Lives and property were in jeopardy and the civil authorities were powerless. Only the presence of the citizen-soldier could restore order and sanity in the midst of disorder and social violence.

II.

Melodrama was certainly very much the order of the day and the militarily disposed, from general to private, took heart in telegrams like that delivered to Fred Windsor from the 16th Regiment's colonel:

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4. Windsor's photograph album, which embraces the entire period of his National Guard service, 1885–1906, includes some twenty pictures of soldiering at Homestead. The album, together with other Windsor memorabilia, is found in the collections of the Warren County Historical Society, Warren, Pa. This author, working with artist Barry Thompson, utilized these photographs in the creation of plate no. 456 in the series "Military Uniforms in America," copyright 1977 by the Company of Military Historians.
5. By way of illustration, see papers from the Oil Region, e.g. "Gone to the Front," in *The Bradford Era*, 12 July 1892. Or, "Off to the Front," in the *Oil City Derrick*, 12 July.
A line of skirmishers, garbed in heavy woolen uniforms, practice under a blistering summer sun. (Windsor Collection, Warren County Historical Society.)

“Get here [Oil City] earliest possible moment. Heavy marching order. Three days’ rations, ammunition. Answer.” However, as in the melodrama with which guardsmen were most familiar from the popular stage, there were obstacles both great and small to be overcome and vexations and trials to be endured before the final curtain and the fulfillment of the heart’s desires.

Not the least, and certainly the most immediate, of these tribulations was occasioned by the fact that it was Sunday evening when Snowden received his orders from the governor’s own hand, and many telegraph offices had closed for the night. As a consequence, an officer such as Brigadier General John Wiley, the commander of the brigade to which the 16th was assigned, found himself indebted to a local reporter for the news of his mobilization. To make it more embarrassing, Wiley told the reporter, when the latter contacted him by phone about 1 A.M. in the wake of a special bulletin, that he doubted the

6. The text of the telegram sent all company commanders is quoted in *The Bradford Era*, 12 July.
Guard would be called to duty. However, within the hour, the general was on the phone to the paper with the news he had been ordered to take his brigade to Homestead “at once.”

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 had opened for business. They, in turn, notified company commanders, like Windsor, within the hour. Colonel Hulings, the 16th’s commander, had hoped to assemble his command for the rail move to Homestead by 2 P.M., but the men of the farm-region companies were so widely scattered that it was impossible to meet that deadline. Accordingly, the hour of departure from Oil City, the regiment’s marshalling point, was changed to 9 P.M. Even then, the troops did not leave the depot until 10:30 P.M.

Snowden, while acknowledging the delays and difficulties encountered, had nothing but commendation for the zeal and alacrity generally displayed across the state. He singled out for special mention the mustering of the 2nd Brigade’s Sheridan Troop, whose farmer members, unhitching their horses in the fields, mounted and galloped to their armory. Elsewhere, the men of two companies of the 4th Infantry Regiment were underground mining slate and coal. When the call to arms reached them, they climbed out of the pits to don uniforms. In one company of another regiment, the captain was ill in bed, and it fell to his wife to harness her husband’s team and drive through the streets rousing guardsmen from their beds.

To the commanding general, such incidents were full of interest and even pathos. But there were others that were humorous. Take what transpired when William Elliot of the 16th’s Co. C attempted to report to his armory. He was a post office employee and, though willing, was stayed by the postmaster. The latter informed Elliot that he was an employee of the federal government and needed where he was. The Bradford Era, the luckless guardsman’s home town paper, commented: “Washington is a bigger town than Harrisburg when the question of authority is raised.”

Snowden, mindful of the ease with which Homesteaders were apprised of the Pinkertons’ descent upon their community, was determined to preserve the secrecy of his movements, even if it meant

7. The incident is detailed in the Oil City Derrick, 11 July 1892.
resorting to highly questionable extremes. Thus, his published orders directed General Wiley's 2nd Brigade to the Blairsville Intersection, though the actual destination he had in mind for them was Radebaugh. Wiley, of course, had no reason to doubt the validity of his orders, and only later learned the Radebaugh staging point was known to the superintendents and conductors of the railroad—if not to himself. These privileged individuals took Snowden's strictures of secrecy so seriously, however, that Wiley's regimental commanders were carried about from place to place and in some instances in the opposite direction from what should have been taken to conform to their orders.¹⁰

The 2nd Brigade commander's frustration cannot be hidden in the official report he addressed to the state's Adjutant General: "I beg you to understand that I do not make this a criticism—but merely to suggest that in the transmission of orders through railroad or other officials, 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 very satisfactory explanation—dire confusion and disastrous results might easily arise."

¹¹ Perhaps Wiley had in mind the plight of the 16th Infantry, sidetracked early on the morning of the 12th about four miles west of Radebaugh. They were hopelessly at sea as to what to do or what would be done with them. But Hulings, Windsor, and the regiment had reached what newspaper headlines were describing as the "front." All that remained was for the battle to be joined, for soldier boys to be transformed into veteran infantrymen.

Unfortunately for Windsor and the 16th, thanks to Snowden's penchant for secrecy, the oil country regiment did not arrive on the Homestead scene until 11 A.M., some two and one-half hours after the lead elements detrained at Munhall Station, adjacent to Homestead, to find only a negligible crowd on hand to meet them. Contrary to the expectations of the martially disposed, those present were bent on conciliation rather than confrontation and had, in point of fact, prepared a welcome that was aborted when Snowden, predisposed to

¹⁰ Snowden's strategy called for the 3rd Brigade to concentrate at Lewistown, moving west; the 1st Brigade, less the First City Troop, to encamp at Mt. Gretna in expectation of further orders. In Snowden's judgment the 3rd and 2nd Brigades were ample to deal with any opposition at Homestead.

¹¹ Annual Report, p. 110.
view any civilian on the scene as an "evil-disposed" person, ordered the station area cleared of all but his own troops. Thereafter, guardsmen from the 2nd and 3rd Brigades moved without opposition to a hill line south of the Carnegie works, where they went about the business of setting up what was to be known as Camp Sam Black.

By the time the 16th joined them, three companies drawn from the regiments already in camp had been ordered into the town so that the citizenry might know "the rightful authorities" had resumed control. There was no provocative incident, not even when the troops surrounded the Carnegie works. Homesteaders, convinced that the Guard would not aid Frick in manning the mills with a non-union work force, were determined on a course of cordiality. To this end the union leadership waited on Snowden at his headquarters. Though the boys from the oil country were on the scene, they were not within earshot. No matter, they would very likely have approved the stiffly correct bearing of their commander in the presence of those he considered—and treated—as villains out of a stage piece.

Their spokesman, a man named Coons, a former National Guard officer, tendered the general a welcome and offered the cooperation of those with him in preserving order. To this overture Snowden replied, "I thank you for your welcome but I do not need your cooperation. The only way that good citizens can cooperate with us is to go peaceably about their business."

Choosing to ignore the general's blighting tone, Coons inquired as to what time the community might tender Snowden a public reception. Once more Snowden's response was freezing, "I cannot accept any reception, sir. It would be most improper. I thank you for your courtesy but formal welcome is not needed. It would be an amazing thing if the National Guard of Pennsylvania was not welcome in any part of Pennsylvania."

12. The cooperative spirit that greeted the troops was engendered by the belief that Snowden would confine himself to preserving the peace and not aid Frick in manning the mills with non-union labor. What was not known at the time was that the general was determined to support the sheriff, "protecting all men who desired to work and the company in operating their mills if they so intended."

13. For a look at the situation from the Homesteaders' point of view see such contemporary accounts as Myron Stowell, _Fort Frick or the Siege of Homestead_ and _Burgoyne_, op. cit., both published in Pittsburgh in 1893.

14. The exchanges between Snowden and the deputation are reproduced in _The Oil City Blizzard_, 12 July. The General summarizes them for his submission to the _Annual Report_, p. 75.
Hugh O'Donnell, the duly elected leader of the Homestead labor force, broke in at this point, "On the part of the Amalgamated Association, I wish to say that after suffering an attack from an illegal authority [the Pinkertons], we are glad to have the legal authority of the state here."

No less truculently than before, Snowden replied, "I do not recognize your association, sir. I recognize no one but the citizens of this city. We have come to restore law and order; and they are already restored."

"But we wish to submit," O'Donnell began. The general cut him short, "Then, sir, submit to this gentleman behind you." O'Donnell, on turning about, beheld Sheriff McCleary. "I do submit to him," he retorted. "We have never questioned the sheriff's orders."

Snowden, smiling through his teeth, responded, "I'm glad to hear it. But you must understand my position. We are here to preserve the peace. We represent the executive arm of the state of Pennsylvania, and I have nothing to say to you further than that the sheriff must be obeyed."
“But we have obeyed the sheriff,” O’Donnell contended. “Haven’t we, Mr. McCleary?”

“No, you have not,” was the sheriff’s answer. “You refused to let any of my deputies in the works.”

Snowden, at this point, withdrew from the conversation, and the meeting ended in awkward silence. Not so silent were the guardsmen about the general’s headquarters. For the moment at least, they had abandoned the scenario they had devised as well as the parts they had chosen for themselves. Between acts as it were, the soldiers felt themselves at liberty to query the location of the camp tentage. No less pressing were the empty rumblings in their stomachs—all but a few having consumed the three days’ rations they had been told to bring with them.  

Fortunately, it was not difficult for either the officers or the men in the confusion of that first afternoon to make their way from the camp grounds into Homestead, jamming the restaurants and fraternizing with the people on the streets, who seemed very willing to exchange mementos of the Homestead battle for cartridges from the soldiers’ persons. Somehow it was all reminiscent of one of the Guard’s annual encampments. However, on making their way back to camp that evening, their various appetites satisfied, the returnees found anything but quiet along the Monongahela.

Inside the lines they were met by scenes of confusion bordering on chaos. Some guardsmen were running hither and thither in search of quarters for the night. Others were conscientiously getting ready to go on guard duty; while there were those who could be glimpsed lying on the ground, rolled in army blankets stoically waiting the arrival of the tentage. Everywhere there was the rumble of heavily loaded wagons mingled with the sharp sound of horses’ hoofs, and everywhere knapsacks, blankets, weapons, and gear of every description were strewn about and being churned under foot. By 8 P.M. hardly half a dozen tents had been pitched and these were mostly mess tents, which the men hastily turned into improvised sleeping quarters for themselves.

A number of the commanding officers were less fortunate, having no place to put their heads—even as late as 10 P.M.—and members of their staffs groped about in the dark looking for tents and then suitable places to pitch them. Owing to the unevenness of the ground, it was difficult to move about, and only a few of the officers or their

15. This author has drawn on the extremely graphic account of the evening in the Pittsburgh Press, 13 July 1892.
men had as yet familiarized themselves with the disposition of the various regiments. Thus new arrivals were shunted about, directed first to the right and then the left with little confidence of finding the commands they sought. It was no pleasant experience walking through the camp. Soldiers lay on the ground asleep, their abandoned equipment threatening to trap unwary feet at every step.

Evidence abounds that guardsmen had given up hope of getting the various camps in order. Rather they had encouraged idle bandmen to play away the dark. From all sides martial strains were heard, and those without musical instruments used their lungs in a lusty manner. For the moment at least, those present were determined to banish their discomfiture and blighted expectations in song. Or perhaps their favorites from the late war were intended as a summons to brave deeds, a call to resume a role negated by the anti-climactic events of the day.

III.

For Captain Fred, Co. I, and the 16th Regiment, their melodramatic imaginings seemed on the point of being translated into reality on no fewer than three separate occasions in the next ninety-four days. Shortly after 1 A.M. on the morning of July 15th, a rumor electrified the camp to the effect that guardsmen would be attacked from the rear before daylight by the strikers. In response, the drums beat to arms and Camp Black suddenly became very war-like, though in point of fact the rumor was just that. Those present, from commanding general to private, were unwilling to believe that their call to duty was to be without martial incident, failing to give them a highly visible opportunity to earn the estate of veteran and thus validate their claims to manhood in a vocabulary intelligible to their fathers' generation.16

Hulings, asleep in his tent when roused by the martial clamor, promptly ordered out a detail from each of the regiment's eight companies to serve as a double picket around the eastern, western, and southern sides of the camp. Their orders were to challenge all who approached and if a satisfactory response was not received, to

16. Within the 16th Regiment, neither Hulings nor any member of his staff had seen service between 1861–65, while among the regiment's company officers only one captain and two lieutenants had served during these hallowed years. Snowden had been no more than a captain on the staffs of Generals Doubleday and Kenley from February to July 1863; Wiley had been the chief clerk in the quartermaster department at Camp Reynolds between May and August 1864.
fire upon the intruders and fall back to the guard line, firing while retreating. The excitement of all can well be imagined, and when the anticipated assault failed to materialize, it seemed to the 16th's colonel and other senior officers that they had misinterpreted the import of the initial rumor—that it was not the camp but the mill that was threatened.  

Acting on this belated conviction, the 16th was issued orders to fall in at 7:30 A.M. in heavy marching order with twenty-four hours' rations. Within moments little groups gathered to discuss in hushed whispers what the day might hold. "What does this mean?" "Where are we going?" These questions were not answered, however, until the regiment marched into Homestead proper, where their appearance caused the wildest possible excitement, especially among the strikers. To this point asleep in their beds, they had been unaware of the excitement prevailing at Camp Black. Only when Hulings' men surrounded the mill was there the promise of an ugly clash, but the anti-confrontation arguments of the Amalgamated leadership again prevailed with the rank and file of the work force. Guardsmen returned to their camps, their martial ambitions roused but unfulfilled.

A second incident following upon the over-active, self-dramatizing imaginings of guardsmen, in which Windsor himself was a principal figure, took place exactly one month to the day later. In its details, the searcher finds not only echoes of Snowden's bellicose interview with the Amalgamated leadership but more of the boredom, fatigue, homesickness, and uncertainty of a month in uniform. As on July 15th, there was the absurdity of farce comedy in the making. Plaudits were promised—all but guaranteed—then denied in the anticlimactic course of events. 

On the day in question Windsor, together with Co. I and Co. D of the 16th, was camped at Swissvale on the north bank of the Monongahela. It was shortly after 8 P.M. in what Captain Fred called Camp Cowell, and those whose eyes were turned toward the mill could see from their vantage point a long freight train passing through the grounds and onto the railroad bridge that spanned the river. It was at this point that what were taken to be shots were fired in rapid

17. The incident is summarized in the *Oil City Derrick*, 16 July 1892.
18. The incident is described with variations in the following local papers: *The Bradford Era*, 18 August 1892; *The Warren Mail*, 24 August 1892, and the *Oil City Derrick*, 24 August 1892. Burgoyne, *op. cit.*, p. 185, calls the affair somewhat inaccurately the "first and only real outcropping of trouble between the workmen and the militia."
succession from the moving train at the *Little Bill*, the river steamer that had pushed the Pinkertons’ barges into history but was now in use as the Guard’s prime communication link between the river’s banks.

Moored for the night just above the trestle on Windsor’s side of the river, it was an obvious authority symbol of some significance to the strikers, and Co. D’s Captain Spencer, aboard the vessel at that hour, assumed Homesteaders had boarded the train to get within striking distance of the *Little Bill*. With a promptness born of weeks of anticipation, he ordered the men with him to return the fire.

Windsor, in his Camp Cowell headquarters, responded to the initial sound of shots with similar alacrity, and within moments had men lining the bluff overlooking the river, sharpshooters in the front rank. On order they sent volley after volley into the train, fairly riddling the engine and the caboose. “You ought to have heard the bullets rattle through the trees,” wrote one of the marksmen, who also described a fellow soldier, sick in bed for a week, crawling to the firing line and blazing away until he fainted from weakness. Nerved up for they knew not what, Windsor had his Camp Cowell garrison search the north bank of the river even as he boarded the *Little Bill* to scout the same area with the aid of its searchlight, netting for his diligence three railroad employees who claimed to be out for an evening walk.

In the inevitable investigation that followed, the train’s conductor testified that there had been no shots fired from the freight cars. Rather, he laid the blame on torpedoes set off by the train’s passage. Persuasively he argued that his crew, the only men he knew to be aboard the slowly moving freight, were hardly likely to initiate a fire fight in which they were so obviously outgunned. Such testimony, reasonable as it was, scarcely convinced Windsor, who stubbornly maintained they had been fired upon by parties unknown. But if the testimony of the conductor can be believed, here was an illustration of what could follow when guardsmen, consumed by a compulsion to act out the fantasies that had brought them to this point, seized the moment and the stage for themselves.

That they might indeed do just that was vividly illustrated on September 3rd in an incident that again involved men from Co. I. Quite possibly it began as an anodyne to tedium, but it promised in a swinging melee to transform would-be heroes into villains of history. The catalyst in this particular instance was the behavior of

19. The fullest account of this incident is found in the *Pittsburgh Press*, 4 September 1892. See also *The Warren Mail*, 7 September 1892.
some of the passengers aboard an excursion vessel, chartered by the Union American Cigar Company of Pittsburgh. When it passed the Homestead mills on its upriver voyage, several of the male excursionists—there were some 800 passengers including 500 women and young girls aboard—yelled out at the non-union men in the Carnegie mills "scab" and "blacksheep!" Those so labeled returned as good as they got, and the verbal exchange terminated only when the pleasure craft steamed out of earshot. On learning of the incident, the Provost Marshal determined to arrest those responsible if the cries were repeated on the downriver trip.

Co. I's Lieutenant Wheelock was in charge of the guard detail aboard the Little Bill. As anticipated, some of the "smart young men" aboard the City of Pittsburgh reiterated their earlier behavior as the vessel repassed the mill. Within minutes the pleasure craft was overtaken and the cry "boarders away" from the deck of the Little Bill startled the unsuspecting pleasure seekers, whose consternation can be imagined as they beheld a line of guardsmen, bayonets fixed, charging down at them. Women fainted and a panic of sorts ensued as the young girls tried to get out of the path of the ferocious boarding party. In the one-sided melee, a youth suspected of being the prime mover behind the shouting was taken into custody and the passengers admonished not to indulge in further name calling.

The boys of Co. I congratulated themselves in the incident's wake even as they had following the fusilage directed at the train. A similar situation was occasioned by the 16th's presence at Duquesne, some five miles distant from Homestead. On this occasion, guardsmen found a large crowd blocking the entrance to yet another Carnegie plant. Co. I, the beau ideal of the regiment, set about the business of dispersing the crowd. Very much in his element, Windsor ordered his men to fix their bayonets and advance into the crowd, forcing the offending parties back so that those wishing to work might enter the plant to do so. Such flamboyantly stage-like moments did not—it should be emphasized—constitute the day-to-day reality of Homestead, but rather a release from it.

To come to terms with what transpired at Camp Black as week succeeded week, the searcher needs to look beyond forgotten feature stories from the seat of war and sample letters home from the boys of the 16th that lament the blazing sun and the heat so intense that it seemed likely to melt the brass buttons on uniform blouses.

20. The incident is detailed in Hulings' contribution to the Annual Report, p. 125, and in The Warren Mail, 10 August 1892.
A guardsman occupies some of the leisure time at Camp Cowell by demonstrating his acrobatic talents. (Windsor Collection, Warren County Historical Society.)

One writer, in particular, gave a vivid picture of off-duty-men seeking the shelter of the strip of woods to the south of the camp. As he pictures the scene, the grass beneath the trees is hidden by the prostrate bodies of "the gasping, perspiring soldiers stripped of all but trousers and undershirts." 21

Soldier boys suddenly found creature comforts—not martial fantasies—all consuming, and their letters reflect an absorption in the day-to-day details of Camp Black that no want or privation on the faces or in the lives of Carnegie's one-time workers could penetrate. Witness the following extracts:

Last Wednesday [July 27th] the 16th did patrol duty in Homestead, Co. I guarding two gates of the steel works, at Manhall [sic] Station on the Pennsylvania R.R. and on duty at the signal station. All was quiet there, but two or three of the companies had some trouble with the strikers who tried to keep the deputies from taking six of their number to Pittsburgh for trial.

The weather has been hotter than the oldest inhabitant remembers of but Col. Hulings has had great regard for the health of his command by cutting short battalion drills in the morning and dress parade about 6 P.M. The 16th are willing and anxious to go home, but of course will do their duty and obey orders.  

The same correspondent in a communication dated August 1st once more articulates the meaning of Homestead to the rank and file—ready to obey the commands of their officers but readier yet to be done with it all and return to their hearthsides.

The second battalion of the 16th did patrol duty at the steel works Saturday [July 30th]. The first, to which Co. I is attached, will go later. As there are seven battalions, one in six days is all that each man will see of the disagreeable business. Saturday was a raining day and Co. I's quarters were flooded somewhat. Digging ditches and police work generally was engaged in, some of the boys being expert at it.

Captain Windsor was officer of the day Saturday. Co. I rejoices in a bathroom built of hemlock, with the sky for a covering. A shower bath can be taken, and if the boys don't keep clean now it will be their own fault.

Since the bulk of the soldiers left Camp Black, it has been lonesome and a good deal quieter.

IV.

The letter writer's reference to Windsor reminds us that Homestead is, in no small measure, his story. For not only did Captain Fred, or one of his officers, precipitate just that sort of confrontation that might have resulted in the ugliest of incidents—far-reaching in its ramifications—but he was joined with Hulings and General Wiley in what was to become the real test of leadership—not keeping the peace at bayonet point so much as combating the homesickness or homemindedness that surfaced within days of the soldiers' arrival. This outpaced the discomforts and indignities that were part of every guardsman's lot for however long he soldiered at Homestead.

22. Reproduced in The Warren Mail, 3 August 1892.
23. Ibid.
The governor and the Guard’s senior officers were not unaware of the priorities of their citizen-soldiers in a prolongation of the status quo. Thus the chief executive announced on his four-day visit to the front (July 19th through 22nd) that duty at Camp Black would take the place of that year’s annual encampment. Subsequently, on July 28th, the bulk of the 3rd Brigade together with the division headquarters were returned to their homes, leaving on duty in the 2nd Brigade the 5th, 15th, and 16th Regiments as well as Battery B and the Sheridan Troop. Early in August, the battery, the cavalry troop, and the 5th Regiment were relieved. The strengths of the individual companies of the two remaining regiments were reduced to thirty-five men each on September 3rd and to thirty men each on the 14th. Five days later, on September 19th, the 15th Regiment was dismissed and, on the 27th, four of the eight companies of the 16th—not including Windsor’s Co. I—were returned to their homes.

This timely relief of units or reduction in strength of those remaining may well have stifled one of the most curious incidents of the entire ninety-five days. News had reached the camp on July 23rd that a young anarchist, Alexander Berkman, had made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Henry Clay Frick. It so pleased a young private named Iams from the 10th Regiment that he cried out, “Three cheers for the man who shot Frick.” Unfortunately for Iams, Lieutenant Colonel Streator, who overheard his spontaneous exclamation, demanded an apology. Iams’ refusal sounded to this officer very much like mutiny and treason. Convinced that he must make an example of Iams, Streator ordered him hung by his thumbs and subsequently discharged from the Guard and drummed out of camp in disgrace.24

As might have been anticipated, reporters hungry for copy were quick to report the incident, many decrying the colonel’s treatment of Iams as barbaric, capricious, tyrannical, unjust, and nothing short of ferocious. His fellow guardsmen were not unsympathetic to the plight of one of their fellows, but they were distracted partisans, obsessed with their expeditious return to home and hearth. And it seems very likely that orders relieving the 10th, Iams’ regiment, on July 28th, was a move calculated to dissipate support for him. Those yet on duty who might have remained indignant on his

24. The incident is summarized in Wolff’s Lockout, op. cit. Snowden and Col. A. L. Hawkins of the 10th Regiment both comment at some length upon it in their individual contributions to the Annual Report.
behalf were fully occupied in coping with a drizzling rain on the 29th and, in subsequent days, with onerous guard or patrol duties as well as daily fatigue details. Hulings acknowledged the latter were "a severe trial of the patience and endurance and discipline of the men."

The point to be made is that without the loyalty, enthusiasm, and dedication of company officers like Fred Windsor, guardsmen throughout the entire Homestead experience—not merely the final seven and a half weeks—might have felt a great deal sorrier for themselves and behaved far less creditably than they did. As it was, Captain Fred's most significant achievement was in making life at Camp Black and later at Camp Cowell tolerable even as he promoted activities of a distracting character for the men under his command. So enthusiastically did Windsor respond to the challenge that he was reported ill during the second week in camp. His indisposition, however, did not prevent Co. I from securing a very favorable rating at the regimental inspections; and when the company's quarters were examined, the officers conducting the inspection were heard to remark that the Warren company had the tidiest and best looking camp of any in the division. Trust Captain Fred for that and for the mattresses upon which every man slumbered—"far better than the hard ground or boards so fashionable in many companies."

Determined to see that his boys were provided for in another connection, Captain Fred secured the services of two "colored gentlemen" from Pittsburgh. With them in the cook house, the hitherto unsatisfactory "grub" began to improve. One of the company writing home on July 29th speaks of their managing to live well. That morning, for instance, they had had fresh fish and potatoes together with new bread and butter. Besides this fare there were delicacies from home, which enlivened many of the company's meals. These included not only tasty perishables like cake but canned meats, pickles, and a variety of relishes. Clearly this enforced exile from home had its tolerable moments—not a few of them at meal times.

Lest the men find the time hanging heavy on their hands in the hours stretching between the noon meal and the battalion drill that was scheduled at 4 P.M., Captain Fred urged his boys to compete in a variety of athletic contests, to include wrestling, one of his own favorite sports. In such recreational activities Windsor and his fellow company commanders were abetted by General
Wiley, a frequent visitor and interested spectator, who had succeeded Snowden in command on the relief of the division headquarters. And when participant sports began to pall, there were burlesque dress parades, evening band concerts, stag balls, and talent competitions. Their recurring opportunities for conviviality caused one appreciative visitor to remark, “This Pennsylvania National Guard has the best set of officers in the Union, and they are all jolly good fellows.” It was as the hosts of summer that the Guard’s officers came into their own. For every weekend from July 17th into September, Homestead was reinvested—not by boys in blue but by their well-wishers armed with formidable picnic baskets.

It is a moot point whether or not visitors should have been at Homestead on this or subsequent Sundays throughout the summer, for the potential for violence—as well as the reality of a succession of ugly incidents—continued unabated. Just possibly friends and families couldn’t have been kept away, and for the Guard’s senior

25. Quoted in the Pittsburgh Press, 24 July 1892.
officers to have made the attempt would have been tantamount to admitting they had not restored the reign of law and order, were not in absolute control of the civil peace in the community. And so they came via excursion trains, over 20,000 on that first Sunday alone. Noteworthy were the many picnic girls, each anxiously in search of a guardsman for whom she asked by name. "It is not within the province of a newspaper," one reporter wrote, "to state what happened after the individual was found, or how often it happened. It is sufficient to say that the soldier boys looked happy and the girls radiant." 

During August, with the camp to themselves, the 15th and 16th Regiments strove to outdo one another in the courtesies they extended to those who came calling. Families—especially the womenfolk—were in evidence. And among their number none was more welcome than Miss Florence, the twelve-year-old daughter of General Wiley, who was given the courtesy command of the troops. She was everywhere at once, and her bright, winning manner won over everyone with whom she came in contact. However, shortly after her departure, a violent moment threatened the peace on August 16th and brought into question—at least momentarily—the wisdom of turning Camp Black into a summer vacation grounds.

Its beginning was innocuous enough—the arrest of a non-union laborer in the mill on a charge of larceny. Together with four witnesses, also non-union men, the thief was brought before a Homestead alderman, who ordered the accused man jailed. Though this individual was taken out the back way, the witnesses and two deputies escorting them were allowed to leave by the front. No sooner had they left the building's protection than they were surrounded by a mob of men, women, and children—strikers and their families—intent on venting their mounting frustrations and anxieties upon them. The commotion was heard by Major Crawford of the 16th, who, as provost marshal, ordered twenty of his men, bayonets fixed, to put themselves between the crowd, estimated at 3,000, and the objects of their anger.

Guardsmen stood their ground, fingering the hammers of their weapons as a voice from the crowd cried, "Don't let a little handful

26. Pittsburgh Press, 18 July. On that first Sunday evening the visitors yet in camp witnessed a guardsman being taken to the hospital. On guard duty for 24 hours along the city farm fence, he had become ill from the vile odors arising from the open box sewer in the street beyond the fence.

27. The incident is noted at length in The Bradford Era, 17 August 1892.
of pale-faced boys stop us. Let’s teach these scabs a lesson.” To frustrate their doing just that, Crawford hurried a support company from the camp at the double quick and was on the point of ordering his men to charge the crowd when a squad of policemen, hurried to the scene at this juncture, began to disperse the crowd with such efficiency that the non-union men were able to make their way back to the mill without incident. From the guardsmen’s point of view, it was yet another opportunity snatched from them, and not a little of their long-standing impatience can be traced to the status decreed for them by General Snowden, that of a *posse comitatus*—literally a reserve force in support of the civil authorities. “What we want,” one officer affirmed, “is either one thing or the other; we want to be strictly in it or entirely out of it. We are soldiers, not borough constables.”

In the wake of this particular incident, so demeaning to the martially disposed, the men of the 16th prepared a petition asking to be relieved on September 1st. And when that date passed with no more than a reduction in the duty strength of the companies, the Captain Freds of the two regiments yet at Camp Black needed all the energy and enthusiasm they could muster to keep the men entertained in the evenings with the kind of fare that has already been mentioned and busy during the day, beginning with the inevitable reveille announced by the drum corps passing before each tent with a “most infernal braying of brasses and pounding of drums.”

As the 16th’s letter writers described the scene, dogs chained within almost every tent for protection against pilferers and pranksters joined in the clamor. It was a combination guaranteed to rouse the soundest sleepers. The now-awakened guardsmen managed, in their own words, to “exist” through the day—setting up exercises, company drill, and dinner—until the battalion drill at 4 P.M. presided over by Hulings himself. Invariably the genial colonel commenced with a half hour’s steady drill to warm the blood and then deployed his companies as skirmishers for some “fierce” maneuvers, climaxed by an inevitable charge over broken ground.

On October 10th the 16th’s commander enlivened the afternoon with a sham battle wherein those involved fired hundreds of blank cartridges. The townspeople, unapprised of the exercise, came rushing out of their homes, and the faces of the workers in the mill

paled in fear that a real battle was taking place. Some of the strikers rejoiced, thinking that the guardsmen were killing each other. Great was their disappointment when they found it was only a sham. And though none were aware of it as the firing died away, this moment was all but the guardsmen's farewell to Homestead. For, on the morning of the 13th, Hulings gave the order to break camp. After ninety-five days the occupation of Homestead was at an end.

V.

The guardsmen's welcome in their home communities was as satisfying as the finale of any stage melodrama, for in the eyes of family and friends, they had earned the accolade of veteran. Certainly the Oil City press was more than willing to bestow it in the wake of a scene that recalled to not a few the return of the troops from the Civil War. "The sunburned and dusty uniforms, the well worn hats and accoutrements were those of an army returned from the campaign, and the confident swinging step with which they marched out of the depot yard was that of veteran soldiers." 29

Such approbation must have pleased Windsor and Co. I, but the reception that meant the most to them waited their arrival home in Warren about 9:15 that evening. On hand was an "immense" crowd of well wishers. A band played, cannon roared, people cheered, and fireworks "fizzled and burned" in honor of Captain Fred and his men, who found the community had prepared a sumptuous meal in their honor.

At its conclusion, Windsor gave what was described as a "detailed report" of duty at Homestead. Unfortunately, the Warren papers did not see fit to reproduce it in their accounts of the evening. However, one suspects the captain echoed his colonel's words on the breaking of the Homestead camp, attesting to the soldierly bearing of one and all and articulating the pride the oil country and the state could take in the guardsmen. Very likely, too, Captain Fred touched on matters that would be subject for comment in annual reports yet to be compiled—the rapidity of the Guard's mobilization and the strengths individual units were able to muster, not to mention the generally attractive condition of dining tents complemented by well-policing company streets.

The rhetoric must have been frankly eulogistic—trust Windsor for that—and under its spell the Warren Mail's reporter summed

29. Oil City Derrick, 14 October 1892.
up the ideology that influenced the behavior of troops ordered to Homestead even as it sustained friends and family at home:

Sometimes it will happen thus, when only the stern command of law will protect a whole community from disorder and social violence. At such a crisis, it is a satisfaction to know that the citizen and the soldier become one and the same. From citizens exercising for amusement's sake, they became citizen-soldiers in the truest and broadest sense of the word. They showed that if danger to law and order ever come, that danger will be promptly met and promptly averted.30

No wonder then that guardsmen took themselves so seriously, convinced as they were that their actions had society's mandate. But, as has been suggested, these citizen-soldiers were serving ends of their own, a manly image of themselves not a little influenced by the popular stage heroes and heroics of the day. Theatre-going had convinced them to anticipate moments of physical confrontation with a clearly identified villain—thus their truculence and frustration in the face of the accommodation and conciliation evidenced by the union leadership. Those like Fred Windsor never quite perceived that they could realize their ambitions only by themselves becoming the provokers—breakers of the very peace they had come to preserve.

Denied what they took to be center stage, reduced in their own eyes to little more than borough constables, guardsmen were on the point of most unheroic behavior, that is until they staked out the playing fields of Camp Black. On them, in the rough and tumble of sporting contests, as in the conviviality of musical evenings and grand stag balls, they regained a sense of individual and collective prowess all but obliterated in a succession of non-confrontations. And when called to home and hearth, victors on the playing fields found little difficulty in perceiving themselves as victors—veterans—on history's stage.

30. The Warren Mail, 19 October 1892.