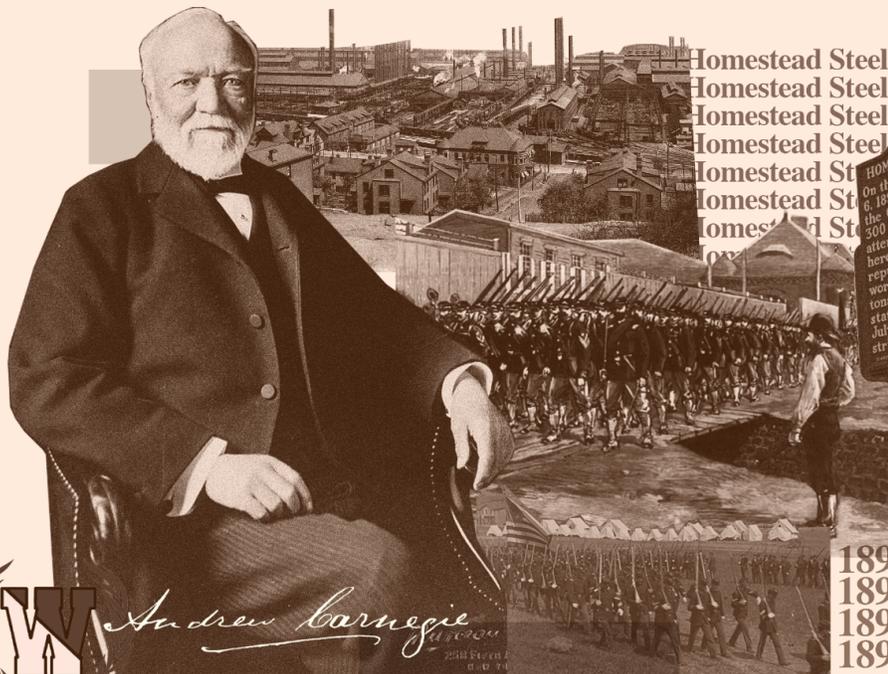
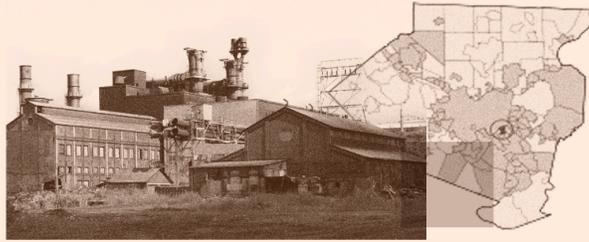


# The Homestead Strike 1892

*Westwood MUNC VII*



*Andrew Carnegie*  
1835-1919

**HOMESTEAD STRIKE**  
On the morning of July 6, 1892, on orders of the Carnegie Steel Co., 300 Pinkerton agents attempted to land near here; strikers, citizens repulsed them. Seven workers, three Pinkertons were killed. 2,000 state militia arrived July 12; by November the strike was broken.

1892  
1892  
1892  
1892

Delegates,

Since WestwoodMUNCVII is being run as an entirely crisis-based conference, it is crucial for newcomers to be familiar with the rules of procedure, as it does diverge from some of the more traditional general assembly procedures. Please see below for a quick rundown of most of the rules we will be following for the duration of the conference:

I. Overview:

Crisis committees are run differently from “normal” Model UN committees. Because they run at a very fast pace, each committee is run in a series of moderated caucus, designed to maintain a rapid flow of debate, helping delegates adjust to crisis updates and such. The rest of the committee follows normal parliamentary procedure with a few notable exceptions.

II. Format:

As previously stated, the format of debate differs slightly from a general assembly in a crisis simulation. There is no speakers list and therefore, the default method of debate is the moderated caucus. Chairs will require the first motion being a round robin so as to ascertain the positions of others in the committee. This will serve as a good jumping off point to see who delegates are most likely to work with and who is most likely to get in the way of achieving their goals. After that, delegates will be able to motion for the “traditional” (un)moderated caucuses, round robins, straw polls, voting procedure, etc. In order to make any of these motions, a delegate must be recognized by the chair after raising their placards. Points and motions may be made between speakers, though note

that right of replies are rarely granted and are only allowed when serious insult to national or personal integrity has occurred.

### III. Public Directives:

Delegates do not work to pass resolutions. Rather, they will pass a series of directives that are binding, take effect immediately and can potentially alter the course of events for the entire crisis simulation. A directive is a specific action that the committee wishes to take. Unlike resolutions, directives do not include preambulatory clauses; instead, delegates will directly state specific orders, similar to operative clauses, following the title and the sponsors and signatories list.

### IV. Personal Directives:

Additionally, individual members of the committee may pass personal directives depending on their particular position, potentially contributing to individual crisis arcs. These directives can range from allocating funds for renewable energy to carrying out assassinations. These actions do not need to be passed by the committee at large and their effectiveness is determined by their feasibility and the crisis staff. It is suggested that delegates refrain from sharing what personal directives they are planning as they should be used to achieve personal objectives that might not always align with the interests of the committee as a whole. These directives are sent to the crisis backroom, who determines whether or not the directive will change the course of the committee.

### V. Communication:

Communication is an essential part of any crisis simulation, and is especially a vital tool when delegates are required to respond to crisis updates. At the beginning of the conference, delegates will be provided with a pen and a pad of paper. They may use the paper to write notes to each other, write up directives, or organize thoughts. Regarding note passing: delegates may pass notes to each other during committee while other members are speaking, but this privilege may be revoked by the chair should it distract from the debate. Specifics about note passing will be addressed at the beginning of the first committee session by the chair. Technology, like computers and cell phones, are not allowed during debate.

#### VI. Conference Prep:

In order to prepare for this conference, it is *strongly* recommended that each delegate consolidate their thoughts and strategy by writing a position paper. Delegates that do not submit a paper by the deadline below will not be eligible for awards. Position papers should:

- Be 1-2 pages in length single spaced, 12 point font
- Describe your role's position and what they contribute to the issue
- Address specific questions from the Background Guide that are relevant to your role
- Outline your role's likely optimal resolution and steps you need to take to achieve it
- MLA or Chicago style citations along with a Works Cited or Bibliography

Please email your position paper to your chairs no later than ***11:59 pm on Sunday, April 21st*** so that they have adequate time to read them. To qualify for any awards you must submit a

position paper by emailing it to [24sschmitz@wpsstudents.org](mailto:24sschmitz@wpsstudents.org) or [25svitali@wpsstudents.org](mailto:25svitali@wpsstudents.org).

Once again, please feel free to email your chairs or crisis director with any questions you may have regarding conference policies or procedures.

Best,

WestwoodMUNCVII Staff

Dear Delegates,

My name is Sam Schmitz. I'm a senior at Westwood High School, and I'm so excited to be your chair for this committee! Although I've been a Model United Nations delegate since 7th grade, this will be my first time seriously chairing. Outside of MUN, I'm also a member of French Club, and I enjoy hiking, kayaking, playing the guitar, and painting.

I also love to study history. One of my personal favorite aspects of Model UN is learning about people, perspectives, and events that I might not have considered before. I chose to focus on the Homestead Strike because although it stands as a fascinating and incredibly important turning point in the history of labor relations, it's not very widely-known. I hope you find the topic interesting and your research enlightening!

Our secretariat has worked hard to put together an awesome conference for you all. If you want to submit your position paper, need anything, or have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at [24sschmitz@wpsstudents.org](mailto:24sschmitz@wpsstudents.org). Please note that papers are due by Sunday, April 21st in order to be eligible for awards. Good luck!

Best,

Sam

Dear Delegates,

My name is Sofia Vitali. I am a Junior at Westwood High School, and I am excited to be a part of Westwood MUN this year! I got involved with MUN this past year and have attended a few conferences, but this will be my first time co-chairing. Outside of MUN, I enjoy reading, listening to music, hanging out with friends, and walking my dog.

One of my favorite classes this year has been APUSH, and learning about the Homestead strike was something that interested me. I am looking forward to hearing everyone's new ideas and perspectives. My favorite part about MUN is meeting new people, and getting to learn from them. Making friends at conferences is always fun, especially when you get to keep in touch with them afterward. I hope you all find people and make new friends at Westwood in April!

If you have any questions or concerns about the committee, or if you would like to submit your position paper, please feel free to reach out to me at [25svitali@wpsstudents.org](mailto:25svitali@wpsstudents.org).

Best,

Sofia

## Committee Overview

During the late 19th century, the United States became the world's foremost industrial power. For the first time in history, America was a nation of wage-earners: according to the 1870 census, some 67% of productively engaged people worked for somebody else.<sup>1</sup> On one hand, industrialization significantly raised the standard of living in America. On the other hand, poverty, unemployment, and abuse at the hands of management were all chronic realities, particularly for the lower class. In an attempt to ameliorate their situation, workers began to unionize. During the 1880s alone, the United States experienced almost ten thousand strikes and lockouts.<sup>2</sup> On the surface, such manifestations were about concrete issues such as wages and working hours. More than that, though, groups such as the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor were fighting for their very right to exist, and union recognition was nowhere near guaranteed. In this committee, delegates will focus on one strike in particular: the Homestead Strike.

The Homestead Strike took place at the Homestead Steel Plant, eight miles outside of Pittsburgh on the bank of the Monongahela River. Homestead's parent company, Carnegie Steel, was making almost \$4.5 million in profits; however, the price of rolled steel-products had dropped following a nation-wide strike.<sup>3</sup> The company's owner, Andrew Carnegie, was thus seeking ways to lower production costs. His associate, Henry Clay Frick, proposed a solution: a series of wage cuts. Carnegie and Frick knew that this maneuver would likely anger the

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Arnesen, *The Gilded Age: Essays on the Origins of Modern America*, ed. Charles W. Calhoun (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "The Strike at Homestead Mill," PBS, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/carnegie-strike-homestead-mill>.

Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, a nation-wide union with a powerful presence in Homestead, yet they implemented the wage cuts anyway, once the union's contract had expired. When management refused to negotiate on the subject, the workers at Homestead voted to strike. In this committee, delegates will represent the corporation, the union, their competitors, and their allies. They will be tasked with finding a way to maintain a stable, profitable company while also protecting the rights of the workers.

## Context

### Initial Concerns

In the 1890s, the Carnegie Steel Company employed about 13,000 people, 3,800 of which worked at Homestead.<sup>4</sup> Among their most important customers was the United States Navy, for whom they manufactured armor plating.<sup>5</sup> Although it was one of the most profitable steel mills in Carnegie's possession, Homestead, like any other manufacturer at the time, was subject to fluctuations in the economy.<sup>6</sup>



A group of steelworkers at Homestead watch as molten steel is poured into casts.

There were several factors that impacted the steel market during this time period. One factor that was at the forefront of the workers' minds was the McKinley Tariff Act of 1890. Although it increased the tariff on many goods, the act actually *reduced* the tariff on the four-inch steel billet, which had a depressive effect on Carnegie's industry.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, labor

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<sup>4</sup> Arthur G. Burgoyne. *Homestead Strike of 1892*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971. pg 10

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pg. 4

<sup>6</sup> Leon Wolff, "Battle at Homestead," AMERICAN HERITAGE, February 1, 2024, <https://www.americanheritage.com/battle-homestead>.

<sup>7</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 25

declared a general strike in autumn of 1892, which led to a country-wide economic downturn to which the steel industry was not immune. In fact, the price of rolled-steel products dropped from \$35 a gross ton in 1890 to \$22 in 1892.<sup>8</sup>

In response, Carnegie and Frick sought to recover their financial losses through a series of wage-cuts. Specifically, Frick and his associates in management decided to alter the sliding scale on which the steel-workers were paid. The scale was such that the workers' salaries were dependent on the price per ton of steel billets: if the price of the product increased, so too did the workers' pay.<sup>9</sup> The scale, however, had a lower limit. Although less than 1,000 of the 3,800 workers at Homestead belonged to the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, the union wielded significant power and managed to set minimum wage at \$25 per ton.<sup>10</sup> Frick and his associates, in response to the sinking price of steel billets, proposed a new minimum of \$22 per ton.<sup>11</sup>

## Past actions

### The Lock-Out

The workers were obviously not happy about the prospect of their wages being lowered; however, the union made it clear that they were open to negotiations on the subject. Frick, for his part, made it equally clear that he was not. \$22 per ton was non-negotiable, and the workers had until June 24th to accept the new scale as members of the Amalgamated. After that, management would only deal with the workers as individuals. Frick "wanted it to be understood that if his

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<sup>8</sup> PBS, "The Strike at Homestead Mill."

<sup>9</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 17

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pg. 11

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. pg. 20

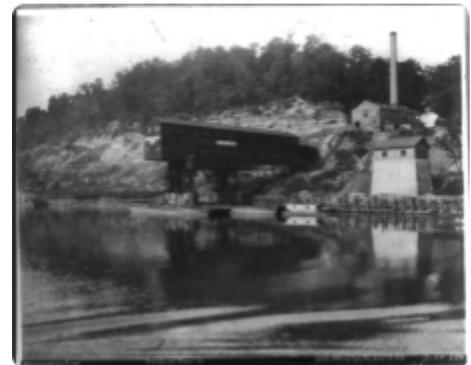
employees did not yield promptly and with good grace, he would non-unionize the mill.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, he would no longer recognize the union’s power, essentially breaking it up.

The workers refused to accept the offer, so Frick ordered the armor-plate mill and the open-hearth department shut down, essentially laying off roughly 800 workers.<sup>13</sup> Following this, the mill ceased production entirely, and thus began the lockout.<sup>14</sup> Although the event is typically referred to as the Homestead Strike, its name is somewhat deceiving:

“A strike occurs when dissatisfied workmen cease work of their own accord and refuse to return until the cause of dissatisfaction is removed. A lock-out originates with the employing individual or corporation, and consists in the refusal to let the employees work until they come to terms with the employer.”<sup>15</sup>

Because Frick took the initiative, the series of events at Homestead began as a lockout.

The workers—those that belonged to the Amalgamated and those who did not—soon met to discuss their next steps. Designated groups were sent to patrol the Monongahela River and all entrances to the town, and headquarters were established in a public hall, where the workers could communicate with the outside world via telegraph.<sup>16</sup> And communicate they did: the conflict received much press coverage, both good and bad, throughout its duration.<sup>17</sup> And with that, the government of the town was



A steel plant on the Monongahela River.

essentially in the hands of a temporary “advisory committee” created by the Amalgamated. The

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. pg. 21

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. pg. 34

<sup>14</sup> Joseph White, “The Battle of Homestead Strike – July, 1892,” Battle of Homestead Foundation, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://battleofhomestead.org/the-battle-of-homestead>.

<sup>15</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 34

<sup>16</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 37-38

<sup>17</sup> Wolff, “Battle at Homestead.”

committee stressed that its goals were the preservation of order, decency, life, and property, as well as the steadfast exclusion from Homestead of non-union men.<sup>18</sup>

## Response

### The Pinkertons

Frick and the management team knew that it would be difficult, though not impossible, to find non-union workers brave enough to enter Homestead and face the angry strikers. The greater difficulty would be getting said workers past the picket lines and safely into the plant to begin work, so they decided to hire a group of Pinkerton strikebreakers.

The Pinkerton Detective Agency was formed in 1850 by Allan Pinkerton, a Scottish-born detective. Initially, members of the agency were involved in solving crimes and pursuing criminals. Soon though, Pinkerton began hiring his men out to banks and other establishments for protective purposes. They were called the “Pinkerton Preventative Watch,” and they were essentially a privately funded and operated police force.<sup>19</sup> Frick hired the Pinkertons at \$5 per man per day.<sup>20</sup> Frick even tried to get Sheriff William H. McCleary to deputize the Pinkertons—that is, to authorize them as official police agents of the county. McCleary reportedly declined to do so, though the exact reason for his hesitancy was unclear.<sup>21</sup>



*We Never Sleep*  
The Pinkerton's logo,  
captioned “We never sleep.”

Roughly 300 Pinkertons arrived via two barges, towed by Captain William Rodgers, on the Monongahela river at dawn. Their goal was to make it into the plant without alerting the

<sup>18</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 39

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. pg. 43

<sup>20</sup> Wolff, “Battle at Homestead.”

<sup>21</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 47

strikers—or the townspeople, for that matter, the vast majority of whom sided with the workers and the union. The workers had scouts stationed all along the river though, and they were well aware of the boats' advance.<sup>22</sup>

The barges' landing site had been walled off with wire-topped fences to prevent entrance over land; however, the workers tore it down almost immediately as the Pinkertons attempted to disembark. This was a crucial and controversial move: until then, the workers had strictly avoided trespassing upon company property so as to avoid being charged with vandalism.<sup>23</sup> At this point, though, they were determined to prevent the Pinkertons from entering the plant by any means possible. Workers armed themselves with guns, and townspeople armed themselves with stones, clubs, and pieces of scrap metal. They stood at the river bank and told the Pinkertons to turn back, "or we'll not answer for your lives!"<sup>24</sup>

Frederick Heinde, a seasoned Pinkerton and captain of the forces, disregarded their warning and pressed forward. He knew that retreat would be ruinous for the Pinkertons' reputation, and what's more would most likely result in the agency having to pay for the voyage out of pocket, as Frick was unlikely to fund a failed expedition.<sup>25</sup> Before either side could make their next move, a shot was fired. To this day, it is unknown whether the agents or the workers fired first. Regardless, a bloody scene ensued as they began to shoot blindly at each other. Several men on both sides fell, wounded.<sup>26</sup> The Pinkertons retreated below deck. The tugboat that had brought the barges to the landing site departed for a hospital with a few of the most seriously wounded agents on-board, essentially stranding the two barges.<sup>27</sup> The workers retreated behind hastily built fortifications. They realized that maintaining their position on the river bank

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<sup>22</sup> Wolff, "Battle at Homestead."

<sup>23</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 56

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 57

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 59

<sup>26</sup> PBS, "The Strike at Homestead Mill."

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 59

left them exposed, as some agents continued to fire upon the shore from holes cut in the side of the boats.<sup>28</sup> The two groups had reached a stand-off.

## Questions to consider

1. What immediate actions can be taken to mitigate violence between the workers and the Pinkertons?
  - a. Would it be appropriate to call in the state militia, or should this conflict be handled by local law-enforcement?
2. Multiple people have been killed during this strike; who, if anyone, is legally accountable?
3. How will the actions taken be received by the press and the world? Consider the reputation of the Pinkertons, the workers, and the Carnegie Corporation.
4. What long-term actions should be taken by the Carnegie Corporation?
  - a. Should the Homestead plant adopt Frick's version of the sliding scale, or the union's version? Or a different policy entirely?
  - b. Will the decisions made at Homestead set precedent for other steel mills owned by Carnegie?
5. Will the corporation officially recognize the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers?

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pg. 61

## Positions

### In support of the company

- Henry Clay Frick:
  - Henry Clay Frick was an industrialist and played a prominent role in Andrew Carnegie's steel empire. He held a firm stance favoring business interests over workers' rights and was extremely unsympathetic towards the Amalgamated Association. While often mentioned alongside Carnegie, Frick was a millionaire in his own right. Previous to his employment as the manager of the Homestead Steel Plant, Frick made a fortune buying and operating coke factories (coke is a type of fuel used to smelt iron ore).<sup>29</sup>
- F. T. F. Lovejoy:
  - F. T. F. Lovejoy was the secretary of the Carnegie Company. He was ideologically aligned with Frick, endorsing Frick's version of the sliding scale and disregarding the opinions expressed by the Amalgamated. He also proposed adopting the new scale in January rather than June, so that if a strike or lock-out were to occur, the cold weather would strengthen the company's advantage.<sup>30</sup>
- Frederick Heinde:
  - Frederick Heinde was the captain of the Pinkertons. He understood that the reputation of the agency hinged upon their success; however, during the conflict, Heinde's main goal was protecting his men, for whom he was responsible. He was shot through the leg, one of the first people on the barges to be injured.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. pg. 8

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. pg. 33

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. pg. 59

- John W. Cooper:
  - John Cooper was a Pinkerton Captain of the New York and Philadelphia division. Cooper believed that the first shot had been fired by the workers, faulting them for the violent confrontation. As soon as he heard the shot ring out, he gave his men the order to open fire, killing several workers and angering the town.<sup>32</sup>
- William H. McCleary:
  - William McCleary was the town sheriff. Prior to the arrival of the Pinkertons, McCleary tried to form a posse to restore peace and order to the town; he was unsuccessful.<sup>33</sup> McCleary knew of Frick's plan to bring in the Pinkertons, but he refrained from warning the strikers. Although his behavior seems to hint at sympathies towards the corporation, he did not grant Frick's request to deputize the Pinkertons. Later, McCleary and local law enforcement officials were overwhelmed by the sheer size of the conflict, and McCleary requested help from the State Militia.<sup>34</sup>
- Philander C. Knox:
  - Philander Knox was a corporation lawyer. Knox served as legal counsel for the Carnegie Corporation.<sup>35</sup> Knox supported the company, but he may not have entirely endorsed Frick's aggression. Instead, he may have advised a more cautious approach so as to avoid a lawsuit from the workers. Conversely, if the company decided to take legal action against its employees, Knox would be involved in that as well.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. pg. 59

<sup>33</sup> Wolff, "Battle at Homestead."

<sup>34</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 49

<sup>35</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Philander Chase Knox." Encyclopedia Britannica, October 8, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Philander-Chase-Knox>.

- George R. Snowden:
  - George R. Snowden was the commander of the Pennsylvania State Militia. He strongly sided with the corporation and denounced the workers for striking. He commented, “Philadelphians can hardly appreciate the actual communism of these people [in Homestead].”<sup>36</sup>
- Benjamin Franklin Tracy:
  - Benjamin Tracy was the United States Secretary of the Navy during the Homestead Strike. He wanted to modernize the navy’s arsenal, and his future plans included the construction of new battleships and cruisers.<sup>37</sup>

The Homestead plant was one of the biggest manufacturers of armor-plating for the Navy; during the strike, however, the plant ceased manufacturing.<sup>38</sup> Although Tracy’s specific stance on workers’ rights is not necessarily clear, he likely supported getting the plant up and running as fast as possible.
- William Pinkerton:
  - William Pinkerton was the head of the Pinkerton Detective Agency where he worked closely with industrialists and business owners. Pinkerton emphasized the importance of maintaining profitable businesses, thus siding with management against workers.<sup>39</sup>
- J. H. Robinson:

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<sup>36</sup> David Montgomery. *The fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the state, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2005. pg. 38.

<sup>37</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Benjamin F. Tracy." Encyclopedia Britannica, August 2, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Benjamin-F-Tracy>.

<sup>38</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 4

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. pg. 43

- J. H. Robinson was a Pinkerton agent from Chicago.<sup>40</sup> When a large number of Pinkerton recruits was needed, the company would advertise in the newspaper, asking for “able-bodied men of courage” but without stating for whose service. Although these ads were quite successful, they often brought in in- or under-experienced men. In fact, many of the agents assigned to Homestead had never experienced a strike before.<sup>41</sup> Robinson was one of many Pinkertons that felt ill-prepared and wished to surrender or retreat, if possible.

### **Moderates**

- Andrew Carnegie:
  - Andrew Carnegie was a well-known philanthropist who—in theory, at least—was a vocal supporter of labor’s right to unionize. He was fairly liberal, particularly when compared to the other industrialists of the time. As a businessman, though, Carnegie’s main priorities were efficiency and optimization. Particularly as the price of steel products dropped, he sought to minimize costs and maximize profits at Homestead. In the workers’ eyes, Carnegie’s decision to turn over management control to Henry Frick highlighted his prioritization of business interests. However, it is difficult to say exactly what Carnegie’s opinion of the union was or to what extent he agreed with or endorsed Frick’s actions. During the Homestead Strike, Carnegie remained abroad in Scotland.<sup>42</sup>
- John McLuckie:

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. pg. 54

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. pg. 43

<sup>42</sup> Adamczyk, J.. "Homestead Strike." Encyclopedia Britannica, December 8, 2022. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Homestead-Strike>.

- John McLuckie was the burgess of the town of Homestead and the labor leader for the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. McLuckie advocated for fair wages, safe working conditions, and the right to organize collectively to negotiate with management. He believed that businesses had an ethical obligation to put the well-being of their employees before business interests.<sup>43</sup>
- Benjamin Harrison:
  - Benjamin Harrison was the President of the United States during the Homestead strike. As a Republican, Harrison believed in fostering economic growth through policies that would promote industrial development. However, Harrison was facing criticism for the McKinley tariff, which many of the workers blamed for the dropping price of steel billets. He understood that if he strongly sided with the corporation, he would risk further alienating the disgruntled workers and losing re-election.<sup>44</sup>
- A.L. Wells:
  - A.L. Wells was a student of Bennett Medical College. He joined the Pinkertons hoping to earn some extra money to put towards his education. When the workers opened fire on the barges, Wells steadfastly tended to his wounded companions while trying to avoid injury himself.<sup>45</sup>
- Robert Emory Pattison:
  - Robert Emory Pattison was the governor of Pennsylvania. Sheriff McCleary requested that Pattison call in the State Militia several times; however, Pattison's telegrams were often elusive or cryptic. He wrote to McCleary: "Local authorities

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<sup>43</sup> PBS, "The Strike at Homestead Mill."

<sup>44</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 29

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. pg. 73

must exhaust every means at their command for the preservation of peace,” and did not seem to favor sending troops to Homestead.<sup>46</sup>

- Captain William Rodgers:
  - William “Bill” Rodgers operated the Tide Coal Company, a tugboat service employed by Carnegie and by other industrial firms in the area. He towed the Iron Mountain and the Monongahela, the two barges that transported the Pinkertons to the plant.<sup>47</sup> When the strikers opened fire, he took some of the most gravely injured men on his boat and escaped, though he later returned to reassess the situation and see if he could provide further help.<sup>48</sup>

### **In support of the workers**

- Hugh O'Donnell:
  - Hugh O'Donnell was a labor leader for the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. Although he was employed at Homestead, he enjoyed a more comfortable income than many of the other workers. He was generally well-liked and well-spoken, and he attempted to use his popularity to convince his fellow workers to cease their violence. He believed that it was vitally important that the strikers and the Pinkertons come to a peaceful agreement, particularly to preserve the image of organized labor and maintain public support for the strike.<sup>49</sup>
- Terrence Powderly:

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<sup>46</sup> Wolff, “Battle at Homestead.”

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 59

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. pg. 60

- Terrence Powderly was the head of the Knights of Labor (KOL) and a staunch advocate for workers' rights. He believed in the fundamental rights of workers to fair wages, reasonable working hours, and improved working conditions. Some chapters of the Knights of Labor walked out in sympathy strikes, showing their support for the workers at Homestead.<sup>50</sup>
- Samuel Gompers:
  - Samuel Gompers was the founder and president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Gompers advocated for achieving improvements in wages, hours, and working conditions through bargaining and negotiations rather than through confrontation. He believed that demonstrating the worker's reliability and competence could secure negotiations with management.<sup>51</sup>
- Eugene V. Debs:
  - Eugene V. Debs was a prominent labor leader, socialist, and political activist in firm support of the workers. Debs openly condemned the actions of the Carnegie Steel Company and supported the striking workers in their fight for better working conditions and wages.<sup>52</sup>
- Alexander Berkman:
  - Alexander Berkman was a Russian-born anarchist. He immigrated to America at the age of 18 and became interested in the philosophy of anarchy following the bombing of Haymarket Square. He often collaborated with his partner, Emma Goldman, a fellow anarchist and labor radicalist. At the time of this committee,

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<sup>50</sup> Stephanie Hinnershitz. "The Homestead Strike." Bill of Rights Institute. Accessed March 6, 2024. <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/the-homestead-strike>.

<sup>51</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Samuel Gompers." Encyclopedia Britannica, March 6, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Samuel-Gompers>.

<sup>52</sup> Debs, Eugene V. "The End of the Homestead Strike." Edited by Tim Davenport. Marxist Internet Archive, February 2017. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/debs/works/1892/921200-debs-endofhomesteadstrike.pdf>.

there have been rumors that the two are plotting to assassinate Frick; however, there is no evidence of them making contact with the strikers themselves.<sup>53</sup>

- Hugh Ross:

- Hugh Ross was described by his fellow workers as pugnacious and daring; it is said that he tried to initiate more direct conflict with the Pinkertons by boarding the barges alongside his friend and fellow worker Jack Clifford.<sup>54</sup> Ross was also on an advisory committee created by the AA to oversee the campaign of the Homestead strikers.<sup>55</sup>

- John Swinton:

- John Swinton was a prominent journalist who advocated for workers' rights. Throughout his career, Swinton shed light on the struggles faced by workers; he exposed the unsafe working conditions, long hours, and low wages. He was a firm believer that workers should receive dignity, respect, and fair compensation for their hard labor.<sup>56</sup> As a journalist interested in the Homestead Strike, Swinton had significant power in terms of shaping the public's perception of the conflict.

- Jack Clifford:

- Jack Clifford was a friend of Hugh Ross; the two workers took a lead role in the protest and ultimately in the violence against the Pinkertons. Clifford supported taking a more active approach in driving the Pinkertons off, rather than sitting and

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<sup>53</sup> "Alexander (Sasha) Berkman (1870-1936)." PBS. Accessed March 6, 2024.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/goldman-alexander-sasha-berkman-1870-1936>.

<sup>54</sup> Wolff, "Battle at Homestead."

<sup>55</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 37

<sup>56</sup> John Swinton. "Swinton's Silver Lining: Taking Comfort in the 1892 Strikes." History Matters. Accessed March 6, 2024. <https://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5366>.

waiting for them to retreat.<sup>57</sup> He was among the workers that did not want to accept the Pinkertons' attempts at surrender, shooting down their white flag.

- William Weihe:
  - William Weihe was the International President of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. He attempted to act as a moderate liaison between the strikers, the union as a whole, and the company. He was a staunch supporter of workers' rights, but he did not believe that violence or anarchy was the answer to the strikers' grievances.<sup>58</sup>
- William Foy:
  - William Foy was a worker and striker. He was among the first to be wounded when the Pinkertons opened fire. Foy and his comrades acted violently towards the Pinkertons; they did not want to allow a peaceful surrender, particularly after several strikers had been injured and killed. Foy wanted to see the Pinkertons put on trial for murder.<sup>59</sup>
- William W. Erwin:
  - William Erwin was a lawyer who defended the rights of the workers. He actively advocated for a more equitable balance in legal proceedings, challenging Frick and the management of Homestead.<sup>60</sup> If Frick and the corporation attempted to take legal action against the workers for, say, trespassing on company property, Erwin would play a lead role in defending the strikers' actions.

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<sup>57</sup> Burgoyne, *Homestead Strike*, pg. 33

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. pg. 17

<sup>59</sup> John Swinton. "Swinton's Silver Lining: Taking Comfort in the 1892 Strikes." History Matters. Accessed March 6, 2024. <https://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5366>.

<sup>60</sup> Dave Riehle. "William Wallace Erwin." Saint Paul Historical. Accessed March 6, 2024. <https://saintpaulhistorical.com/items/show/181>.

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