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The best sources for the Homestead Strike are the "Annual Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Part III, Industrial Statistics, 1892," and the account in the Annual Cyclopedia for 1892, in addition to Wright's "Industrial Evolution of the U.S." and other secondary material. From the Annual Cyclopedia, pages 626-627:

"The most serious labor disturbance ever known in the country broke out in the Carnegie Company's mills at Homestead, eight miles east of Pittsburgh, on July 6. The riot, which began on that day, was in consequence of disagreements between the management and the workmen, which had been going on for a month or more. Notice had been given that certain apparent reductions of wages would be made in the steel works; the time of signing the agreement on wages was changed from the summer to January; and the Company had refused to recognize the 'Amalgamated Association of Steel and Iron Workers' as an organization, or to hold any conference with the workmen for discussing the terms offered. The men, on their part, refused to work at the reduced rate, and at the same time announced their determination to resist all attempts on the part of the Company to fill their places with non-union workmen. The contest was precipitated by the workmen at Homestead hanging H.C. Frick, president of the Company, in effigy, after which the Company ordered an immediate shut-down of the works two days before the time provided by the contract under which the men were working. The employees at once proceeded to organize for the defensive. On July 5 the Company announced its intention to make repairs, and the officials asked the sheriff to appoint deputies to protect their property. The sheriff sent a small squad of men to the works, but the strikers assembled in force and notified them to get out of town, as no disorder was intended and no damage would be done to any property. They even offered to be sworn in as deputies and to give bonds for the faithful performance of their duties as conservators of the peace. When this offer was declined, the advisory committee which had been directing the action of the workmen, and which had held the turbulent spirits in check, was immediately dissolved, and all the records of the committee were destroyed.

"Meanwhile the Company had secured the services of a body of Pinkerton detectives, who were gathered in two barges on the Ohio River, some miles below. This became known to the workmen and they assembled on the banks in great numbers to watch for the barges. When they arrived the workmen broke through the fence surrounding the mill, and, intrenching themselves behind piled-up steel billets, prepared to resist the landing. By four o'clock in the morning an effort was made to land the detectives, but the strikers met them, and a fierce battle was precipitated by a heavy volley of shots. The detectives were all armed with Winchester rifles, but at the point where the attempt to land was made there was a steep embankment and they were compelled to go in single file, and were soon driven back to the boats by the steady fire from the shore. They made continued efforts to land, but the strikers took a position behind a breastwork of steel rails and billets, and from this place of safe refuge were able to pick off the detectives as soon as they appeared on the decks of the boats. The great preponderance of evidence goes to show that the firing was begun by the strikers.

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"The fight was renewed the following day. The strikers secured a brass ten-pounder cannon and planted it within the steel-built embrasure, so as to command the barges moored at the river bank. At the same time the force of 1,000 men took up a position on the opposite side of the river, and planted a cannon, which they protected with a breastwork of railroad ties. Shortly before 9 o'clock the cannon were turned on the boats, and a bombardment was kept up for several hours. The stout oaken timbers forming the sides of the boats were splintered, but the ~~hx~~ heavy steel plates on the inside prevented the balls from penetrating the interior. When it was found that little impression could be made by the cannon on the boats, an effort was made to fire the barges. Hose was procured and oil sprayed on the decks and sides. While this was being done, barrel after barrel of oil was emptied into the river above the mooring place, the object being to allow it to float against the boats and thus ignite them.

"The detectives, thus besieged, three times ran up a flag of truce, and each time it was shot down by the strikers. But later the officers of the Amalgamated Association interfered, and the next offer of surrender was responded to by a committee of strikers sent on board to propose terms. They guaranteed safe conduct for the Pinkertons, provided they left their arms and ammunition behind and agreed to leave the place under guard. The detectives had no alternative and accepted the terms. Seven had been killed and 20 or 30 wounded. As they passed through the streets in charge of an escort appointed by the strikers, they were attacked by a mob, shot, clubbed, and stoned. The barges were looted and fired. Eleven workmen ~~workers~~ and spectators had been killed in the fight.

"In the emergency the sheriff telegraphed to the Governor for aid at ten o'clock on the morning of July 6. The Governor answered that the civil authorities must exhaust every means at their command for the preservation of peace, and, in response to ~~furhher~~ dispatches, that the sheriff must call upon the citizens for an adequate number of deputies. The next day the sheriff sent word that he had 32 deputies, and that they were to report on the morning of the 8th. The same day (the 7th) the Governor was requested to meet a committee of citizens of Homestead, and the meeting took place at Harrisburg. They promised to do all in their power to restore order, but were apparently unable to accomplish anything. On the 10th the sheriff again called on the Governor for assistance, and the entire froce of militia was ordered to Homestead, where they arrived on the 12th. The town was placed under martial law, and order was finally restored, though in many cases non-union men who came to work for the Company were assaulted by union workers.

"A committee of Congress was appointed to investigate the affair. The testimony went to show that the apparent reduction proposed in wages was about 18 per cent. From a statement issued by the Executive Committee of the Federation of Labor is taken the following statement of the wages the men were receiving: 'We have made a careful investigation, and find that just before the lock-out there were 3,421 employed in the mills. Of this number there were 13 whose wages averaged about $7.50 a day, 46 averaged between $5 and $7 per day, 54 averaged from $4 to $5 per day, 1,177 averaged from $1.68 to $2.50 per day, and 1,625 received 14 cents per hour, or less.'

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"The United States Senate adopted a resolution, August 2, which was reported from the Committee on Education and Labor, providing for a select committee of seven Senators to investigate and report the facts in relation to the employment for private purposes of armed bodies of men as detectives in connection with differences between workmen and employers, the reasons for the creation of such organized bodies of armed men, their character and uses; where, when, how and by whom they had been employed, and paid, and under what authority.

"On July 21, H.C. Frick, manager of the Carnegie Works, was shot and stabbed in his office by an anarchist from New York. Arrests were made on July 18 of some of the leaders of the workers, on a charge of murder. In August three retaliatory suits were begun against the Carnegie officials, the Pinkerton brothers, and five of their men, likewise on a charge of murder. Mr. Frick was arrested as soon as he recovered sufficiently to be out. Later, a charge of high treason was brought against the Homestead Advisory Board. On October 11 the Grand Jury returned true bills in the treason cases against the strikers, and also in the murder, conspiracy, and aggravated riot cases against the Carnegie officials and the Pinkerton detectives. The indicitments for treason involve(d) 31 defendants. In his instructions to the jury the Chief Justice said:

"'It is alleged that the Advisory Committee did more than to induce others not to accept employment from the Company; that it allowed no person to enter the mills of the Carnegie Steel Company, and even permitted no strangers to enter the town of Homestead without its consent; that it arranged an organization of military character, consisting of three divisions, with commanders, captains, etc., the captains to report to the division commanders, and the latter to report to the Advisory Committee. Every member of such asserted government, whether it be an advisory committee, or by whatever name it is called, who has participated in such usurpation, who has joined in a common purpose of resistance to the law and a denial of the rights to other citizens, has committed treason against the State.'

"The mills were gradually supplied with new workmen, and the strike was not declared off till November 20. At that time it was stated by the superintendant that not more than 800 of the total number of old employees would be able to secure employment.

"In December a report was published of an alleged conspiracy to poison the non-union workmen at the works, said to have been revealed by the confession of a cook employed by the Company to furnish meals to the workmen within the inclosure-to the effect that he had been hired to put poison into the food, and promised $5,000 if the works should be shut down in consequence. It was charged that the design was not to kill the men, but to use some drug that would make them sick and weak and unable to work, and that such a drug was supplied by a chemist: that 32 died, and 2,000 were made ill. True bills were found December 21 against a district master workman of the Knights of Labor and three cooks. In behalf of the men accused it is said that the situation at Homestead is unwholesome and the water bad, and that strangers, such as these new workmen were, are apt to suffer until they become acclimated."

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From the Pennsylvania Report, Pages D1 to D3 :

"For many years the Company has employed a large number of skilled workmen who belong to the Amalgamated Association of Steel and Iron Workers, and has contracted for their employment with the officers of the association. On the first of July, 1889, a three year's contract was made which was to terminate at the end of June 1892. The workmen were paid by the ton, the amount they received depending on the selling price of steel billets of a specified size which they produced. If the price of these billets advanced, the wages received per ton advanced without limit. If the price declined, their wages also declined to a certain point, called a minimum, but a decline in the selling price below this minimum caused no reduction in wages. This minimum was fixed in the contract at $25.00 per ton. At the time of making the contract the market price of the billets was $26.50 per ton.

"As the time drew near for the contract to expire, the Carnegie Company, through its chairman, Mr. Frick, submitted a proposition to the workers belonging to the iron and steel association as the basis of a new contract. The three most important features of the proposed contract were, first, a reduction in the minimum of the scale for billets from $25.00 to $22.00; second, a change in the expiration of the date of the contract from June 30th, to Decemeber 31st; third, a reduction of tonnage rates at the furnaces and mills in which important improvements had been made and new machinery had been added, increasing greatly the output and consequently the earnings of the workmen. At those in which no such improvements or additions had been made, no reduction in tonnage rates was proposed. The Company gave as a reason for reducing the minimum that the market price of steel had gone below $25.00 per ton, and that it was unfair for the workers to have the benefits of a rise in the market above $25.00, and share none of the losses of the company, when the market price fell below these figures. Indeed, the Company thought that there ought to be no minimum as there was no maximum under the sliding scale. The workers insisted that there ought to be a minimum to protect them against unfair dealing between the Company and the nuyers, as they had no voice or authority in selling the products of their labor.

"The reason for changing the time for closing the contract was that the Company's business was less active at the end of the calendar year than in midsummer, and that it was easier to complete new arrangements for employment at that time. Another reason was that the Company often made sales for an entire year, and consequently contracts for labor could be more safely made if they began and ended at times corresponding with contracts made with their customers. The workmen opposed this change in the duration of the contract for the reason that in midwinter they would be less able to resist any disposition on the part of the Company to cut down their wages, and that in the event of a strike, it would be more difficult to maintain their situation than it would be in summer. They claimed, therefore, that the change in time would be a serious disadvantage to them in negotiating with their employers.

"They submitted to the Company a counter-proposition, that the contract should end the last of June, as had formerly been the case, and that if any change was to be demanded, three month's notice

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must be given them,and that,if this was not done,the contract which was to run for three years,should continue for a year longer; in other words,from June 30,1895, until June 30,1896. This proposition was rejected by the Company. On the other hand the Company finally proposed to make the minimum $23.00 per ton for steel billets,and the Amalgamated Association,throught their comittee, proposed to reduce the minimum to $24.00,but they refused to concede any more."

Page D6 : "Concerning the Company's demand for lower wages to men who were working with the new and improved machinery,the workmen replied that "putting in of additional machinery was not a certainty,and that if done it would result in a mutual benefit to the Company,as well as to themselves,in producing a larger tonnage. They saw no reason,therefore,why their wages should be reduced."

Page D9 : "On receipt [of the sheriff's telegram of July 10th] the Governor directed General Snowden,who commanded the National Guard of Pennsylvania,to put the division under arms,and to move at once with ammunition to the support of the sheriff of Alleghany County at Homestead.---Orders were at once issued for the entire division to move.&&&---The soldiers responded immediately---and on the morning of the twelfth they entered Homestead.

"As soon as the soldiers arrived the Carnegie Company took possession of their works,and began to make preparations to resume operations with non-union men. It was difficult to secure employees,and several months passed away before the Company was able to obtain all the men desired. In the meantime the strikers showed plainly their dissatisfaction over the conduct of the Company in thus endeavoring to resume operations,but resistance to their plans could no longer be attempted with any degree of success. At first the new employees were fed and housed within the inclosure, and this continued for several weeks until their number had increased to such a degree that they felt secure in going outside for their meals with the protection afforded by the sheriff's deputies. They were in effect voluntary prisoners."

Page D11 : "The expense to the State in sending and maintaining the National Guard at Homestead was $440,256.31."

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