Nowhere is the ING transition from a local, community-based organization to one element of national reserve army more clearly observed than in their aggressive pursuit of state and federal funding. Guardsmen built their organization on the twinned notions of military training and manhood training, and as long as the latter relied on the former, they had to pursue military training with as much rigor and seriousness as they possibly could. To pursue serious military training in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries required an ever-increasing expenditure of funds for an ever-growing array of supplies and equipment. In the early 1870s, Illinois militia companies relied primarily on their own financial resources plus whatever funds they could raise locally, making them aggressive fund-raisers and providers of local attractions. Militia members quickly discovered that these resources were not enough to outfit and equip a true statewide reserve training force, and so they turned to the only possible source to make up the difference, the coffers of the state and federal governments. To become a tax-supported organization, guardsmen in Illinois and across the nation learned to create effective local, statewide, and eventually national lobbies that worked together to
turn what was essentially a private organization into a permanent and fully integrated part of the bureaucratic machinery of the state. The logic of soldiering drove militia volunteers to broaden and deepen their relationships with the state and, especially, the federal government until by 1916, they had begun the final, irrevocable turn away from their local communities as they established a new, national identity as the dedicated core of the national reserve army.

**Seeking State Funds in the 1870s**

Illinois National Guard officers dedicated to a reserve army role for the ING and all state militia forces faced their greatest challenges in securing the militia’s financial base. Volunteer companies, in Illinois as elsewhere, traditionally were supported primarily by their members’ private contributions and whatever largesse their local communities could spare. Because their local communities couldn’t spare as much as militia volunteers believed they needed to outfit and arm themselves with modern rifles and equipment, as early as 1874 Illinois militia officers went to the Illinois General Assembly to ask for an increase in the tax dollar support awarded to the state militia. They did not get an increase in 1874. However, most local communities could not supply the amount of money required to supply and train a modern reserve army, and communities certainly could not do so equally across the state and over time. Complete reliance on local funding sources, even in a community that generously supported its militia companies, could produce wildly uneven results. For example, in 1875 the Committee on Ways and Means of the First Regiment of Chicago reported that citizens had subscribed $13,468.50 and members of the regiment had given $2,349.50 to the regimental coffers, for a total budget of $15,818.00. Just a little over a year later, the Second Regiment, also entirely made up of Chicago-based companies, was $8,700.00 in debt, with no immediate relief in sight. These awkward and unfortunate results of too great a dependence on local financial sources drove Illinois militia members to their state representatives again and again in ever more organized lobbying efforts, seeking increased militia budgets.

The dramatic upsurge in membership during the period 1874–76 gave renewed impetus to the perennial attempts to get a new militia code passed through the Illinois General Assembly. In 1875 Brigadier General Alfred Ducat traveled the state and personally visited many militia companies. According to Holdridge Collins of the First Regiment, Ducat was met everywhere with desire for a new and better militia code. So Ducat established a committee and set a date for its meeting in Chicago.
Unfortunately, enthusiasm for a new law was not yet at such a pitch as to induce members from outside the city to attend the meeting. The militias were still creations of local communities, and their members did not yet see the benefits of working together at the state level. In this respect, Illinois militiamen continued to reflect national norms.\(^6\)

It fell to Ducat and his volunteer staff to come up with a bill. The general staff gathered copies of militia codes from other states as well as a “large mass of statistics” to use in creating their own bill and in lobbying for its passage. Ducat also sent out a circular to all militia companies stressing the importance of a united front and steady pressure upon their own state representatives. The major features of the new code centered around a yearly appropriation to “meet the expenses for rent of armories, ordnance stores, camp equipage and transportation of all battalions for at least one yearly muster, and for ammunition and a Rifle Range for practice, with an allowance \textit{per diem} for every man who shall turn out upon order,” and “with such provisions for the perfection of discipline as may secure an effective and creditable soldiery.” The bill was drawn up and distributed to all interested and necessary parties.

The Illinois General Assembly met every two years during the late nineteenth century, and 1877 was a session year. Outgoing Governor Albert Beveridge and incoming Governor Shelby S. Cullom addressed the thirtieth session of the General Assembly on the subject of the militia. The governors’ remarks are particularly interesting for what they reveal about contemporary concerns about the link between citizen and soldier and the role of citizen-soldiers in society.

Beveridge concluded his remarks on the incredible growth, and real problems, of the militia with the following recommendations for a new militia code: “The Militia Law of the State is very crude and imperfect, and needs revision. In my opinion, the state should provide for the organization and discipline of a limited number of Regiments, and for the encouragement of such organization and the preservation of its own property, should provide, at least, suitable armories.” He went on to address any concerns about the presence of these regiments might raise, assuring his listeners that a “well-organized Militia, composed of our own citizens, will not endanger the liberties of the people, but on the contrary, give greater security to life, property and liberty.”\(^8\)

Governor Cullom seconded Beveridge’s sentiments in his own remarks, saying, “I desire to add one suggestion in reference to the affairs of our own State, by calling your attention to the Militia Law. I believe a more perfect law should be enacted, which will secure a more thorough organization of the State Militia.” He continued, “The spirit of our institutions, and the temper of our people, are hostile to a standing army; and
I am opposed to any policy, State or National, looking to governing the people by the bayonet. Yet, in the most highly-civilized communities, a trained Militia, recruited from the intelligent and industrious classes, is an almost indispensable auxiliary to the civil power, in the interests of peace and good order.” 9 Beveridge and Cullom both took care to point out that they did not advocate use of the militia as an extension of the policing function of the state. However, with the unacknowledged but powerful underlying subtext of the events concerning the Chicago “commune” of 1874–75, they both also acknowledged that domestic order maintenance was a potential function of the militia. They argued that the best way to ensure that the police function did not become oppressive was to draw militia members from the citizenry. They believed that the citizen-soldier by his very nature would act as both a brake on and an indispensable support to police power. Cullom even went so far as to link citizen-soldiers with civilization itself, implying that citizens can best police themselves, and the government, through the tool of the citizen-militia.

To advance the growth of such an institution, both governors drew attention to the two most frequently cited problems and solutions for the better development of the militia. First, the state should pay for the absolute essentials, that is construction of or rent for armory space and its upkeep. Second, the law should set a specific term of enlistment (three to five years) and give militia officers the necessary authority not only to establish order, but also to enforce discipline. This was not all Ducat had proposed in his new bill, but it was the obvious minimum.

At this point a possible roadblock loomed, in the form of Adjutant General Hiram Hilliard. Hilliard was dissatisfied with the proposed code for a number of reasons, most centering around the rank and responsibilities of his office. As a result, Hilliard apparently was not willing to lobby for the bill or to act in any way to help secure its passage. This was a real blow because Hilliard was the only one with rank and authority located in Springfield. Ducat lived and was headquartered in Chicago. Just when it seemed as though yet another militia bill was going to die in committee, Ducat undertook leading the lobbying effort himself. He used personal contacts with the Cook County representatives and also sent two of his officers down to Springfield to present their position to a joint committee hearing finally arranged by Hilliard. The bill was finally accepted by the House in 1877, but not without some difficulty. There was a substantial minority staunchly opposed to the bill, and this minority attempted to derail it with a number of mockingly obstructionist amendments, for example, raising the number of musicians per company from two to 250. 10 The bill was then
shepherded through the Senate by Martin A. Delany, state senator from
Cook County, sixth district, chairman of the militia committee and sup-
porter of the bill. The bill was passed May 14, Governor Cullom signed
it on the 18th, and it became law. The new militia code went into effect
July 1, 1877.\footnote{11}

The bill was not without its flaws, but most everyone concerned
agreed that it was a good start and that they would try again during the
next session to address the remaining problems. One of the problems that
most irked formalists was that after heavily amending the first half of the
bill and, among other things, changing ranks and organizations, the
House had passed the remainder without consideration for any inconsis-
tencies. The rank charts of the original bill, modeled after the New York
militia, were all one grade higher than in the regular Army. The House
had cut all the division ranks down to regular Army equivalents, but left
Brigade and Regimental ranks alone, so that technically majors were rul-
ing on lieutenant colonels. The Senate passed the House bill without
much debate and no attention to this issue. The tax was limited to one-
twentieth of a mil, enough to build on, according to AG Hilliard, though
not really sufficient to meet all proposed obligations, and far more disap-
pointing, it represented a one-time-only dispersal of funds.\footnote{12}

The new act carried with it no permanent funding clause; under it, all
funds awarded to the militia had to be renegotiated in the general state
appropriations bill every two years.\footnote{13} So in 1876 the General Assembly
appropriated approximately $20,000 annually for the next two years for
the support of the entire Illinois state militia. This money was still not a
permanently reliable income.\footnote{14} Further, the mobilization of the infant
Illinois state militia for strike duty in 1877 and 1878 left the state gov-
ernment with unpaid bills for militia service and supplies totaling
$82,060.27, a debt that could not be paid until the Illinois General
Assembly appropriated the funds to do so.\footnote{15}

Militia supporters continued to work hard for a new law, one with a
permanent funding provision, and they were largely successful with the
Militia Act of 1879.\footnote{16} By 1882 the annual tax levy, as provided for by the
Militia Act of 1879, had grown to $70,000, and in 1888 the adjutant
general requested an annual appropriation of $120,000.\footnote{17} The state of
Illinois paid close to $400,000 to support the ING from 1895 to 1896,
and in 1896 the AG asked for an annual appropriation increase to
$210,000.\footnote{18} A decade and a half later, during the period 1911–12, the
ING was costing the taxpayers of Illinois $890,553.36.\footnote{19} These figures
dramatically illustrate not only the increasing legislative savvy of the
ING leadership, but more significantly, their successful establishment of
the ING as a part of and the responsibility of the state government. The
increases in state funds for the militia followed a steady, upward course, never once diminishing over the years, even in periods when the ING itself shrank. The chief lobbyist for the militia during these years was inevitably the adjutant general, appointed by the governor and responsible for paying the bills rung up by the militia. As a result of this executive branch responsibility, the growth in militia appropriations does not appear to be strongly linked with the political party in power, either in the General Assembly or in the statehouse.\textsuperscript{20} The funding increases for the ING, no matter how gradual over the decades, were not without detractors. Even such generally supportive voices as the Chicago Tribune's raised questions and objections to the steady growth of the state's military budget throughout the 1880s.\textsuperscript{21} A minor 1883 investigation into what the paper called “outrageous charges” accumulated during a court-martial had grown by 1887 into a chauvinistic assault on the excessive militia budget that could have been shrunk if only a northern camp site, near the city of Chicago, had been selected over Camp Lincoln down near the state capitol.\textsuperscript{22} In 1889 the Tribune was producing exposés on the extravagances of such Camp Lincoln expenses as swimming pool maintenance and the inflated price of camp rations.\textsuperscript{23} Despite the negative press coverage, the steady biennial budget increases continued.

Changes in the adjutant generals’ biennial reports over the years from 1876 to 1912 are another sign of the success of ING leadership’s legislative and social agenda to convince the taxpayers of Illinois, and through them the General Assembly, and vice versa, that the ING warranted this significant outlay of state moneys. In 1876, in his first biennial report to the governor who appointed him head of the state forces, adjutant general Hiram Hilliard laid out his case for government support of the militia. His lengthy argument began with a reminder of the various constitutional provisions organizing militias for “the defense of the country and the maintenance of public order.”\textsuperscript{24} It was the latter that Hilliard chose to elaborate on for the state legislature, concluding:

If Illinois intends to keep pace with the other States in the march of improvement, and if a militia organization is to be maintained, let such legislation be had as will not reduce our volunteers to the level of a rabble, and when you place the power to commission officers in the hands of the Governor, give him and the officers he commissions the power to enforce discipline.

Taking into consideration that there will always be dangerous men in society, who, when once aroused, may inflict losses of millions upon quiet and unoffending citizens, it is not well for a great State, like Illinois, to allow its militia to fall below a proper standard of excellence.
Their skill and efficiency must in great measure take the place of the discipline of regular troops; the greater their proficiency in drill and marksmanship, the less we shall have to fear from riots and lawlessness.\textsuperscript{25}

In stressing the public order functions of a militia, Hilliard was reacting, in part, to events in Chicago over the previous few years, from the rioting following the Chicago fire to the events surrounding the Chicago Relief and Aid society in 1874 and 1875.\textsuperscript{26} However, the bill applied to the whole of the ING, and the money would be spent throughout the state, as the number of militia companies statewide was growing quickly in 1875 and 1876. (See appendix J.) To achieve a drilled and disciplined militia, Hilliard made several recommendations. He argued that giving the volunteers of the state militia “good arms of the latest pattern, and plenty of ammunition for target practice” would “fill the ranks with the best young men of the State” and encourage them in “habits of coolness, discipline and temperance, which in turn will command universal approbation.”\textsuperscript{27} Hilliard then went on to warn that if the state did not fulfill this minimum for the militia, not only would the “rabble” have free rein, but also, this veteran of the Civil War pointed out, the “reverses that befell the Union armies in the early part of the recent war” would be repeated again and again in the face of similar national crises.\textsuperscript{28} With this conclusion of his argument for a better-supported state militia organization, the adjutant general devoted the next several paragraphs of his report to a summary of the key points of a bill prepared by General Ducat and modeled after the militia codes of other large states, tacitly offering his support to this bill.\textsuperscript{29} In 1876, the adjutant general of Illinois clearly believed that he had an important role to play in aiding the lobbying efforts of militia supporters. In 1878 Hilliard—still adjutant general—devoted more than half of his report to making the case for the importance of the militia to the state on the same themes. He made still more detailed recommendations for changes in the current law and an expansion of the current budget to $200,000 annually.\textsuperscript{30} Hilliard got less than 10 percent of his funding request, but he was able to win a steady, if small, permanent appropriation.

I. H. Elliot, Hilliard’s immediate successor, also argued for increased state support for the state militia, but his arguments shifted away from Hilliard’s focus on internal order maintenance and toward a broader understanding of the role of the National Guard in the life of the nation. Elliot chose to quote two “distinguished” and “eminent” observers who remarked on the bulwark the state militias created for the United States.
I cannot forbear to quote a sentence from a letter on this subject from one of our most distinguished citizens: ‘A nation of fifty millions ruling a continent bounded only by the great oceans, upholding and pledged before God and man to defend a form of civil government adverse in its fundamental principles to every other power on earth, ought in some way to be a military people;’ and also the remark of an eminent Englishman upon witnessing the maneuvers of one of our State Regiments; ‘A country that possesses such a citizen soldiery as that, has no need of a regular army.’

Here Elliot chose to emphasize not domestic order, but rather the role of the militia as a national force in a potentially hostile world. Perhaps the most telling distinction between Hilliard’s 1878 report and Elliot’s in 1882 is a single sentence: “If [our State troops] are worthy of being sustained at all, they should be well sustained and given a fair chance to make favorable comparison with the best State Soldiery.” The difference between this argument and Hilliard’s long and elaborate debate points indicates the progress that militia leadership had made in becoming a regularly supported state agency. The line suggests that Elliot was sure that the General Assembly already viewed the ING as an integral part of the responsibilities of state. Elliot actually devoted the bulk of his report to an argument for increasing the militia appropriation, a case he made by pointing out that the requirements established by the 1879 Militia Act could not be met under the terms of the current appropriation.

By 1888, Adjutant General Joseph Vance limited himself to reminding the governor and the General Assembly not to forget the National Guard in peaceful years, attributing the peace itself to the “existence of an organized body of citizen soldiers, which have proven equal to any emergency in the past, known to be equipped for any active service . . . doubtless contributed in moral effect to this state of tranquility.” After this opening, Vance kept his argument simple:

In a moment when no clouds obscure our peaceful horizon, will our General Assembly forget that a few thousand dollars expended in maintenance of this institution may save the lives of hundreds of citizens and the value of millions in property? Will they preserve this institution, which has been so wisely and substantially built [sic]? Or, influenced by false considerations of economy, will they withhold the sustenance that gives it life and strength?

In 1896, Adjutant General Charles Hilton felt no need to make any par-
ticular plea about the necessity or importance of the ING to the state or the nation in his biennial report. Instead, he concentrated his efforts on a lengthy and thorough report on the state of the ING at his command. In 1898, the adjutant general of Illinois boasted that his troops had achieved “a high and commendable state of discipline and efficiency.” The adjutant general credited Governor John R. Tanner for fostering the institution, but he also recognized that it was mostly owing to “the great personal interest and sacrificing devotion to duty of all commanders . . . reinforced by the eager desire to learn, the intelligent absorption of lessons and instruction, the unstinted donation of time and energy by officers and enlisted men alike.” It was these men who “placed the active National Guard on a high pedestal of usefulness and reliability.”

By the eve of the Spanish American War, the ING was firmly established as a state institution, with a large and active membership committed to preparing the organization for a role as the nation’s reserve Army. Seizing on the Spanish American War as a chance to demonstrate that their long years of preparation had paid off, Illinois guardsmen mobilized ten full regiments and one artillery battalion for service in the United States Volunteers for periods of a few months up to a year, a record of service ING members were able to point to with pride forever after.

In the years after the Spanish American War, ING advocates were able at last to convince the Illinois General Assembly to begin a building campaign to house the National Guard, in Chicago and across the state, in state-owned and state-operated armories, and to see their state budgets grow substantially. With the new money, ING members were able to increase the rigor and professionalism of their training and acquire the ever more sophisticated technology they needed to keep pace with international military developments. And each year, some twelve hundred new young men from a wide range of backgrounds continued to find the ING an appealing organization that allowed them to take leading roles in patriotic celebrations, participate in competitive shooting events, and stake their claim to both citizenship and manliness while having a good time.

Partisanship, Politics, and Intraga Guard Tensions

Politics and the state militias have a long, complex history, from the way individuals used militia rank as a stepping stone to political office, through parades as statements of civic engagement, to securing the right to the franchise, to the basics of gaining and holding a berth in the militia. Holdridge Collins’s lengthy account of the effort to secure satisfactory new militia legislation in the 1870s is a primer for the ways politics,
money, and political egos affected the Illinois militia, and the ways long-
established hostility between downstate politicians and those from
Chicago continued to shape the development of the ING.\textsuperscript{41} The back-
and-forth between Hilliard and Ducat, and between politicians from
Chicago and from downstate, was at once supremely political and inti-
mately personal. And during the very next session of the General
Assembly, Martin Delany, supporter of the 1877 legislation, protested
violently against further modification of the militia code, and especially
against the permanent budget that was part of the 1879 bill.\textsuperscript{42} Over the
years other personal and political grudges would continue to affect ING
leadership, from the resignation of Brigadier General Joseph T. Torrence
of the First Brigade in 1882 to the long, involved drama over Colonel
John C. Buckner of the Ninth Battalion in 1897 and 1898.\textsuperscript{43} Political
alliances for the ING were not necessarily stable or long lasting.

The politics of the ongoing struggles to gain a berth in the ING
reflect similar tensions. In March 1893, the Chicago Inter Ocean report-
ed that then-Governor John P. Altgeld was going to accept a private reg-
iment, the Hibernian Rifles, as the new Seventh Regiment, ING. Accordin to the paper, the “Hibernian Rifles have strong Clan-na-Gael
affiliations, and have long been recognized by Chicago Irishmen as
belonging to the anti-Cronin faction . . . In light of these facts it would
seem that Governor Altgeld’s object in admitting this regiment into the
State service is to show his recognition of this element with the hope of
attaching to himself no inconsiderable part of the Irish vote.” The arti-
cle goes on to record the objections of several current ING officers to the
scheme, all of whom found a military reason (the companies had too few
members) to object, as well as their complaint that this was an overtly
political move on the part of a struggling governor.\textsuperscript{44} The Chicago Tribune
was less hostile than the anticorruption Inter Ocean in its coverage of the
story, noting that the previous objections to the Hibernian Rifles’
attempts to gain an ING berth was that “the State did not want class
organization in the Guard,” and that they succeeded because of their
contributions to Altgeld’s election the previous fall.\textsuperscript{45} Despite the objec-
tions, the Seventh joined the state ranks.

The African American Ninth Battalion had an even tougher time
than the Seventh. African American voters in Chicago had come to
wield enough influence that they were courted by some factions of the
Chicago Republican party as well as Chicago Democrats, and so they
were by necessity pulled into the fray of Illinois party politics, gaining at
least a little leverage to achieve some of their goals.\textsuperscript{46} Willard Gatewood
unraveled the major threads of the story in his 1975 article on the
Eighth Illinois in the Spanish American War, and “complicated” only
begins to suggest the twists and turns of this tale. John Buckner, major of the private Ninth Battalion, though an active Republican politician, was not a member of the same Republican faction as John Tanner, governor from 1896 to 1900. In 1895, during the Altgeld administration with its strong ties to Republicans, including Buckner, in the city of Chicago, Buckner was a political asset to his regiment. Elected to the General Assembly in 1894, during the Altgeld administration, Buckner was able to secure a place for the Ninth Battalion in the ING. In 1897 during the Tanner administration, Buckner had significantly reduced political pull with the new Republican administration, which came close to destroying his organization on the eve of the Spanish American War.47

Major Buckner faced two courts-martial in 1897.48 At the center of both was a disagreement concerning rail travel to and from summer camp in 1897. Major Buckner claimed that the train cars provided for his troops were dirty and unfit for service and refused to use them, eventually making arrangements on another line. The representative from the adjutant general’s office disagreed, and the first court-martial on two charges of refusing an order was the eventual result of the face-off. Governor Tanner disallowed the “not guilty” findings of the first court-martial, and he sent the case back to the ING. At the second court-martial, Major Buckner was also charged with leaving the route of a parade early, so as not to pass in review before Tanner, and disrupting the procession as a result. He was found guilty of all three charges, and in November of 1897 Buckner was suspended from his command for six months, much to the disgust of the editors of the Springfield Illinois Record. The editors, Charles E. Hall and James H. Porter, were avid supporters of Buckner and vitriolic opponents of Tanner, staunch though they were in their loyalty to the Republican Party.49

The “Buckner affair” highlights the political role of the militia within the African American community and on the larger Illinois political stage. The political role shouldered by the members of the Ninth Battalion operated on several levels. The affair was overtly political in the sense that Buckner belonged to a faction of the Illinois Republican Party that was competing with Governor Tanner. Some critics suspected Tanner of attempting to use the Guard to build a statewide political machine, in which case forcing Buckner out of the Ninth in order to replace him with someone from Tanner’s own faction makes some sense.50 The affair was also political in the sense of the ongoing struggle for African American civil rights. Buckner’s original offense was to refuse transportation that he felt would not have been offered to white regiments. “We were furnished cars for that trip that were unfit for use. Some of them had been used in picnic excursion trains and had stood
several days without cleaning. They were actually filthy, and so dusty you could write your name with your finger anywhere inside them.” Some of the other cars provided for his men had not “apparently been used in years, and were not safe to travel in. Before we had covered the one and one-half miles from Camp Lincoln to Springfield an air brake broke on one car and another got out of order so the train had to be stopped.” He protested what he felt was overt discrimination against African American guardsmen, and when he did not receive satisfaction, he refused to use what he felt were demeaning accommodations and arranged for new transport, presumably some that treated his organization with more dignity and respect than they received before. In fact, it is possible that as much as Tanner’s irritation with Buckner derived from his loyalty to the wrong Republican faction, it was also exacerbated by Buckner’s uncomfortable challenge to overt racial discrimination.

As a final note on the intensity of the political and personal battles fought over the regiment, Tanner’s choice for colonel of the new Eighth Regiment in 1898, John Marshall, infuriated the editors of the Illinois Record, who remained steadfastly loyal to Buckner and their faction of the Illinois Republican Party. The editors took issue with everything the Chicago-based leadership of the battalion (soon-to-be regiment) did once Buckner had been suspended. Regarding Marshall as a traitor to Buckner, they castigated him for recruiting problems, for being chosen over Buckner as colonel, and for being a traitor to his race. Later, they would gleefully publish a series of inflammatory letters from disaffected soldiers, in particular a Corporal George J. Beard (also a former employee of the Illinois Record), in Cuba who blamed all their hardships on Marshall. The vitriolic correspondents of the Illinois Record complained about food, discipline, the heat, and having to stay in camp. They also continued to slam Marshall, claiming that Marshall had had an affair in Cuba, and then complaining later that when the several officers’ wives arrived, all the extra tents and bedding were requisitioned for them rather than renting quarters for them three and half miles away in town. Despite the criticism, Marshall remained colonel of the Eighth Regiment until 1913, and he was able to use the position to gain political appointments, including deputy sheriff of Cook County and a position as a state game warden.

Over the next decade, the Eighth Illinois continued to operate as a full member of the Illinois National Guard. The members shared in the benefits of the gradual expansion of both state and federal budgets, including the expansion of training opportunities, and they generally impressed their federal inspectors. However, in these years of increas-
ing racial tension and the rise of Jim Crow in the South, the members of the Eighth Illinois faced more overt discrimination and racial violence than they had before the turn of the century. On July 6, 1908, the *Daily Inter Ocean* of Chicago reported that members of the Eighth Illinois had attacked “obnoxious motorists” who disturbed a parade. Making matters still tenser, on August 14, 1908, Springfield erupted into one of the most horrific race riots in Illinois history, with whites turning on blacks and destroying lives, homes, and property. Before it was over, the majority of the ING was called into service, with over 3,500 men and officers arriving in Springfield to help restore order.\(^{59}\) Only two regiments and a few scattered companies were not called into service. Neither the Sixth Infantry from northwestern Illinois, nor the African American Eighth Infantry, not even the company stationed in Springfield, were called.\(^{60}\) In 1913, a federal inspector acknowledged, in a confidential report to the chief of the militia bureau, that the Eighth

Figure 14
would never be called for domestic service, as the “regiment is always spoken of as a political regiment in that it is believed that it would be criminal to order it out for local duty, i.e., for strike or similar duty here in the state, as it would be almost certain to precipitate a race war.”

Giving force to his observation, the summer following the Springfield race riot, on July 18, 1909, the *Daily Inter Ocean* carried reports of worries about possible violence in Springfield while the Eighth Illinois was there for summer camp. On April 8, 1911, the *Chicago Defender* shared the story of Colonel Marshall being snubbed at an officer’s school training in San Antonio. The 1913 federal inspection report tells of a brick being thrown through the windows of a train car carrying the Eighth Illinois to camp. On August 11, 1915, the *Chicago Defender* reported that a race “melee” erupted after a white man slashed a member of the Eighth Illinois in Springfield.

It is impossible to divorce politics from the story of the Eighth Regiment—or from the history of the ING—but these stories also illustrate why the statewide organization never explicitly articulated a preference for any one political party. Politics within militia organizations could be vitriolic and nasty, and each unit could have its own political identity and alliances. Despite the internal feuds, the greatest criticism ING officers leveled at governors over the years was that governors were attempting to turn the state forces into a “machine” for their particular party. To prevent that from happening, and to lobby for their own interests as an organization, ING members created the private “Illinois National Guard Association” in 1882. Their purpose was the “promotion of the interests of the State Guard and mutual improvement in military matters.” By 1887 the association had 227 members who gathered annually to listen to papers on military affairs and to prepare amendments for the improvement of the laws governing the state forces. By the 1890s, the association had settled into a permanent role as an advocate for professionalization and increased public funding. The statewide organization could not embrace any one political faction or party without alienating a significant portion of its own membership, not to mention the always-important legislatures, and even destabilizing the republic itself. In the words of *The National Guardsman*, “The spectacle of a militia composed exclusively of democrats or republicans, or Roman Catholics or Presbyterians for instance, would not only be a singular one, but one involving the elements of danger and sedition; a menace to all government and law, and to be suppressed with the same methods as would be employed in destroying a band of guerrillas or a gang of pirates.”
Costs Grow Faster than State Support

The ever-growing state budget for the militia in Illinois brought with it increasing state oversight and multiplying regulations for the state militia. Each militia law had more sections than the last, detailing matters as diverse as the formation of companies, the election and examination of officers, the regulations for court-martial, and riot control provisions. Each new law also carried with it increased disciplinary powers for all ING officers to enforce compliance with the increasingly detailed and demanding regulations. Each new adjutant general imposed further restrictions on the freedom of militia officers to structure their own company’s time, either at weekly drills or in their annual calendar of events.

In 1884, the adjutant general imposed a standard fatigue uniform for the ING. In 1885, the General Assembly appropriated the funds to purchase Camp Lincoln, a permanent campground for the ING, so that every company could spend four to seven days encamped each summer for training purposes. The adjutant general began to mandate the types of equipment and equipment storage that every armory would have available to house state property in the mid-1880s. The adjutant general imposed record-keeping forms and ledgers to unify record keeping throughout the ING about the same time.

The office of the inspector general, created in 1876, was responsible for seeing that all these new codes, regulations, and practices were followed by each company, and as such, the office grew in power and importance with each new increase in state funds and expansion of state policies. State money was, naturally, the stick as well as the carrot. If the inspecting officer wrote a negative report, a company could find itself pushed out of the ING in favor of one of the long list of new companies awaiting a place in the Guard.

Whatever the price for the funds, however, money from the state never matched the needs ING members felt they had. For example, the adjutant general purchased only fatigue uniforms for the ING’s enlisted men, and not every year. Officers’ uniforms of all types and parade uniforms and accouterments for everyone had to be paid for privately. Any expedition to another city or state had to be privately paid for. Cavalrymen who owned or rented their own horses paid for these things out of pocket. As a result, fund-raising continued to be an important and central activity for most ING companies until well after the turn of the century. Companies held balls, lectures, amateur theatricals, drill performances, and parades, all in quest of money. They printed up beautiful, glossy souvenir books full of photographs and unit and individual histories as a means of selling advertising to raise funds. They also worked all the individual and group connections they had in order to
ask for the big sums of money necessary to keep ambitious organizations afloat.\footnote{74}

One of the most expensive items that drove companies or regiments to their communities for support was armory costs. Armory rent subsidies from the state barely covered the upkeep of the average leased facility, and they definitely could not cover the construction of a new armory; private fund-raising was the only way to achieve that. Illinois moved quite slowly to state-subsidized armory construction for an otherwise large and relatively well-supported state militia system. A number of states had started building or subsidizing armory construction as early as the 1870s, including New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.\footnote{75} As late as 1901, the state of Illinois still owned no armories for the use by state troops. All armories used by ING companies and regiments were rented for a combined annual cost to the state of $50,000, with the rare exception of privately constructed armories for particularly well-financed companies or regiments. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, adjutant generals requested in increasingly desperate tones a large arsenal in Springfield to house the adjutant general’s operations and the Springfield-based ING regiment, and for a new lakefront armory in Chicago.\footnote{76} In 1896, Adjutant General Charles Hilton described the Chicago situation:

The amount expended in Chicago is not sufficient, and in many cases the deficiency has to be made good by private contributions. Even with this aid, the armory facilities are entirely inadequate. Thanks to the great interest taken in this matter by General H. A. Wheeler, commanding the 1st Brigade, the city of Chicago has given to the State troops 20 acres on the Lake Front, provided it be used for armories and drill ground. I strongly recommend that the next General Assembly be asked to make the necessary appropriations to utilize this gift. The housing of all the troops in Chicago in adequate armories on this ground, would be economical in that it would diminish the annual fixed charges; would do much to encourage them; and would make them independent of private or extraneous aid, desirable for many reasons.\footnote{77}

In 1897, the General Assembly did appropriate $10,000 to contribute to the costs of armory construction in Chicago, but that sum represented only a fraction of the cost of the proposed armory, and two years later it remained unbuilt.\footnote{78} In fact, ten years later, in 1906, Adjutant General Thomas W. Scott penned an appeal to the General Assembly that strongly echoes that of Hilton from the previous decade. “Armory con-
ditions in the city of Chicago are such at this time that, with impunity, it might be said that an emergency exists, and I recommend to Your Excellency the great importance of steps being taken at an early date to provide permanent armory buildings for the several commands in that city.”

It was only after the successes of the ING during the Spanish American War that the state of Illinois began to build as well as rent armories for the ING. The long-dreamed-of and oft-requested new State Arsenal and Armory in Springfield was completed in the period from 1901 to 1902, though not without problems. AG Scott mentioned in his 1906 report that it was “imperative that the electric system in this building be attended to, as the wiring in its present condition has been a pronounced menace to life.” Finally, in 1907, the General Assembly appropriated $185,000 for the first armory purchases and constructions outside of the state capital. AG Scott remarked that “this marks an era in the history of the Illinois National Guard and lends great encouragement to the officers and men who have for years devoted their time and money to maintaining the high standard of our guard.”

Of course, once the General Assembly opened the door to armory construction, they were bombarded with pleas for assistance by the many, many companies and regiments that had been making do in horrible, rented quarters. In 1908, the Chicago-based First Cavalry published an extensive report to present to the General Assembly, documenting the truly awful conditions in their armory and stables, complete with an album of photographs illustrating the dangerous condition of their facility. These appeals and others like them had a clear effect, and in 1911 the General Assembly appropriated $395,000 for an armory for the First Cavalry. Two years later, the General Assembly approved a new armory for the African American Eighth Regiment headquartered on the South Side of Chicago. The Eighth Regiment Armory opened in the winter of 1914–15.

In the meantime, the vast majority of companies and regiments across the state made do with rented facilities. Troops outside Chicago were “usually quartered in make-shift buildings, sometimes unsuitable, usually too small, and nearly all in crowded portions of the town, where no ground is available for drill out of doors.” A historian of Company I, Sixth Regiment, provides this list of armories that served the company in Morrison from 1877 to 1898.

For an armory and drill room, the basement of the old frame building which stood on the lot now occupied by the Hub Clothing Store was secured, remaining here but a short time, the company removed
to the City Council room, and shortly afterward to the second floor
of Hollar Smith’s blacksmith shop on east Main street. At that time
the members considered themselves extremely fortunate in being so
snugly located. From there they ‘trekked’ to Milne’s opera house, and
later to the old skating rink on Grove Street where they were at home
at the outbreak of the Spanish American War.  

In Springfield, Company C, known as the Governor’s Guard, made do
with the top floors of livery stables.  

In Chicago in 1881, the Second Infantry moved into two rented
upper floors on Randolph Street, the lower devoted to a drill hall, which
was “handsomely papered,” with silvered pillars, an ebony-framed mirror
and a “very elaborate chandelier,” and the upper held the “cosy” com-
pa ny rooms.  That same year, Battery D arranged to build a simple, one-
story brick building on city-owned land that was also used for a circus
ground. When pressed that this might inconvenience the circus, Mayor
Carter Harrison responded, “No, sir . . . It gives them a little less room
for side-shows, but they still have room enough.”  As the first appropri-
tations for state-financed construction in 1907 were specifically for regi-
ments located in Chicago (the Second and the Seventh), the situation
in Morrison, Springfield, and elsewhere throughout the state was not sig-
ificantly altered for a very long time to come. In the meantime, else-
where as in Chicago, private contributions had to make up the shortfall
between state rent subsidies and the armory needs of each regiment or
company.  

Sometimes, private money could be enough. The First Regiment of
Chicago—the wealthiest and best-connected, politically and socially,
regiment in the state—was able to secure custom armory space early on.
The First started out on the top floor of a warehouse when they organ-
ized in 1874, and then in 1875 they moved to a midsize facility built for
their use and then leased to them on Jackson Street. When the fifteen-
year-lease was up in 1890, the owner declined to renew, and the regi-
ment, feeling the space was too small, moved to a larger, grander armory
built by donated funds on a piece of Michigan Avenue property owned
and donated, via a no-payment ninety-nine year lease, by Marshall
Field.  The large, new First Regiment armory in Chicago, designed by
the well-known architects Burnham and Root, was completed and ded-
icated in 1890. Unfortunately, the armory was destroyed by fire less than
three years later, and it was completely rebuilt in 1894.  

The First Infantry Association, the private association to which members of the
regiment also belonged, owned both armories. All the amenities—desks,
tables, chairs, pianos, locker rooms, basketball courts, kitchens, and din-
ing rooms—were privately funded and owned. The inspector general noted in 1902 that the “company’s quarters are superior to the field and staff officers’ and have been furnished by the company officers and enlisted men, at their own expense.” He went on to share his opinion that “these company quarters are as well fitted as many of the first-class clubs of the city and [are] conducive to the enlistment of the very best of our citizens. Books on military affairs and the best literature and music are provided in each of the company quarters . . . which reflects great credit on the members of the several companies for their zeal and liberality in making their respective quarters most attractive and unsurpassed.” The “Dandy First,” as they were christened in local papers, was, of course, the most unusual of regiments, and their amenities merely served to highlight just how substandard the accommodations for the rest of the ING were until well after the turn of the century.

The First Regiment was not the only ING organization that was able to build privately. Capitalizing on their record of wartime service, the new Captain of Company I, Sixth Regiment in Morrison, was able to secure a new armory for his organization. This was a tremendous undertaking for a single company and required much “time . . . expended in formulating plans and securing the assistance, financially, of interested citizens. . . . [T]he armory was practically completed by January first, 1901.” Like the members of the First, the historian of Company I was very proud of the company’s home.

The building is constructed of brick and is the full depth of the lot. The drill room is on the first floor and is large and well proportioned. The wardrobe room is also located on the first floor. The front of the building is two stories in height, the ground floor being occupied as a store room. The second floor is given to a suite of rooms for the use of the “Morrison Military Club,” an organization founded by the members of company I. On the east side of the upper floor is the bathroom, which is equipped with both tub and shower bathing apparatus, also toilet rooms. Joining this is the captains [sic] office which opens into the main room or clubroom proper. This room is large and fitted up for the convenience of the club members, and is a very pleasant resort for both the old and young men of the town as well as all citizens are eligible to membership upon payment of the regularly established quarterly dues. A janitor is in attendance both day and evening.

This comparatively luxurious and dedicated facility was built and maintained by private funds, raised locally and from the membership dues
assessed by the Morrison Military Club, and not with state funds. The existence of this facility serves as a strong reminder of the incredible importance of local fund-raising for ING companies.

Some of the more massive armories constructed privately or by state funds in the 1880s and 1890s were built, among other purposes, to protect the contents (equipment and people) from the putative danger of rampaging urban mobs. Of the First Regiment’s second (1894) armory, Inspector General Walter Fieldhouse noted that it was “built in the normal style of architecture, having massive walls and is practically impregnable against riot or civil insurrection. . . . The main entrance has massive doors situated in a Norman archway and cannot be entered excepting by and with the aid and consent of those in charge of the armory. . . . The turret and battlement of this armory are conveniently placed to repel attack. The windows and firing ports are well arranged about 30 feet above the street to protect the entire armory.” Historian Robert Fogelson has dubbed this “normal style of architecture” the “castellated style,” and the First Regiment armory in Chicago is one of his examples of the form. Fogelson goes on to argue that these armories can be read as true statements about fears of the mob and of civil insurrection rather than as symbolic statements of wealth and power, as some contemporary critics dismissed them. He points to the realities of the heavy construction, and to the language the architects and their clients used about their buildings, language that was heavily laced with issues of defensibility, impregnability, and the like. The fears may have been real, and the massiveness of the construction certainly was. Exactly how these castellated armories would have stood up to the test of an attacking civilian mob is unknown, however, as none were ever so attacked. Castellated armories were also extremely rare among the many, many makeshift, rented facilitates that stored state arms and equipment for most companies and regiments in Chicago and around Illinois. The new armory the Morrison company built in 1900 certainly didn’t have battlements or rifle slits, and their storeroom was on the main floor, right by the main door. The powerful need for defensibility appears to have only come into play when the regiment (and all castellated armories that Fogelson discusses were built for regiments, as opposed to single companies or battalion-sized organizations) had plenty of money to spend.

The realities of stone work, masonry, rifle slits, and battlements that were invested in these large, elaborate armories served chiefly to mark them as armories in the urban space. They also spoke to fears and situations, both real and imagined, that the companies they housed might face. In the final summation, however, it must be noted that the castellated armories, like the First Regiment armory, mostly functioned as
elaborate clubhouses for members and as a tantalizing vision to potential recruits, and contemporary critics understood this concept. The state of Illinois, at least, did not feel called upon to provide its state troops with any state-financed armories until well after the turn of the century, after the demise of the castellated style. 98 Certainly, as of 1901 the other organizations in Chicago (the Second Regiment, the Seventh Regiment, the First Cavalry, the Illinois Naval Militia, and the Eighth Regiment) did not have large, impregnable castellated armories for their use or to protect themselves and their equipment in riotous situations. The Illinois Naval Militia, to cite a particularly whimsical example of nondefensible architecture, used a brick building built to mimic a ship for the Columbian Exhibition of 1893 for their armory. 99 Regardless of what the members of the First may have felt about the defensibility of their large, castle-style armory, the members of the General Assembly, and guardsmen in general, didn’t appear to think it necessary to provide any organization in the state with such a space. A photograph of the new Eighth Infantry Armory built in 1914 reveals that it was a simple two story building with big windows and a standard door. More than anything else, it strongly resembles school buildings of the era. 100
Armory construction in Illinois was not only the most expensive hurdle for militia companies; it also was up to them to make up whatever shortfall there was between state appropriations and their needs for uniforms, equipment, weapons, and supplies. So ING members relied on extensive fund-raising within their communities to subsidize their aspirations. Throughout the three decades from 1870 to 1900, most militia companies in Illinois spent much of their time on fund-raising efforts, hosting a bewildering array of entertainments—from balls to lectures to drill performances—to raise the money they needed to raise and maintain their organizations.

After the Spanish American War, the ING continued both to be quite politically active by lobbying on their own behalf and to avoid particular party alliances, positioning itself in the long tradition of the regular Army as a nonpartisan organization that stayed above the fray for all but their own interests. As one testament to their success, the Springfield papers carried pictures throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s of summer camp festivities showing a succession of governors and their wives and daughters visiting officers for picnics and parades. Despite their constant efforts, most National Guardsmen were not able to raise enough money from their communities to make up the difference between their needs and the state subsidies, except in the rarest of situations. So National Guard officers also lobbied their state representatives throughout the late nineteenth century to increase the state allotment of funds. Periodically throughout the 1880s and 1890s, and more persistently after the Spanish American War, they also turned to the federal government to supply the difference between state appropriations and militia desires.

Creation of a National Lobby for Federal Support for State Troops

Flushed with their early successes in gaining increased support from state governments in the wake of the events of 1877, National Guard activists in Illinois and in other states began to think in grander terms. In 1878 in Virginia, and in January 1879 in New York, militia activists from around the country held meetings to establish the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), which had its first formal convention in St. Louis in September 1879. The officers who established this association were, for the most part, the kind of long-term members who would come to dominance in the various National Guards around the country during and after the Spanish American War. The officers...
who gathered in St. Louis in 1879 did not focus on domestic order. Rather, they articulated a belief that the volunteer associations of the National Guards constituted the best possible defense of the nation. National Guardsmen from Illinois who shared these sentiments were active in the organization from the beginning, sending representatives to the first National Guard Association convention in St. Louis in 1879, and again in 1881 when Colonel E. D. Swain and Colonel J. H. Shaffer represented Illinois at the annual convention.103

These militia activists from Illinois and other states held as their goal nothing less than a complete overhaul of the state militia system nationwide, with the explicit aim of turning the militias into a serious reserve army.104 In the published minutes of the 1879 St. Louis convention, the secretary proclaimed, “the wars of this country have all been fought by citizen soldiers.” The implication that the entire gathering appears to have drawn from this statement was that all future wars would have to be fought with the same type of volunteer, and that such volunteers should receive serious training with this end in mind. After decrying the “expensive standing army . . . [which was] always increasing in costliness” from $1.5 million in 1799 to over $40 million a year in 1879, the secretary went on to suggest the models of Great Britain and Canada in organizing large, efficient volunteer home armies or militias. Such militias, according to him, allowed these countries to “dispense with all regular troops,” and “have convinced our people that our own citizen soldiery can be soon placed in an efficient condition of organization, equipment and discipline.”105 Of course, militias like those of these other countries were paid for by the national government, which was not the case in the United States. In 1881, Colonel Swain of Illinois spoke for many when he described the cavalry and artillery organizations of the ING. “Our cavalry was not equipped by the State. It belongs, however, to the National Guard . . . Of course, both branches of the service under discussion labor under the same difficulties that they do in other localities, in the men not owning the horses.”106 Later, talking of the importance of summer camp, Swain noted that Illinois set aside about $25,000 annually for camp and garrison equipment and to pay for the entire ING to encamp for four days training, though the state did not yet own a single campground. He concluded a long report of the most recent camp experience of the First Infantry with “I do not think there can be any question as to the advantage of encampments. They are the most efficient schools that we can have, and more can be done in a week’s encampment, I think, to instruct the National Guards in the duties of the soldier, than it is possible to do in armories or by the companies at home and alone during the year.”107 But to achieve this training, the states needed to supply still more money.
The suggestion some officers made during the 1879 convention, that it might be possible to do away with the regulars altogether, turned out to be a more of a debate point than a serious alternative military structure, and the notion of abandoning the standing army was quickly dropped by the National Guard Association. In any case, the association spent the next several years defending itself from charges ranging from trying to establish state forces designed to challenge the federal government to a strategy to create a 150,000-man standing army under the sole authority of the president.¹⁰⁸ Wild accusations aside, General Wingate of New York explained in 1881 that the “really great obstacle which we have to contend against is, the apathy of Congress. Few who have no actual experience can imagine the difficulty of procuring the passage of any law by that body which involves no personal or political interest, and particularly on a subject like this, upon which the average Congressman knows nothing, and cares less.”¹⁰⁹ Despite the apathy of Congress, concerted efforts by the association over eight years of lobbying did result in a modest gain in federal funding—from $200,000 annually to $400,000, secured in 1887. However, after several years of such hard work with so little accomplished toward the original goal of a new militia law, the association volunteers lost their energy, and the association dwindled to a shadow of its former self.

In 1897 a new national lobbying organization was formed by a new group of activist officers. The Interstate National Guard Association (INGA)—created initially by representatives of western states—hoped to achieve much more modest formal gains at the federal level than the earlier association. Chiefly, they hoped to secure a significant increase in the federal appropriation—from $400,000 to $1 million—for the state militias, and they did not seek any dramatic changes to the standing militia laws.¹¹⁰ However, their vision of the purpose of the National Guards was nearly identical to that held by National Guard Association (NGAUS) members twenty years previously. In 1897, General Bell, adjutant general of Missouri, reminded INGA convention delegates that “[w]e should realize that the safety of American firesides, in the event of war with foreign powers, will depend largely upon the standard of our National Guard.”¹¹¹ Officers once again cited the models of Great Britain and Canada as worthy of study and emulation.¹¹²

Officers from Illinois played a much more significant role in this second National Guard Association than they had in the first. Then adjutant general of Illinois, Jasper N. Reece, served on the first executive committee, followed by two terms as president of the association from 1898 to 1900. The ING sent by far the largest number of delegates to the INGA conventions in 1897 (ten delegates), 1898 (twenty delegates), and
1900 (sixteen delegates), and the 1898 convention was held in Chicago, hosted by the ING. General Reece was personally instrumental in the negotiations that eventually merged the older association (NGAUS) and the newer (INGA) into one national association. Illinois officers were quite active in the new organization, perhaps because although it ranked third among the state militia organizations by size of membership, the ING ranked only twenty-seventh among the forty-nine state militias in terms of funding per man. (See appendix I.) Other states with smaller appropriations managed to make them go further by limiting the size of their militia organizations or, like Ohio, which had nearly the same size organization, managed to provide three and a half times the state funds. The National Guardsmen from Illinois made no attempt to explain why they elected to arrange for such a comparatively large National Guard organization without being able to provide for it as generously as most of their peer organizations. In strict cash terms, the state ranked ninth in terms of state funding. By cutting the size of their organization in half to bring their membership size in line with their budget, ING officers could have effectively doubled the amount of money available to support each company, as, in fact, they did do in the early 1880s. However, very soon after, they allowed the ING to grow again.

The ING leadership chose instead to turn aggressively to the federal government to address the shortfall. They were eloquent on the subject of national defense and the role played by the National Guards in serving the nation. In his opening address to the third INGA convention, Jasper Reece, adjutant general of Illinois and president of the INGA, thundered:

What does the national government owe the states who furnished the President with such magnificent fighting material on a single day’s notice? What have we, the instructors and teachers, a right to expect from Congress in the way of fair and reasonable appropriations—in arms, clothing, and equipments—to enable us to again prepare for unlooked-for emergencies, when the brawn, brain, and muscle of the volunteer may again be demanded for immediate and dangerous service? What should the government do for the National Guard of the states in order that we may maintain this unsurpassed fighting force at its maximum state of practical efficiency? . . . [W]e do care to have the national government assume a fair share of the burden and responsibility in fitting out the soldiers that will some day be required at our hands to fight national battles; we do care to see the patriotism and valor of our militia boys adequately recognized by Congress, and we will have this recognition.
In 1900, following the third annual convention, Congress answered Reece and raised the annual federal militia appropriation from $400,000 to $1,000,000. The ING’s claim that the state of readiness of the National Guard reserve forces was a national responsibility ultimately carried the day. The power of this argument drew on the experiences provided by the mobilization of the National Guards for the Spanish American War, but the members of the INGA claimed complete responsibility for their triumph in Washington. At the opening of the fourth annual convention in 1902, the chair summarized the results of the previous convention for the delegates by asserting that “the result of that meeting was the increased appropriation which has enabled the National Guard to equip an organized militia as never equipped before... I want to congratulate the organization on the splendid work they did.”115 The vigorous debate at this fourth INGA convention concerned the proposed bill to revise the long-outdated militia law of 1792. This effort, too, was ultimately successful.

Wartime service from 1898 to 1899 gave representatives of the INGA the clout they needed to secure long-sought changes in federal militia law and dramatic increases in federal funding, changes and increases modeled on those they had already managed to achieve in their own states. In 1903 Congress passed the first new federal militia law since 1789, and Congress elaborated on the 1903 legislation in 1908. These new laws recognized the National Guard as the Nation’s reserve Army and provided significant federal funds and support for that mission. Over the next decade, this federalization of the National Guards increased the professionalism and level of training and preparedness among the National Guardsmen and slowly decreased their reliance on the relationships with communities and states they forged in the final quarter of the nineteenth century.116

In 1903, as part of a wider series of military reforms at the organizational level, Secretary of War Elihu Root pushed through Congress the Militia Act of 1903, or the “Dick Act,” as it came to be called in honor of the Ohio National Guard officer and member of Congress, General Charles Dick, who shepherded the bill through the House of Representatives. The Dick Act contained many of the provisions debated and selected by the INGA convention in 1902. The Dick Act recognized the National Guards as the organized militia of the United States. In exchange for organizing units and uniforming themselves according to regular Army regulations, drilling a specified number of times per year, attending summer camps, submitting to annual War Department inspections, and generally complying with Army regulations on all subjects, the National Guards of the various states received arms and equipment
from the War Department and federal funds to pay for attendance at
summer camp and at occasional joint maneuvers with the Army. This
last funding was not even drawn from the militia appropriations, but
rather from the regular military budget. The Dick Act also mandated
that volunteer forces raised for wartime service would be organized
according to the legislation for raising the state troops for the Spanish
American War. Five years later, in 1908, National Guard officers
believed that militia reform had attained all their goals when Congress
passed a series of amendments to the 1903 act. The 1908 amendments
permitted the president to use National Guard troops outside the bound-
aries of the United States and removed the nine-month time limit on
active service imposed by the 1903 act. The 1908 amendments also
explicitly required the president to call the organized militia (i.e., the
National Guard as recognized in the 1903 act) in advance of any other
volunteers, which put firmly into law what had only been implied
before.\textsuperscript{117}

In many ways, the 1903 legislation was the natural outgrowth of the
previous twenty-five years of development. Militia members across the
country had spent two decades lobbying their communities, their state
governments, their congressmen, and the U.S. Army itself for increased
financial and professional support for their organizations in pursuit of
their ambition to create a modern, professional reserve military force. As
a result, by the turn of the century, National Guard enthusiasts were
experienced lobbyists with a number of important successes under their
belts. They had also spent twenty-five years or more as the beneficiaries
of full-time agencies of their state governments, and fifteen years receiv-
ing regular Army inspections and advice. These experiences only encour-
aged National Guard enthusiasts to work harder for new federal legisla-
tion, finally securing the strong federal relationship they wanted in the
first decades of the twentieth century. National Guard officers may not
have predicted exactly how their relationships with the various levels of
government would change as a result of the 1903 federal reforms, but
they certainly knew that they would. National Guard officers embraced
the accelerating pace of change as the twentieth century progressed.\textsuperscript{118}

An important aspect of the successful lobbying efforts on the part of
the National Guard activists in the INGA, and previous efforts by
Illinois guardsmen with the Illinois General Assembly, is that they were
careful not to tie the success of their movement to a particular political
party. The INGA proceedings from these years are full of tips on lobby-
ing legislators and getting press support to influence local congressmen,
but never is there a word breathed about the importance of one political
party over another. The presence of a Spanish American War volunteer
in the White House, Theodore Roosevelt, must have interested the 1902–3 lobbyists, but the INGA members never mentioned him or his party by name. Their focus remained squarely on their cause.119

Consequences of Federalization

The ING actively and aggressively sought tax dollar support at the state and the federal levels from the 1870s onward. Illinois National Guard officers and National Guard Association members were not interested only in the money, however much they needed it. They also wanted government identification and the seal of approval that could be given only by the military professionals of the U.S. Army. That seal of approval was available only if the National Guard worked hard to meet the minimum standards established by the U.S. Army. The equipment, time, and training they needed to meet that standard were expensive, ultimately more expensive than most communities could afford to raise on their own to support their local company, and so available only from the federal government.

With government money came government oversight. In the years between 1903 and 1916, correspondence between National Guardsmen and the secretary of war (from 1903 to 1908) and the chief of the Bureau of Militia Affairs (after 1908) grew exponentially as both sides struggled to adjust to their new relationship. National Guard officers barraged federal officials with questions about funding, uniforms, procedures, and property management. Federal inspection officers exhorted the National Guard to improve its discipline and military skills. The new, closer ties between National Guardsmen and War Department officials also created new tensions. Several troubling disagreements arose about issues ranging from pay for National Guardsmen to the exact role the Guards would play should the United States be drawn into war with a foreign state. Many guardsmen also experienced intense frustration with increased War Department oversight and regulation of militia affairs, which had previously been very much in their own hands.120 In the middle of the adjustment, the men themselves sometimes got left behind. Cary T. Ray of the First Regiment, ING, ended up resigning his commission, without ever making his goal of the captaincy of Company D, over problems with property returns from the previous captain. Ray had signed a receipt for the supplies on the promise that the resigning man would make good the deficiencies, which he never did. Ray got caught in the ensuing property accounting and left the ING.121 In another ironic turn, by 1914 federal inspecting officers were complaining that guards-
men were giving so much time to rifle and target practice while in camp that “proper field instruction could not have been given, and it may be stated that it is not the intention that rifle instruction, important as it is, shall displace the other forms of field instruction to the extent done” at camp in 1913.122

As they reconfigured themselves to meet the professional standard laid out by the War Department and recognized by Congress, the Illinois General Assembly, and the general public, guardsmen significantly altered their practices. Drill marching was out, and marksmanship was in. Much that could be demonstrated with drill marching, qualities that they had traditionally relied on to convince their local communities that they were worthy of emotional and financial support, could not be so easily demonstrated with marksmanship scores. The very identity that the National Guards had established to secure community support and a steady stream of new recruits was challenged by the new realities of federal funds and federal alliances. For the most part, the members of the ING appear to have been very happy with the change, and the ING continued to grow in the early years of the twentieth century, attracting much the same kind of young man it had for decades. The chance to make a serious claim on the identity of the modern soldier, trained for the modern battlefield while ensconced in the comfort of a modern, state-built armory, seemed to satisfy the needs of ING members to convince themselves that by 1915 they had attained the realization of their goals.

Realization of the Federal Future: Mexican Border Service and the National Guards

In June of 1916, U.S. troops under the command of Brigadier General John J. Pershing, chasing the Mexican rebel commander “Pancho” Villa and his army across northern Mexico, clashed severely with Mexican government troops in Carrizal. In response to the subsequent diplomatic crisis, President Woodrow Wilson called 75,000 National Guard troops into federal service to police the Mexican-U.S. border.123 The members of the ING, like their counterparts in most states, were thrilled that they had the opportunity to gain experience in a large-scale military mobilization and that their organization was the tool to achieve mobilization in a national emergency. Many Illinois guardsmen saw the expedition as a giant training exercise, aimed not so much at containing Pancho Villa as preparing the U.S. Army and its National Guard reserve troops for their much-anticipated joining of the ongoing war in Europe.124 Once on the
border for their three-month tour of duty, Illinois cavalrmen had little reason to change their minds about the importance of their activities; in fact, high-ranking Army officers supported this version of events. In the second weekly issue of the *Illinois Cavalryman*—a paper published by members of the First Illinois Cavalry during their thirteen weeks of service on the Mexican border—the front page featured an interview with the general in command of the portion of the border under the control of the Illinois troops. The headline reads, “PLAN FOR HUGE ARMY REVEALED—General Parker Declares Border Mobilization Big Training School—Preparedness Step.” From the point of view of many military men, the Mexican problem was clearly secondary, an excuse to train for large plans and larger wars.

Illinois guardsmen regularly measured the daily routines of training and leisure, movement followed by stasis, that they experienced while on border duty against the horrible conditions troops fighting in Europe in 1916 were enduring day after day in the trenches. These guardsmen attempted to seize in their border service the chance to ready themselves as much as possible for the trials they were convinced awaited them on the Continent. The writers and reporters of the *Illinois Cavalryman* filled its pages with a variety of advice columns devoted to encouraging the interested soldier to pursue and further develop and refine his professional skills. Articles discussed everything from camp sanitation to marksmanship and offered a primer in basic Spanish so soldiers could converse with any potential prisoners of war. Of course, the paper also covered sporting events—boxing, polo, horse racing, basketball—and social news for the entertainment of the men marching around the dry mudflats of the late-summer border region.

Those thirteen weeks on the border turned out to be the merest shadow of the work that lay ahead of what would become the nucleus of U.S. troops in France. On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, and by the end of 1917, the first of the U.S. troops, including divisions made up of National Guardsmen, were training for war outside Paris. General Pershing was again in command, and knowing just how much his troops had to learn about conducting themselves in modern warfare, he devised a ten-month-long training period to prepare them for battle. The experiences on the border the previous summer had taught regular soldiers and National Guardsmen alike how much more they needed to know if they hoped to survive to return home. Those who participated in the border experience also learned the importance of organized leisure-time activities and distractions for bored troops. If guardsmen made one small contribution to the preparations of the United States, it may have been their long experience with
providing popular entertainments and competitive events for their members.

Guardsmen training in late 1917 for war in France were exactly where ambitious National Guard officers for the previous forty years had hoped to see them—on the front lines as a full partner to the regular U.S. Army. The National Guards had won their battles—with their communities, their state governments, and the federal government—to prove that with sufficient time and money, American men could effectively train themselves as the elements of a reserve army from the secure position of a civilian life. That the reality always fell short of the dream was less important than the fact that the National Guards had some training, whereas raw recruits had none.

The reserve army mission was paramount to the volunteers who filled the ING, and National Guards across the country, because it was through this role that they elaborated their shared language for identifying themselves as men and as citizens of the republic. Having committed to the power of the word and the image evoked by “soldier” to bring diverse men together in one common bond, the men who volunteered their time and money to the ING had to give soldiering their serious attention. Although change had been almost imperceptibly slow throughout the 1870s and 1880s, by the 1890s it was clear that a commitment to soldiering that was founded on shared social needs would take on a life of its own and would in time claim the entire National Guard movement for the reserve army mission.

As National Guardsmen left their local communities further and further behind—as the locus of their funding, activities, and identity shifted ever further toward the center—issues of manhood and citizenship were recast to fit the new realities. The mobilization for World War I and the creation of a whole new crop of “real” veterans of wartime service once again helped to draw a dramatic line between the soldier and the civilian, the boy and the man. This new crop of veterans would be the ones to shape the National Guard in their own image over the next decades. They did not identify with their civic fathers who were striving to mend the union as had a much earlier generation of militia companies, or the Spanish American War veterans out to turn still amateur soldiers into true reservists, but with their fellow soldiers and officers from an overseas combat experience. Citizenship did not seem to be at stake in this new war (despite the overt and demeaning segregation of the African American troops), so for the National Guardsmen its only message may have been one of the deadly rituals of combat.

The National Guard of the late nineteenth century was an organization of civic participation, of manly citizenship, and of patriotic service.
The Spanish American War was an exciting opportunity for National Guardsmen to prove that they had been serious all along, an experience turned sour by lack of preparation and training. The National Guardsmen who emerged from that contest were finally successful in prying money, time, modern equipment, and training from the state and federal governments as their skills and image seemed to reflect on the possibilities of the rising world power. The Great War was an entirely different event. The United States was a late and relatively lightly harmed participant in a grim slaughter. How this experience would shape the next generation of leadership in the National Guard is an untold story, but it is a tempting place to look for the fall in popularity and public approbation that the National Guard suffered, particularly in the late 1920s and throughout the Depression years, a time when a sense of civic leadership and identification with responsible manhood might have allowed the National Guard to shape a different, more traditional future.