“BULLETS AND CANISTER FIRST, BLANK CARTRIDGES AFTERWARDS:” HARD WAR AND RIOT RESPONSE ON THE UNION HOME FRONT

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ABSTRACT

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Following the passage of the Enrollment Act of 1863, violence erupted in cities across the Union. The Enrollment Act, in tandem with January’s implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation, led many Northerners to violently resist the draft in wartime “draft riots.” Poor men who could not afford the commutation fee argued that the draft targeted them and forced them to fight a war for the rights and freedom of blacks, a cause many of them cared nothing about. This thesis examines the governmental responses to three of these riots. In Detroit, on March 6th, responding troops utilized containment tactics, defending Detroit’s richer neighborhoods and waiting the riot to subside. By July, however, responders utilized much harsher tactics. In New York City, from July 13th to July 16th, responders employed increasingly militaristic tactics to scatter mobs and restore order in the city. In Boston, on July 14th, responding troops fired a cannon into a mob of men, women, and children, killing many civilians but effectively quashing the riot.

This thesis analyzes this shift in response tactics. Through examination of local, state, and federal responses to the home front riots of 1863, Lueck argues that aspects of the Union’s “Hard War” policies developed in the North as well as the South. Using legal testimonies, military records, and newspaper articles, each chapter traces the local, state, and federal responses to the riot in discussion. Through thorough analysis and discussion of each of the circumstances and responses to riot, this thesis outlines the implementation of lethal riot response tactics on the Northern home front, tracing the union’s shift from the hesitant response in Detroit to the swift and merciless tactics in Boston.
For My Family
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INTRODUCTION

By 1863, the American Civil War had taken its toll on the Union. Bloody battles, such as those at Bull Run, Shiloh, and Fredericksburg, damaged the Union’s military as well as home front morale. Peace Democrats and Copperheads rose in cities across the North, arguing for the swift conclusion of the war with a negotiated peace. As a result, enlistments significantly slowed. Men subject to patriotic duty or peer pressure had already joined the army, and those who had previously neglected to enlist were further discouraged by battlefront reports and home front anxiety. Additionally, the enlistment terms of volunteers who joined at the start of the Civil War had begun to expire. In all, one hundred thirty regiments were scheduled to return home during the spring and summer of 1863.¹ To remedy the situation and replace fallen soldiers, the Union passed the Enrollment Act in March 1863. This act was primarily designed to inspire voluntary enlistment using the threat of conscription, dividing each state into districts and providing each state with fifty days to fill a quota before being subjected to the draft. Districts that did not fill their quotas with volunteers were required to conduct lotteries, randomly selecting men between the ages of twenty and forty five to fill their district’s requirement. Any man that was randomly selected could either pay a substitute to take his place or pay commutation fee of $300 to the federal government for an exemption from the draft. Following payment of the commutation fee, another name would be drawn.²

As was expected, many northerners vocally resisted the draft. However, Union officials did not expect the lengths to which this resistance would go. James McPherson writes, “As such

it worked, but with such inefficiency, corruption, and perceived injustice that it became one of
the most divisive issues of the war and served as a model of how not to conduct a draft in future
wars.”3 The Enrollment Act, in tandem with January’s implementation of the Emancipation
Proclamation, led many Northerners to violently resist the draft in wartime “draft riots.” Poor
men who could not afford the commutation fee argued that the draft targeted them and forced
them to fight a war for the rights and freedom of blacks, a cause many of them cared nothing
about.

Fueled by the passage of the Enrollment Act, the draft riots exemplify the tensions
resulting from the intersections of class and race in cities across the Union. In January 1863,
President Abraham Lincoln told Senator Charles Sumner that he feared “the fire in the rear.”4
This fire, referring to the rise of the antiwar movement and the subsequent fall of the Union war
effort, increased with each battlefront setback. The Enrollment Act also fueled this fire,
increasing tensions based on economic class and race across the North. Confederate officials
were well aware of this fact, even incorporating it into their overall strategies. In a letter to his
wife, Robert E. Lee explained that continued Confederate victories and stalemates would cause
“a great change in public opinion at the North,” crippling the Northern war effort and assisting
the South.5 Union officials recognized that control of this home front dissent was critical to
continuing the war effort and defeating the Confederacy. The draft riots, representing the violent
outcomes of these ever-increasing tensions, presented potentially devastating blows to the war
effort. Swift resolution of these conflicts and prevention of future conflicts was of immense
importance in preserving the war effort.

3 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 600.
4 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 591.
5 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 591, 625.
Though many Draft Riots had differing short-term causes, each riot developed, in part, out of tensions inspired by the Emancipation Proclamation and the Enrollment Act. In Detroit, on March 6th, shortly following the passage of the Enrollment Act, the trial and life sentencing of a black man named Thomas Faulkner led to an outburst of violence on the city’s south side. Hundreds of poor white Detroiter's, angry about the draft and the reframing of the war, took to the streets in an attempt to lynch Faulkner. This commotion quickly grew into a vicious campaign against the city’s black population. On July 13th, draft lotteries began in New York City. The city’s laborers and lower class immediately resisted, attacking and destroying a draft office and all of its contents. This attack developed into a four-day riot, resulting in the violent death of several of the city’s black residents and destruction of much of the city’s infrastructure. On July 14th, officers canvassed Boston’s neighborhoods, serving draft notices to the men whose names had been drawn in the draft. Beginning with the assault on a conscript-man with a flatiron and building to a large-scale mob assault on an armory, the Boston Draft Riot grew in a similar fashion. Each of these riots was eventually calmed. However, in some ways reflecting their different approaches to quelling each riot, responders in each city saw differing levels of success.

In *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy Toward Southern Civilians 1861-1865*, Mark Grimsley traces the evolving treatment of southern civilians by Union soldiers, commanding officers, and policymakers. From beginning of the American Civil War to William Tecumseh Sherman’s famous march to the sea and the surrender of the Confederacy, Grimsley argues that Union military policy toward southern civilians shifted dramatically. Union armies began with a relatively gentle approach, attempting to convince presumably loyal southerners to free themselves from the radical politicians who had driven secession. By 1864, however, this
strategy had been largely abandoned in favor of a much more ruthless alternative.\textsuperscript{6} This alternative, titled “Hard War,” involved brutal actions taken against Southern civilians in order to demoralize them and discourage their support of the Confederacy. Hard War emerged in the western theater in April 1863 and in the eastern theater in 1864, once Ulysses S. Grant had been appointed General-in-Chief. Grimsley argues that Hard War was by no means simply a strategy promoted by high commands. Rather, ground level soldiers, lieutenants, and other decision-makers “…helped shape and reshape Federal policy toward Southern civilians as it moved toward the Hard War of the conflict’s final years.”\textsuperscript{7}

Examination of local, state, and federal responses to the home front riots of 1863 illustrates that aspects of the Union’s Hard War policies developed in the North as well as the South. In-depth assessment of police and military responses to the Detroit Race Riot, the New York City Draft Riots and the Boston Draft Riot reveals a similar shift from cautious to aggressive treatment of civilians. In Detroit, local authorities hesitated before calling in the state militia. Once troops arrived, they utilized containment tactics. Rather than actively breaking up the riot, soldiers formed a boundary around the riot and waited for the excitement to subside. In New York City, police officers attempted to manage the riot’s early stages with non-lethal force. However, by the conclusion of the four-day riot, federal soldiers had deployed devastating assaults on the mobs and surrounding buildings. In Boston, authorities sent for experienced combat troops as soon as word of excitement reached the mayor. Soldiers arrived soon after and fired a cannon into the heart of the mob, injuring and killing men, women, and children but successfully suppressing the riot. This shift, though occurring more rapidly, mirrors the

\textsuperscript{7} Grimsley, \textit{The Hard Hand of War}, 3.
implementation of Hard War in the South. Just as Hard War was executed by a combination of
ground level forces and high commands, soldiers, police chiefs, mayors, civilian military
officials, and governors each played a role in driving the shift from passive to aggressive riot
treatment of civilians in the Detroit Race Riot, the New York Draft Riots, and the Boston Draft Riot reflect the actions
taken by soldiers on the battlefront in their shift toward Hard War, abandoning cautious
responses and turning to lethal force to restore order in northern cities more efficiently.

This thesis analyzes this shift in response tactics. Using legal testimonies, military
records, and newspaper articles, each chapter traces the local, state, and federal responses to the
riot in discussion. Chapter One focuses on the historiography of the Civil War draft riots,
identifying the scholarly gap that this thesis intends to fill. Chapter Two examines the Detroit
Race Riot of March 1863. This chapter relies heavily on witness testimony and local newspaper
reporting, illustrating the causes, effects, and resolution of the riot on a local and state level. In
this chapter, I argue that the Detroit Race Riot represents a critical first stage in the northern shift
toward Hard War. Chapter Three examines the New York City Riot, utilizing similar source
types and methodologies. This chapter relies upon evidence from testimonies, newspaper
reporting, military records, and statistics to illustrate the police and military responses during
each of the riot’s four days. In this chapter, I argue that the local, state, and federal response to
the New York City Draft Riots serve as a definitive step toward utilizing Hard War to maintain
civil control and order on the home front. Chapter Four examines the testimony of Major
Stephen Cabot, the commanding officer of the regiment involved in putting down the riot, and
that of Emma Sellew Adams, an Irish girl living near the site of the Boston Draft Riot, in
addition to military records and newspaper reporting. In this chapter, I suggest that the decisive
early use of lethal force of the Boston Draft Riot represents the culmination of the Union’s shift toward Hard War. Through each of these chapters, this thesis will outline the implementation of Hard War on the Northern home front, tracing the union’s shift from the hesitant response in Detroit to the swift and merciless tactics in Boston. In addition, this thesis will underscore the importance of connecting the study of these riots as well as their significance within the history of the American Civil War.
CHAPTER I:
THE HISTORIOGRAPHY AND DISPARATE STUDY OF THE RIOTS

As is the case with many aspects of the American Civil War, historians have constructed a meticulous and variable scholarly conversation regarding the Union Draft Riots of 1863. By and large, historians focus their studies on New York, which saw the greatest carnage and death toll of the group. Historians such as Iver Bernstein and Adrian Cook have written monographs focusing exclusively on the New York Draft Riots, utilizing a variety of methodologies and frameworks. Numerous other historians have written journal articles on the subject, analyzing the cultural, social, and political implications of the violence.8 The riots in Detroit and Boston, comparatively, have received much less academic attention. Secondary coverage of the Detroit Riots exists primarily in wider histories of the city of Detroit and overviews of the state of Michigan during the Civil War. Historians have primarily connected the riot to the region’s local history, tying the riot to the growth and development of the region. Though similarly presented in histories of the city of Boston, the Boston Riot has received recent scholarly attention in journal articles published by historians such as William Hanna and Ian Jesse. These articles primarily serve to examine the cultural causes and motivations of the rioters, exploring the ethnic and social composition of the mob.9

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Despite the variety of lenses employed by historians over the years, historians have yet to research, identify, and trace the links in military response to the 1863 Union Draft Riots. Aside from Barnet Schecter’s *The Devil’s Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America*, historians have largely treated the riots as isolated incidents, featuring one city or region’s conflict in their articles or books. Schecter’s work, though briefly discussing each of the three riots, includes them as tenets of a larger discussion of social and ethnic unrest in connection with Reconstruction.\(^\text{10}\) In order to trace the impact each riot had on the others, historians must connect their discussions of each riot and better identify trends in riot response tactics over the course of the summer of 1863.

*Overviews, Local Histories, and Syntheses*

Comprehensive Civil War histories, such as James McPherson’s *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* and Bruce Catton’s Civil War compendium, often include discussion of the New York Riot. However, these histories largely cast the conflict as a freestanding event, preceded and followed by relative peace in the North, or discuss them as a single conflict, neglecting to identify any level of distinction between them. In *Battle Cry of Freedom*, McPherson mentions that draft riots occurred across the northeast in 1863, and provides a general explanation of what happened and why. McPherson uses his book to argue that the men on the battlefield were responsible for both military victories and for determining the fundamental nature of concepts such as freedom in the post-war United States. Relying on both primary and secondary literature to provide the factual basis of his narrative, McPherson analyzes this information to convey his interpretation of the story of the American Civil War.

\(^\text{10}\) Schecter, *The Devil’s Own Work*, 1-8.
McPherson uses sources such as military records and letters written by soldiers to provide a primary basis for his book, while including information presented by other historians to supplement the primary evidence. Regarding the 1863 riots, McPherson presents a detailed history of the New York Draft Riot, folding it into a larger discussion of the ethnic and political makeup of the North, but essentially ignoring the riots that occurred in other cities. Much of McPherson’s information comes from the statistical analysis of Adrian Cook.\footnote{James McPherson, \textit{Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 609-611.}

In contrast, in his Civil War trilogy entitled \textit{Bruce Catton's Civil War}, Bruce Catton briefly describes what he felt was notable about the series of draft riots that occurred across the Union in 1863. In his book, Catton, a leading historian of the American Civil War era, offers a comprehensive history of the American Civil War. Through his extensive history, Catton argues that in each stage of the war it was the generals of each side that made the difference. Highlighting efforts of General McClellan in the first portion, Generals Burnside, Hooker and Meade in the second, and Generals Grant and Lee in the third, Catton uses numerous government documents, military records, and diary entries to support his claim and tell his story. Catton does not focus on the New York Draft Riots, which often steal the spotlight in Civil War histories. Rather, he puts emphasis on riots across the Midwest. Highlighting specific riots in Southern Illinois, Catton also references riots across Ohio, Pennsylvania, and in the New England states. In doing so, Catton discusses the differences in damage and casualties inflicted in the New York Draft Riots and other draft riots occurring across the North. However, he also groups the rest of these riots into one category and emphasizes their similarities. Catton casts each of these riots as a similarly failed uprising, failing to mention the Detroit Race Riot and the Boston Draft Riot.
Catton also fails to discuss response tactics outside of his brief overview of the military’s involvement in the New York Draft Riot.\textsuperscript{12}

Academic journals routinely publish local histories detailing their constituent region’s Civil War riot experience. These studies prove exceptionally useful in investigating Union Draft Riots that occurred outside of New York and geographically widening the analysis of draft-related domestic unrest. These microhistories are typically framed as isolated episodes, connecting an area’s history to the Civil War in a means to which local readers can relate. In “Civil War Draft Resistance in Illinois,” Robert E. Sterling does just that. Published in the Autumn 1971 edition of the \textit{Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society}, Sterling traces the effects of the draft on small communities throughout the state. The article investigates public opinion through Sterling’s examination of notable Chicago newspapers from both sides of the political aisle, conscription and voluntary enlistment records, as well as personal accounts of violent uprisings. Sterling focuses on resistance to the draft through each ward of Chicago, as well as throughout each provost district of Illinois, discussing riots in small communities such as Oconee and Olney.\textsuperscript{13} Though short, the in-depth and specific nature of Sterling’s article firmly establishes it as the leading history of draft riots in Illinois.

John W. Oliver’s “Draft Riots in Wisconsin During the Civil War” offers a similar contribution to the subject’s historiography. This 1919 publication in \textit{The Wisconsin Magazine of History} employs a comparable scope to Sterling’s, tracing Wisconsin’s state-wide reaction to the implication and enforcement of the Union’s first conscription laws. Because of Wisconsin’s proximity to Canada, Oliver discusses draft dodging as a large component of his article, arguing

that “Canada… became a Mecca” for men who feared military service.¹⁴ Perhaps as a result of this ability to escape, Oliver writes that draft resistance in Wisconsin was fairly limited. However, in some areas such as Ozaukee County, violence did occur in 1863. Only 627 residents of the 2,450 that had cast ballots voted for Lincoln in the previous election, illustrating Ozaukee County’s status as a haven for anti-war Democrats.¹⁵ As is the case with Sterling’s article, Oliver’s original content defines “Draft Riots in Wisconsin During the Civil War” as a strong addition to the historiography of the draft riots.

James M. Gallman’s “Preserving Peace and Order in Civil War Philadelphia” is perhaps the most unique local investigation of the summer of 1863. Rather than tracing violent resistance in the manner of Sterling and Oliver, Gallman investigates and attempts to explain the absence of violence in Philadelphia. Gallman writes that though “potentially disruptive tensions often flared up” in wartime Philadelphia, the city remained largely peaceful while other east coast cities such as New York and Boston erupted in violence.¹⁶ Interestingly enough, Gallman also expressly contrasts Philadelphia’s calm to violence in small-town Wisconsin, Illinois, and Detroit.¹⁷ Gallman’s article, though discussing a much smaller geographic area than Sterling’s and Oliver’s and defending an argument that is in many ways the inverse of the standard draft riot investigation, offers a strong contribution to the subject’s historiography. His examination of Philadelphia’s peace adds information about city and its circumstances to the subject’s scholarly conversation. Additionally, the investigation of a city at peace in 1863 compliments the wide array of publications written about violence well, revealing similarities and differences between

¹⁵ Oliver, “Draft Riots in Wisconsin During the Civil War,” 336.
each area’s social makeup and circumstances and better allowing historians to trace the causes of these riots.\textsuperscript{18}

Barnet Schecter’s 2005 monograph, \textit{The Devil’s Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America} offers perhaps the most cohesive and detailed narrative of the 1863 Union Draft Riots as a whole. In this work, Schecter argues that the measures taken to quash the riots only passed “the task of exorcising these ‘demons’ from the body politic” down to Americans of the next generation.\textsuperscript{19} Though \textit{The Devil’s Own Work} is undoubtedly New York-centric, Schecter succeeds in linking the New York Draft Riots of July 1863 with others that summer, as well as other instances of civil unrest in the early 1800s. Schecter begins his narrative with the lead up to the Battle of Gettysburg, establishing the wartime context that would accompany the Union into the violent summer of 1863. Schecter then doubles back to the panic of 1837 in order to establish the various social and cultural contexts discussed in the monograph, exploring topics such as immigration, labor relations, and living conditions in New York City. The monograph then traces the conflicts raised by these issues through the decades and into the New York Draft Riots.\textsuperscript{20}

Schecter includes the riots in Detroit and Boston in his narrative, though in a fairly limited capacity. Schecter discusses the Detroit riot as a component of his discussion of emancipation and its enemies. The political causes and effects of the riot are briefly described in connection with the Emancipation Proclamation and as a part of the growing northern resistance

\textsuperscript{18} Gallman writes that Philadelphia exhibited racial tensions similar to those in Detroit and New York City. However, Philadelphia’s location denoted the city as a depot for soldiers marching to and from the battlefront. Gallman highlights this military presence as well as the city’s prior recruiting efforts as the primary differences between Philadelphia and the cities that experienced riots.


\textsuperscript{20} Schecter, \textit{The Devil’s Own Work}, 9-11, 47-49.
to the abolition movement and its role in the war. Schecter mentions the Detroit riot again early in his discussion of the New York Riot, stating that Detroit officials feared another uprising.\textsuperscript{21} Schecter’s first mention of the Boston riot appears to miss the riot’s significance as an individual conflict, including it in a list of comparatively minor riots in Albany, Troy, Yonkers, Hartford, and other cities in the northeast. The Boston riot is mentioned again in Schecter’s discussion of the aftermath of the New York City riot. The swift quash of the riot is praised and used as a foil of sorts for the destruction that was left following the riot in New York.\textsuperscript{22} The Devil’s Own Work succeeds in linking the causes of the 1863 riots and contextualizing them within the political, cultural, and social contexts of the era. However, Schecter fails to effectively discuss the differing military responses that characterized the conclusion of each riot.

\textit{The Detroit Riot}

Coverage of the 1863 Detroit riot is largely inconsistent across the historiography of Civil War Detroit. Alfred J. Freitag’s 1951 monograph, entitled Detroit in the Civil War, he entirely neglects to discuss the riot. Freitag offers an overview of the more extensive rioting that took place in New York and Chicago, but offers little detail of Detroit’s own uprising. In an almost casual tone that certainly reflects the tremulous racial atmosphere present in the era of the monograph’s publication, Freitag writes, “In Detroit, too, there was a riot but it lasted only for a day. In most cases the victims were Negroes, because agitators blamed them for the war.”\textsuperscript{23} While largely written off in early histories such as these, the 1863 Detroit Race Riot and its victims receive greater attention in more recent works. George S. May’s Michigan and the Civil

\textsuperscript{21} Schecter, The Devil’s Own Work, 106-107, 181-182.
\textsuperscript{22} Schecter, The Devil’s Own Work, 202-203, 232.
\textsuperscript{23} Alfred J, Freitag, Detroit in the Civil War (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1951), 12.
War Years, 1860-1866: A Wartime Chronicle offers a similar narrative to that found in Freitag’s monograph. Published in 1965 as a part of a collection by the Michigan Civil War Centennial Observance Commission, May’s monograph digs a bit deeper into the Detroit riot. Providing consistent day-by-day reporting of key Civil War events and their effects in the Detroit area, May devotes a short paragraph to discussion of the rise, fall, and lasting effects of the 1863 race riot.\textsuperscript{24} However, this limited discussion does not include a detailed discussion of the responding troops or the tactics they employed. Rather, May focuses on the morale of Detroit’s citizenry following the riot and the resulting development of the Detroit Police Force.

David M. Katzman’s Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century provides perhaps the most comprehensive secondary retelling of the Detroit riot. In his book, Katzman argues that prior to the establishment of “the racial ghetto,” Detroit’s black population lived, worked, and generally existed alongside Detroit’s white population.\textsuperscript{25} Using census data, Katzman constructs and presents tables detailing the distribution of African Americans in Detroit in 1854 and 1860, as well as tables and maps depicting birthplace, housing locations, and workplaces of African Americans from 1850 to 1870.\textsuperscript{26} These statistics serve to establish context for the 1863 riot, as well as quantitatively measure its long-term effects on the city and its residents. Katzman writes that he intends these statistics to serve as a framework for the study of nineteenth century race relations in other cities across the North, arguing, “a variety of studies of

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small communities would enable us to make broader generalizations about American life in the
nineteenth and twentieth centuries.”

Despite previously published works by historians such as Sterling and Oliver, Katzman
expressly states, “The Detroit race riot of March 6th, 1863, was the only major riot in the
Midwest.” Despite this rather dismissive statement, Katzman does briefly link the riot to those
that occurred in New York, and Boston. Katzman writes that each of these riots, in addition to
other riots in Buffalo, Brooklyn and Troy, were fueled primarily by racial tensions. Katzman
highlights Katzman’s narrative and description of the riot is drawn almost exclusively from a
poem written by B. Clark, an African American resident of Detroit and witness of the events.
While somewhat limited in terms of sources, relying heavily on secondary sources and sparingly
referring to primary sources, Katzman’s discussion of the riot still serves as perhaps the most
detailed secondary interpretation of the events. Katzman’s book also features a strong discussion
of the lasting effects of the Detroit riot on the city and in Michigan. Katzman argues, “While the
1863 riot destroyed much of black Detroit, it did not shake the renewed faith in American society
brought about by the Civil War.” Katzman argues that the organization of groups such as the
First Michigan Colored Volunteers Regiment and the Michigan State Equal Rights League of
Colored People overshadowed the racism exhibited in the riot. Katzman also traces the
resurgence of ethnic and racial neighborhoods from the late 1860s to the 1880s. Though
Katzman does not discuss the military’s response or expressly connect details of the pacification

27 Katzman, Before the Ghetto, xi.
28 Katzman, Before the Ghetto, 44.
29 Katzman, Before the Ghetto, 44.
30 Katzman, Before the Ghetto, 47.
31 Katzman, Before the Ghetto, 55.
of the Detroit riot to those of New York or Boston, Katzman’s work provides a strong addition to the historiography of the Civil War Draft Riots.

Interestingly, journalism and political media serve as the focal point for numerous discussions of the Detroit Race Riot. Helen H. Ellis’s *Michigan in the Civil War: A Guide to the Material in Detroit Newspapers 1861-1866* was published with May’s monograph in commemoration of the Centennial of the Civil War. This monograph, more an index than an analysis, documents local media publications regarding notable Civil War events. Though useful, perhaps the most detailed investigation of the cultural causes of the Detroit Race Riot can be found in Matthew Kundinger’s “Racial Rhetoric: The *Detroit Free Press* and Its Part in the Detroit Race Riot of 1863.” In this article, Kundinger investigates Civil War era Detroit’s two largest newspapers, the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*. Kundinger effectively traces the role of local media in both causing and reporting the violence that occurred, concluding that political competition between the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune* and the *Detroit Free Press* exacerbated tensions between supporters and critics of the war effort. This study, however, is littered with obvious factual errors, including referring to Thomas Faulkner as William Faulkner throughout the entire piece. These errors leave Kundinger’s article, along with each of these other sources, perilous as a central source in a discussion of the 1863 Detroit Race Riot. Despite this variety of unique scopes and approaches, researchers of the event must turn to legal accounts and other forms of documentation for accuracy in their investigations.

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In terms of analysis of the New York City riot, Iver Bernstein’s *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* serves as one of the leading works. In fact, Bernstein’s chronological breakdown of the riot has been widely accepted and referenced by Civil War historians. Early in the monograph, Bernstein references a newspaper article written by a James Brooks, a Peace Democrat Congressman, newspaper editor, and “popular uptown figure intimately familiar with the attitudes of his constituents.” Bernstein develops and presents a concise day-to-day schedule of the New York City Draft Riot, based on the makeup and activities of the mob. Bernstein attributes the actions of the rioters on Monday, July 13th to the imposition of the military draft. Tuesday’s actions are attributed to thieves taking advantage of the circumstances, and Wednesday’s actions are described as the result of the conflict between the mob and the police force and military. Rather than fleshing out this schedule in a traditional narrative, Bernstein discusses the effects of the riot on the various social classes and the political elite in New York City. Bernstein includes thorough discussions of the role of New York social classes such as laborers, merchants, and industrialists. Bernstein also discusses the lasting effect of the riots on the New York City political scene, discussing the repercussions in relation to Tweed’s Tammany Hall and labor strikes in the 1870s.

Many historians consider *The New York City Draft Riots* a seminal work in the historiography of the New York City Draft Riots. In many ways, these historians are correct. In addition to its qualitative discussion, Bernstein provides ample statistical data in the appendices of his book. Numerous tables document the city’s “Uptown Social Geography” in 1863, the


decline in black population in New York City from the start of the Civil War to the conclusion of the riots, and a comprehensive list of members of the Union League Club of New York. Bernstein also includes maps depicting the murders committed by rioters and neighborhood political loyalties. Despite these contributions, Bernstein’s discussion of the Union’s military response is limited. Bernstein does not analyze the street-level tactics of the police and military units involved in the response, and does not connect these tactics to those employed in the Detroit and Boston riots. Rather, Bernstein’s schedule and statistics serve his social and political discussions well. The New York City Draft Riots serves as an excellent reference and analysis of the events in New York City. However, Bernstein does not effectively address the military significance of the riots, and certainly does not tie them to other riots in the North.

Adrian Cook’s The Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863 is similarly regarded. Cook’s work, published in 1974, serves as an excellent complement to Bernstein’s monograph. Cook employs a much smaller chronological scope, focusing on the street-level details of the riot rather than investigating its long-term causes and effects. Cook divides The Armies of the Streets into three major sections: “The City in 1863,” “The Days of the Riot,” and “The Aftermath.” Whereas Bernstein uses a more generalized discussion, each of Cook’s sections deal in specific and meticulously researched details regarding each of his designated stages of the riot. Cook’s most substantial discussion lies in “The Days of the Riot,” providing an hour-by-hour analysis of each day of the weeklong riot. Cook seamlessly weaves together statistics with personal testimonies, providing a narrative that is indispensable for historians investigating home front unrest in the Civil War North. His first and third sections,

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while less notable than the second, are also effective in their brief contextualization of the riot within the history of the city and the circumstances of the North. However, the true value of the monograph lies in Cook’s meticulous analysis of the actions of the rioters.

The worth of Cook’s monograph is illustrated by its presence as the sole citation in McPherson’s discussion of the riot in *Battle Cry of Freedom*. In addition to his narrative, the depth of Cook’s research can be found in the highly useful appendices to his book. *The Armies of the Streets* ends with comprehensive lists of those killed and wounded in the riots, their cause of death or severity of injury, and the date and time of death or affliction. These comprehensive lists contain hundreds of names, and are constructed using information collected from newspapers, court records, and correspondence. In addition, Cook includes lists of those arrested in the riot. This list particularly illustrates the depth of Cook’s research into the swath of court and police records that were produced following the riot. Cook’s fourth appendix features perhaps the most ambitious compliment to his narrative. This narrative contains an attempt at a comprehensive list of all New Yorkers involved in the riot, including each rioter’s age, occupation, and role in the riot. Cook writes that court records did not contain an adequate record of rioters, offering detailed explanations where his records differ from the official city documents. These appendices offer even more to historians than Cook’s narrative. Widely read historians such as McPherson bring this meticulous research to wider audiences, bolstering *The Armies of the Streets* as a crucial component of the New York City Draft Riot’s historiography.

Joel Tyler Headley’s *The Great Riots of New York, 1712-1873* discusses the city’s Civil War Draft Riot in a fashion similar to that employed by scholars of the Detroit and Boston riots. Rather than focusing on Bernstein’s political and social circumstances of the riot or utilizing

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Cook’s meticulous research methods, Headley presents a day-by-day description of the riots within a larger discussion of New York City’s wider history of violent revolt. Using an episodic narrative of both riots both famous and obscure from 1712 to 1873, Headley argues that the violent resistance in New York’s past has contributed to a comparatively peaceful city in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. This argument may pose an overgeneralization, as *The Great Riots of New York* does not attempt to examine or discuss riots or peace following the Orange Riots of the early 1870s. However, despite the loftiness of this argument, *The Great Riots of New York* features strong contextualization of the 1863 New York City Draft Riot within the city’s broad history, from rebellions against British occupation, the Revolutionary War, the emancipation of slavery in New York, and through the Civil War. Headley’s book serves much more as a basic reference than an in-depth scholarly monograph such as those by Bernstein and Cook. Headley’s sources are not adequately documented, and his discussion of the riot largely echoes pre-existing scholarly investigation and discussion. However, Headley’s book includes an analytical comparison of the military’s responses to many of the riots discussed. Headley makes a number of recommendations regarding the military’s role in quelling large-scale mob violence, gleaning evidence to support his recommendations from his narrative. Headley recommends the deployment of specialized police forces in riot situations, rather than military forces. He also recommends the use of clubs and nonlethal force in the dissolution of mobs. This advice differs greatly from the Hard War tactics employed by responding forces in New York and Boston.

Edward Spann’s *Gotham At War: New York City 1860-1865* is methodologically similar to Headley’s *The Great Riots of New York*. However, where Headley contextualizes the Draft

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Riot with other riots in the city’s history, Spann’s work contextualizes the riot within New York City’s wartime experience. Spann writes that New York City experienced unique tensions during the Civil War, as the city’s ports processed over two thirds of the United States’ imports and one third of the nations exports. The city’s industries relied heavily on cotton from the South, resulting in stress on the city’s economy and labor force. In terms of the Draft Riots, Spann concludes that these tensions merged with the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation primed the city for a riot upon the instatement of the draft.\footnote{Edward Spann, Gotham at War: New York City 1860-1865, Wilmington: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002, 1-6.} Once the assumed purpose of the Civil War had shifted from preservation of the Union to the emancipation of slaves, poor New York laborers already negatively affected by the riot resorted to violence. Spann does not delve into the quelling tactics of the riot, though he does provide an in-depth discussion of the riot’s aftermath on New York City’s social, ideological, and economic structures. However, similarly to Headley, Spann does not discuss draft riots in other cities.

possessed the city’s unskilled Irish workers.” Unfortunately, Man Jr.’s article features various outdated statistics about the riots and their victims, such as perpetuating an initial reporting of over one thousand casualties. Works written since this article’s publication, such as Cook’s *The Armies of the Streets*, have debunked this myth, providing ample evidence that the death count was significantly lower than initially assumed. Man Jr.’s article also displays a clear bias against the poor Irish workers of New York City during the war. Man Jr.’s article, published in *The Journal of Negro History*, includes a detailed discussion of the role and presence of African Americans in New York City prior to the Irish Potato Famine and wave of subsequent Irish immigration. Though in many ways ideologically charged and factually flawed, Man Jr.’s article serves an important precursor to future works and important element in the New York Draft Riot’s historiography.

*The Boston Riot*

The trend among big picture Civil War historians has clearly been to overlook the Boston Draft Riot, opting to focus on the New York riot or simply make brief reference to the 1863 draft riots that occurred across the North. However, arguments posed by historians focusing on the Boston Draft Riot such as Brett Palfreyman demonstrate the merit that the Boston Draft Riot possesses as a unique and notable piece of Civil War history. Palfreyman’s main argument, that documentation from the elites of Boston dominated the reporting of the riot in an attempt to limit the reports of dissent in what was considered the Union’s center of abolition. Palfreyman writes, “If word spread that common people were taking to the streets to resist the draft in Boston – the

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ostensible heart of antislavery, the supposed stronghold of the Union – how could the North ever hope to win the war?"\textsuperscript{46} Palfreyman proposes a convincing and highly interesting argument. This argument brings to question the role of record taking and the media in Northern society and in the war effort. The Boston Draft Riot, if reported from Palfreyman’s viewpoint, would serve as a valuable example of one of these themes for writers such as Catton or McPherson.

In \textit{Civil War Boston: Home Front and the Battlefield}, Thomas O’Connor argues that the Civil War had strong effects on the home front in Boston as well as on the battlefield. Relying on both primary and secondary sources, O’Connor presents his argument in the form of a narrative. O’Connor chronologically describes a series of events that occurred in Civil War Boston that demonstrate the turmoil that the Civil War caused in Boston. O’Connor’s use of sources varies based on event, but he generally utilizes newspaper articles to tell his story and promote his argument. In terms of the draft riot, O’Connor’s narrative comes exclusively from Major Stephen Cabot’s primary account. O’Connor notes Cabot’s knowledge of the riot in New York, but largely describes the riot as an isolated incident. \textsuperscript{47} Throughout each event and chronological time period, O’Connor focuses on four communities in Boston: the business community, the Irish Catholic community, the African American community, and the female community. By tracing newspaper articles through each of these events and focusing on each of these four communities, O’Connor succeeds in defending his somewhat basic contention that Boston was heavily affected by the Civil War.

In \textit{Boston Riots}, Jack Tager, uses the same methodology employed by Headley in \textit{The Great New York Riots}. Tager argues that Boston has a much more riotous history than is


\textsuperscript{47} Thomas O’Connor, \textit{Civil War Boston: Home Front and Battlefield} (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 140.
commonly thought. Tracing Boston’s history over the course of three centuries, Tager draws heavily from newspaper articles published regarding riots in Boston to examine Boston’s rich history of riots. Tager asks a number of questions of his primary sources in each case he examines, attempting to discover the identities of the rioters, causes of their actions, actions taken in response, and the riot’s historical significance, concluding that the Boston Draft Riot represented an unprecedented use of violence in Boston riot control. Tager incorporates secondary analysis of select riots into his narrative, comparing and contrasting arguments and interpretations of other historians to his own. Though Tager’s book is much less centered on the 1863 riot than Headley’s, *Boston Riots* adequately contextualizes the Boston Draft Riot within the history of the city of Boston.48

In “The Boston Draft Riot,” William Hanna explores the ethnic makeup of the participants of the Boston Draft Riot. Using comparisons with the New York Draft Riots that occurred just beforehand, Hanna identifies the Boston version as a distinctly unique conflict, referring to Boston’s unique ethnic makeup as a primary cause of the riot. Hanna argues that Boston’s unique ethnic makeup a leading cause of the riot, arguing, “…political alienation and smoldering anger, when added to poverty and despair, made the teeming streets of the North End ripe for civil disorder.”49 To support this claim, Hanna highlights trends among Boston’s large and ever-expanding Irish populations, such as dissent against Lincoln and the war effort. To establish his argument and show its relation to the events, Hanna describes the draft riots while frequently referencing the key points of his argument. Referencing accounts such as that of Major Stephen Cabot, newspaper articles from the *Pilot* and the *Boston Evening Transcript*, and

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police records, Hanna successfully weaves his argument into the narrative story of the Boston Draft Riot.

In “In Search of Excitement: Understanding Boston’s Civil War ‘Draft Riot,’” Ian Jesse approaches the conflict from a more critical standpoint. In this contemporary analysis of both primary and secondary documentation of the Boston Draft Riot, Jesse argues that the causes of the Boston Draft Riot were entirely separate from the New York Draft Riots, and that they have been largely forgotten for good reason. Jesse references several primary sources such as Major Stephen Cabot’s account, an article written by a poor Irish resident of Boston named Emma Sellew Adams, and multiple newspapers in his argument. Jesse argues that historians such as Hanna have been too quick base their studies on accounts such as Cabot’s and have molded their studies in a far too militaristic sense. Rather, Jesse argues that the riot should be considered less of a Draft Riot and more of a “group of rowdy people in search of excitement.” Jesse’s article serves as one of few sources that attempt to directly refute a study of connection between the riots. Jesse’s article speaks primarily to generalizations drawn regarding the cause of the riots, speaking to historians of the Detroit riot such as Katzman and historians of the New York Riot such as Man Jr. and Spann in addition to historians of the Boston Riot.

Conclusion

As is illustrated by a thorough examination of the historiography of major and minor riots that occurred during the summer of 1863, historians have approached each riot using a variety of methodologies. Periodic local histories contribute valuable analyses and interpretations of relatively smaller riots. Books and articles written about Detroit, New York, and Boston during

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the Civil War and across the nineteenth century contribute invaluable context for the study of each city’s riot. Books and articles written focusing entirely on the riots reveal much about the motivation and makeup of each city’s mob and the destruction each incurred. However, aside from Schecter’s surface-level synthesis, the scholarly conversation largely ignores any connection between the riots. Scholars such as Katzman and Jesse expressly deny the existence of these connections. In order to adequately assess the impact that each riot had on one another and on the Civil War North as a whole, historians much reconsider the claims of Katzman and Jesse and reexamine the links between the causes, effects, and circumstances of each riot.

Above all, the nuanced historiography of the 1863 Civil War Draft Riots lacks a strong comparative discussion of the riot control tactics employed in each of the major riots. Local histories such as those written by Sterling and Oliver contain information regarding the approaches and tactics involved in putting down smaller midwestern riots. In depth analyses of the better-known riots by historians such as Cook, Headley, and Hanna, include detailed information regarding the actions of police and military forces in the quashing of each city’s riot. However, even the most intricate statistics presented in Cook’s esteemed history of the New York City Riot do not make connections between the military responses to each riot. Though an abundance of research has been conducted and ample scholarly publications have been produced, further historical inquiry is necessary to fully understand the historical importance of the military responses to the 1863 Union Draft Riots.
CHAPTER II:

THE DETROIT RACE RIOT

On March 6th, 1863, violence erupted in the heart of Detroit, Michigan. Racial tensions rose to a breaking point following the trial of Thomas Faulkner, a local tavern owner. On February 26th, Faulkner allegedly raped a ten-year-old white girl named Mary Brown and molested an African American girl named Ellen Hoover. Whether or not these charges were genuine remains a matter of debate, as Brown and Hoover each recanted their testimony in the years following the riot and the conclusion of the Civil War. Although Faulkner had “but a trifle of negro blood in his veins,” both the citizens and the media considered him black. Given this fact and the heinous nature of the alleged crime, Faulkner was quickly found guilty and sentenced to life at Jackson State Prison. As a result of this conviction and Faulkner’s race, a large mob had aggregated outside the courthouse. Many white Detroiter were fed up with the war and pointed to the black population, of which Faulkner was a representative, as a scapegoat for the continuation of fighting. Though the court sentenced Faulkner to life in prison, the crowd’s actions demonstrated they would accept only the penalty of death. Provost Guard officers at the scene fired blank cartridges into the crowd, attempting to intimidate them without inflicting damage. The soldiers fired these blanks, but the mob continued to grow. Then, in what some claim was a somewhat rash decision, Provost Guard Captain John T. Van Stan ordered his meager forces to load their weapons with live ammunition. Though it is unclear whether Van Stan gave the order, several officers fired into the crowd, killing one protestor and wounding others. This did not quell the riot, and it raged on into the night. More troops eventually arrived

51 “Trial of the Negro Faulkner,” Detroit Free Press, March 7, 1863, Morning Ed.
52 “Trial of the Negro Faulkner,” Detroit Free Press, March 7, 1863, Morning Ed.
and were able to calm the situation, but not before the rioters had inflicted significant damage to public and private property in Detroit and the surrounding area.\textsuperscript{53}

The dispersal tactics employed by Van Stan and his men could be described as dubious at best. However, the devastating results of the riot cannot be attributed to tactics alone. In the early months of 1863, Northern cities were simply underprepared and underequipped to respond to a home front riot of this magnitude. An insufficient number of troops acted frantically and haphazardly, allowing rioters to incur extensive brutality and property damage across the city of Detroit. However, the Union government and military would be quick to learn from its mistakes. Juxtaposition of the handling of the Detroit Race Riot with the increased military response that followed the New York Draft Riots and Major Stephen Cabot’s firing of a cannon into a crowd comprised primarily of women and children in the Boston Draft Riot illustrates the drastic development of military policy on the home front. Union military policy toward northern civilians developed in a similar fashion to that of “Hard War” policy in the South as examined in Mark Grimsley’s \textit{The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy Toward Southern Civilians: 1861-1865}, dramatically increasing in severity over the course of the war.\textsuperscript{54} Examination of military tactics and eyewitness testimony shows that the 1863 Detroit Race Riot represents a critical first stage in the rapid development of Union home front pacification policy during the American Civil War. This examination of the Detroit Race Riot supplements previous historical accounts of the episode through a thorough analysis of the city, state, and federal military response and the tactics employed by these responding troops. This examination, in tandem with

\textsuperscript{53}Various Authors, \textit{The Late Detroit Riot}, 1.
similar examinations of the New York City and Boston Riots, better illustrates the importance of the Detroit Race Riot within the context of the 1863 riots as well as the Civil War as a whole.

*The Context*

In 1863, Detroit was much smaller than the city it would become in the 20th century. According to *The Detroit Almanac*, Detroit’s population in 1863 was around 53,000. Rapidly growing, only about 45% of the city’s residents were born in America. Despite this ethnic diversity, only around 3% of Detroit’s residents identified as African-American or black.\(^5\) In terms of geography, Detroit was also fairly small. According to Clarence M. Burton’s *When Detroit Was Young*, the city of Detroit was somewhere between 13 and 14 square miles in size. At the time of the war, the city experienced relatively slow geographic growth. Between 1849 and 1857, Detroit over doubled in size, expanding from 5.85 square miles to 12.75. Detroit would grow only 2.25 square miles in the following two decades, expanding to 15 square miles in 1875.\(^6\) Perhaps as a result of the city’s increased population growth and decreased geographic growth, city services and infrastructure grew along with the city’s population during this period. Paid personnel replaced Detroit’s volunteer fire department in 1861 and a professional police force was formed in 1865. Developments in steel production at Eureka Iron Works in nearby Wyandotte in the 1860s foreshadowed the city’s future booming automobile industry.\(^7\)

However, as was the case across much of the nation during the Civil War, Detroit’s economy

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\(^6\) Clarence M. Burton, *When Detroit was Young*, Detroit: Burton, 1930.

suffered in the early and mid 1860s. Because of the scarcity of money, many Detroiters resorted to using postage stamps of various values as currency.\footnote{Alfred J. Freitag, \textit{Detroit in the Civil War}, Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1951, 12.}

In addition to improvements in infrastructure and services and despite economic hardship, the society and people of Detroit also grew and developed during the Civil War years. Education reforms marked the beginning of an apparent sea change in women’s rights and racial tolerance. In 1861, Detroit’s only high school began accepting female students. Although African American children would not be admitted to Detroit Public Schools until 1869, a kindergarten teacher named Fannie Richards opened the city’s first private elementary school for African American students just two years later.\footnote{“Industrial Detroit (1860-1900),” Detroit Historical Society.} In addition, Michigan led the way in formation and deployment of African American units in the Union army. The 1st Michigan Colored Volunteer Regiment was formed in February at Detroit’s Camp Ward and sent to training in March 1863, much at the behest of the local Republican leaders of Detroit. Despite local and national controversy, this unit would become the 102$^{\text{nd}}$ Regiment of United States Colored Troops and place Detroit in a national spotlight.\footnote{Michael O. Smith, “Raising a Black Regiment in Michigan: Adversity and Triumph,” \textit{Michigan Historical Review} 16, no. 2 (1990): 22-23.}

Despite these advances, however, the circumstances of and the public’s reaction to the Thomas Faulkner trial demonstrates that Detroit had a long way to go in terms of racial tolerance. In a report of the riot printed in the \textit{Detroit Free Press} on the day of the riot, white Detroit’s racial motivations and willingness to revolt is made exceedingly evident. The report juxtaposes the peaceful nature of the city with the shockingly reckless behavior exhibited following Faulkner’s conviction. The article states, “Respectable citizens, forgetting their obligation to preserve the peace and remembering only the damnable crime of which they had
heard the prisoner convicted, were among the foremost to set the law at defiance, and… were almost demoniacal in their attempts to rescue [Faulkner] from the officers.”61 It is clear through the context of the article that these formerly respectable citizens were not attempting to “rescue” Faulkner in an attempt to save him from his punishment. Despite the heinous nature of the conviction, the chaos that ensued following its delivery was driven by racial tension. In the New York Times coverage of the riot, written for a much wider audience, race is also accepted and reported as the principal cause of the riot.62

The Riot

One Detroiter named Thomas Buckner witnessed one the earliest stages of the mob that would go on to inflict vast damage. According to Buckner, the crowd began as a “parcel of fellows runing [sic] up Lafayette Street after two or three colored men.”63 This small group quickly evolved into a crowd, hauling kegs of beer on wagons and traveling up Croghan Street toward the prison. Violence began, and Buckner was close enough to recount seeing the Provost Guard’s bullets fly and hearing explicit exclamations from the crowd. In a rather overt statement of the rioters’ attitudes toward the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, Buckner quotes one mob member in saying, “If we are got to be killed up for niggers then we will kill every nigger in this town.”64 Ironically, this statement, though very relevant to the sociopolitical status of African Americans in the latter portion of the Civil War, has very little to do with Thomas Faulkner or the girls that he had allegedly offended. Racial tensions in Detroit left the

63 Thomas Buckner Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 3.
64 Buckner, The Late Detroit Riot, 3.
city poised for disaster. The Faulkner trial set off these tensions in a way to which city, state, and federal authorities were ill prepared to respond.

Marcus Dale, one of five black men working at the Whitney Reynolds cooper shop on Lafayette Street and a resident of the shop’s adjoining house, also witnessed the growing mob as it moved away from the courthouse. Reynolds’s shop was a likely target for the riot, as it was the largest colored coopering facility in the city. Dale, along with Robert Bennette, Joshua Boyd, and Solomon and Lewis Houston, found the establishment directly in the path of the mob as it advanced from the courthouse, down Beaubien Street. Dale’s wife and three children were in the adjoining house, along with two other women and one other child. As the mob approached, Dale notes that the women and children took cover in the adjoining house. Dale notes that mob members were “…yelling like demons, and crying ‘Kill all the damned niggers!’”

Dale includes discussion of his relative confusion regarding the motivations of the crowd, as Faulkner had voted democrat in the previous election. While it is important to note Dale’s closeness to the events while considering this account, it is clear that the members of the mob were anything but racially tolerant. Faulkner’s distant black ancestry characterized the case in the eyes of white Detroiters. This racial characterization connected the case’s resulting anger with that sparked by the Enrollment Act, resulting in the riot’s widespread outrage.

Hasty decision-making by the Detroit Provost Guard only fueled this fire. Captain Van Stan and the other Guard officers had seen success in repelling the mob in its early stages by fixing bayonets and standing their ground. However, as the mob grew and advanced toward their position, tensions rose. Although it is unclear whether the order was given or which of the officers shot first, several shots rang out as the mob closed in. Charles Langer, a reportedly

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65 Marcus Dale Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 2-3.
66 Dale, The Late Detroit Riot, 3.
innocent bystander of the riot and a well-respected Detroit citizen, was shot through the chest and killed. Several others were wounded.67 This action, failing to instill fear as likely intended, served to intensify the crowd and its lust for vengeance, now against Faulkner, the Provost Guard, and the African American population of Detroit. Recognizing this, the officers retreated into their barracks, effectively leaving the rioters free to wreak havoc on the city. An article in the *Detroit Free Press* describes these events in a dire tone, stating, “The cry of death and vengeance ran through the crowd like an electric shock. The sight of the bleeding corpse of the dead man, and the groans of a half dozen who were wounded, kindled anew the flames of insubordination and frenzy… Being baffled in their attempt to rescue the criminal, they sought other channels to give vent to their malice.”68 The crowd accrued greater numbers and further weaponry, and the riot proper soon began.

Testimonies regarding the early stages of the riot speak to both the brutality and capability of the mob to inflict damage on Detroit’s residents and infrastructure as well as the government’s unpreparedness to handle such an uprising. Following the retreat of the Provost Guard, both Buckner and Dale found themselves and their property with next to no defenses against the rapidly growing riot. Buckner found himself on the sidewalk as the mob violence began. To avoid flying stones, bricks, and other “missiles of every description” that “flew like hail” in nearly every direction, Buckner and an unnamed friend ducked into his house on Beaubien Street.69 As the violence grew, Buckner’s house came under attack. To defend themselves, Buckner wielded his gun and his friend wielded an axe. The crowd broke through Buckner’s door and attempted to enter the premises four separate times. In each instance,

69 Buckner, *The Late Detroit Riot*, 3.
Buckner simply raised his gun and threatened to shoot, successfully averting the quartet of advances. Buckner writes that following his diversion of the crowd, the mob shifted focus to the cooper shop on Lafayette Street. 70 Although Buckner was able to effectively limit the damage inflicted on his property, his experience defending himself and his home characterizes the city’s response to the riot. Unassisted by local, state, or national authorities, Detroiteres were essentially left to defend their own property.

Buckner’s success in repelling the rioters was shared by few. Down on Lafayette Street, Dale and the other men were determined to protect themselves as the mob approached the cooper shop. In doing so, they managed to intimidate the crowd by firing off several warning shots with an old shotgun that happened to be in the back of the store. This was not before the mob had showered the establishment with stones and bricks, destroying the building’s façade and smashing through the windows and doors. 71 The focus of the mob then moved to the adjoined house, endangering the women and children. According to the account of Louisa Bonn, one of the other women in the house, rioters broke through the door with an axe and set the dining room aflame. The crowd prevented the escape of Mrs. Bonn and her child, shouting, “Let us surround the house and burn the niggers up!”72 Lewis Pearson, a customer at the cooper shop who was trapped in the fire, charged through the projectiles and took shelter under a wheelbarrow on the front lawn. 73 This same shower of stones repelled Mrs. Reynolds, the wife of the shop’s owner and the third woman present in the house, as she attempted to escape the blaze. Mrs. Reynolds, along with her daughter, was forced to take shelter inside the burning building and pray for

70 Buckner, The Late Detroit Riot, 4.
71 Dale, The Late Detroit Riot, 3.
72 Louisa Bonn Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 5.
73 Lewis Pearson Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 8.
rescue from each of the two dire fates that faced her.\textsuperscript{74} The \textit{Detroit Free Press} took note of this particular episode, describing “One colored woman… with a little child in her arms” who was driven back into the house by a variety of projectiles. \textsuperscript{75} Throughout this situation, the mob retained complete control of Detroit’s south side. Aside from a handful of victims who had found weapons and were able to resist, the area was at the mercy of the rioters.

Yet, those who had weapons were largely unable to control the mob. Dale, in perhaps an overstatement of personal heroics, was struck in the face with a rather large rock and was severely burned while protecting the women and children as they desperately attempted to escape the fire. Though sustaining an array of injuries, Dale succeeded in rescuing the women and children from the burning house, but was unable to quell the fire.\textsuperscript{76} Joshua Boyd, after being charged by a mob of “twenty-something dirty Irishmen” died from wounds sustained at the scene.\textsuperscript{77} John J. Bagley, a witness to the burning of the cooper shop, described what he saw in a sworn statement during the court proceedings that followed Joshua Boyd’s death on Friday, March 7\textsuperscript{th}. According to the court transcription, Bagley witnessed several young children on the lawn of the shop kicking a “prostrate negro” in the face and head. Bagley claimed that when he attempted to find help, he was unable to find a single officer.\textsuperscript{78} As previously noted, Detroit did not possess a professional police force until 1865. Military personnel and other authority figures were also notably absent from the scene, leaving the defense of several men, women, and children to a hand axe or an old shotgun in the back of the store. Although Detroit did have a professional fire department by this point, Reynolds’s shop and house, along with those of

\begin{footnotes}
\item[74] Mrs. Reynolds Testimony, in \textit{The Late Detroit Riot}, 6.
\item[75] “A Bloody Riot,” \textit{The Detroit Free Press}, March 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.
\item[76] Bonn, \textit{The Late Detroit Riot}, 5.
\item[77] Dale, \textit{The Late Detroit Riot}, 3.
\item[78] John J Bagley Sworn Statement, in \textit{The Late Detroit Riot}, 20.
\end{footnotes}
countless other black Detroiters, were essentially left to burn. In all, Whitney Reynolds lost $1,200 in cash and over $4000 in property. This early episode, though told through an admittedly biased lens, clearly illustrates the unpreparedness of local, state, and federal military units for large-scale riots across the North.

However, the havoc wreaked by the ever-expanding crowd did not stop on Lafayette Street. In fact, major newspapers largely overlook events to this point. An exceedingly short article in *The New York Times* focuses on the series of events occurring at the mob’s many destinations following the shops and dwellings on Lafayette Street. Moving beyond the cooper shop, the mob passed by a number of African American residences on Fort Street, one block south of Lafayette on Beaubien. One of the first to spot the mob heading toward Fort Street was none other than Louis Houston, one of the workers in Whitney Reynolds’s cooper shop. Houston was fortunate enough to escape the fire and chaos that would engulf the establishment. However, as he fled southeast down an alley, he realized that his good fortune had quickly dissipated. Houston was cut off by the mob and was beaten mercilessly until believed dead. However tragic these circumstances, perhaps the most important takeaway from the experience of Houston was his inability to find safety following his beating. After regaining consciousness, Houston fled to the nearby jail for fear that the mob would find him if he returned to his home. Houston was turned away by the jailer, writing, “…the civil authorities [did] not one thing to defend me; and when I went to the prison for protection of my life, was turned out to the exposure of the mob!”

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70 Whitney Reynolds Testimony, in *The Late Detroit Riot*, 6.
81 Louis Houston Testimony, in *The Late Detroit Riot*, 7-8.
82 Houston, *The Late Detroit Riot*, 8.
Ironically, a handful of the civil authorities that would have been able to assist Houston were hiding out in the very jail from which Houston had just been expelled. Though much of the Provost Guard took refuge in their own barracks, an article published in the *Detroit Free Press* on March 7th 1863 documents the perspective of three specific members of the Provost Guard that were on duty during the riot. Officers John Fenn, James Hepburn, and John Eeser were a part of the unit charged with transporting Faulkner from the courthouse to the jail, and met success in this endeavor.\(^\text{83}\) However, as is clear through these testimonies, the mob rapidly grew and pursued the officers and their prisoner down Beaubien Street. These officers, along with the other victims of the riot’s violence, would likely have faced a shower of stone and brick had they left the safety of the prison. No further action by these officers is documented.\(^\text{84}\) Houston, after leaving the jail, was once again beaten mercilessly by the mob. He was then somehow able to reach the house of Dr. Seward, a white local physician whose house had been spared. Houston remained under the doctor’s care for the entire five weeks that elapsed between the riot and the disclosure of his testimony.\(^\text{85}\)

Several African Americans saw fates as brutal as that of Lewis Houston as the mob wreaked havoc on Fort Street. Richard Evans, a seventy-nine year old resident of Fort Street, was in his house with his wife as the mob advanced south from Lafayette Street. Eventually, a number of rioters entered his home. One rioter leveled a gun at Evans’s head and fired. Evans, though struck in the head with the rioter’s bullet, retained consciousness and was able to shout at the rioters from the ground. Evans shamed the rioters, shouting, “You are now satisfied – you have done the deed, and shot me!” The rioters, assuming Evans dead following this outburst,


\(^{84}\) “Local Intelligence: The Trial of the Negro Faulkner, The Evidence for the Prosecution.”

\(^{85}\) Houston, *The Late Detroit Riot*, 8.
plundered his house and left he and his wife virtually penniless. Thomas Holton’s family, though much younger, suffered a similar fate. Residents of Fort Street between Beaubien and St. Antoine Streets, Thomas Holton, his wife, and his small child cowered in their modest home as the mob approached. As an assault began on the front of their residence, the Holton family escaped through their back door. Holton notes that the sheer size of the mob and the chaos it generated assisted them as they fled the city. Rioters quickly lost track of the family as they slipped away from the crowd and promptly lost interest in pursuing them. The family spent the night and much of the following day hiding in the woods around three miles outside Detroit, unable to safely return to the city until the following afternoon. Upon their return, they found their possessions entirely stolen or burned.

Similarly, disabled black Detroiters were left utterly defenseless as the riot continued south. Like the Holton family, Benjamin Singleton was aware of the advance of the crowd. Residing on the corner of Beaubien and Fort Streets, Singleton heard the racist exclamations and the sounds of destruction. Unfortunately, blindness limited Singleton’s ability to take advantage of the early warning. As the Holtons escaped the city, Singleton struggled to escape his burning house. Singleton was eventually dragged from the flames by a few white women, but was left with nothing. Mary Matthews, the wife of a resident of the local mental health facility and sole tenant of her home, was also spared no mercy. However, before burning the entire Matthews house, rioters scoured each room and carried off the valuables. Items and furniture deemed invaluable were dragged to the street and individually burned. Each of these victims was

86 Richard Evans Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 8.
87 Thomas Holton Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 8.
88 Benjamin Singleton Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 11.
89 Mary Matthews Testimony, in The Late Detroit Riot, 11.
essentially helpless, serving as devastating examples of the results of the city and country’s inability to quash the riot.

The fire discussed in each of these accounts spread in the mob’s wake as it continued south. The newly professional Detroit Fire Department was simply unequipped to handle this fire as it engulfed entire city blocks. Unlike the Provost Guard, the firemen took action to limit the damage. However, the spread of the fire and the consistent lighting of new fires proved to be too much for the inexperienced department. According to the *Detroit Free Press*, firefighters dispatched steam engines to the intersection of Lafayette and Beaubien Streets. Struggling to keep up, they were hardly able to attend to the smoldering buildings before being recalled to another area.\(^90\) In addition to immeasurable property damage, the fire caused widespread and in some cases severe injury to residents of the neighborhood. Marcus Dale was fortunate enough to escape the cooper shop with manageable burns.\(^91\) Dr. J.C. Gordon, a physician and the acting police chief in the weeks following the riot, examined the remains of Joshua Boyd following their recovery. According to Gordon’s report, parts of Boyd’s corpse were burned up to half inch into the muscle. Had mob projectiles not bludgeoned him senselessly, Gordon surmises that the burns would have killed him anyway.\(^92\) The fire, in accordance with the riot, would largely be left to burn out on its own.

*The Federal Response*

As the magnitude of the riot and the inability of local and state troops to manage the mob became apparent, Captain Van Stan telegraphed nearby forts and camps for federal assistance in

\(^92\) J.C. Gordon Report, in *The Late Detroit Riot*, 21.
suppressing the riot. Unfortunately, due to the timing of his call, Van Stan did not receive assistance until well after the riot had taken hold of the city. There are a number of possible reasons why Van Stan and city officials delayed in appealing to the federal government for assistance in putting down the riot. Many republican newspapers, such as the *Wilmington-Clinton Republican* from rural Ohio, asserted that Democrat-leaning Detroit officials sympathized with the rioters. This newspaper, along with countless others, blames the duration and impact of the riot to the political leanings of Detroit’s leaders.\(^{93}\) The riot’s unprecedented nature serves as another likely influence on the request’s delay. Van Stan and other local leaders, such as acting mayor F.B. Phelps, had no precedent or preconceived ideas of the most effective means by which to quash the riot.\(^{94}\) As such, the early stages of the riot were treated as a local issue, despite the absence of any sort of local police force. Van Stan, other officers of the Provost Guard, and the city leadership entirely expected local forces to succeed in dispelling the rioters.

Troops from a number of battalions and groups responded to Van Stan’s call, including several companies from the Twenty-Seventh Michigan Infantry, the Detroit Light Guard, The Lyon Guard, and a company of Indiana regulars.\(^{95}\) These disparate troops joined in Detroit and formed an ad hoc defense force, the structure and function of which offers a sharp contrast to the uniformity and streamlined action of troops activated in later riots. Colonel Orlando B. Wilcox, commanding officer of the Light Guard, initially led this response, later joined by Colonel Dorus M. Fox of the Twenty Seventh.\(^{96}\) Rather than actively attempting to break up the riot, these troops employed containment tactics. Each group played a role in containing the rioters and

\(^{96}\) Walter F. Clowes, *The Detroit Light Guard: A Complete Record of this Organization From its Foundation to the Present Day*, Detroit: John F. Eby & Company, 1900, 34.
shielding the portions of the city that had not yet been attacked by the rioters. These tactics secured Detroit’s wealthier northern neighborhoods, but allowed the rioters to essentially demolish Detroit’s predominantly black southern neighborhoods.

The Twenty-Seventh Michigan Infantry, the largest force to arrive in Detroit, was composed of volunteers from Michigan’s upper and lower peninsulas and was not officially mustered into service until April 10th, 1863. The regiment’s first eight companies were assembled and trained in Ypsilanti, under the instruction of Colonel Dorus M. Fox of Lyons, Michigan. Following training, the Twenty-Seventh Infantry accrued an impressive record of service. Following a brief confrontation with Confederate troops in Jamestown, Kentucky, the Twenty-Seventh was sent to Vicksburg, Mississippi to assist Ulysses S. Grant with his siege of the city. Following Vicksburg, the unit was transported to Maryland to participate in the siege of Petersburg and a number of other eastern-front conflicts. In the process, the Twenty-Seventh suffered 1,202 casualties out of 1,897 soldiers and officers enrolled. Soldiers not killed or wounded in action were mustered out of service in Washington D.C. in 1865. The unit received special mention by the War Department and Congress in 1866 due to its high casualty rate.97

However, this record of combat experience was entirely obtained following the Twenty-Seventh’s involvement in the Detroit Race Riot. Aside from Colonel Fox, Lieutenant Colonel John H. Richardson, and a number of Captains, the vast majority of the soldiers of the Twenty-Seventh had not yet seen combat. Though many of the soldiers who travelled to Detroit had enlisted months before their deployment to the riot, the Twenty-Seventh would not be ready to head to the battlefront until over a month after the riot’s conclusion.98 The Detroit Race Riot is

97 Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 1861-1865 v. 27, Ed. George H. Brown (Kalamazoo: Ihling Bros. & Everard Printers, 1903), 1-3.
98 Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 3-4.
not included in the official records of the Twenty-Seventh Michigan Infantry. These records, compiled in 1903 by a Michigan State Commission headed by Adjutant General John Robertson, includes a thorough timeline of the unit’s movements and combat experiences, as well as meticulous records of each enlisted soldier’s fate. The absence of the Detroit riot speaks to the limited nature of the unit’s involvement, specifically the lack of actual confrontation or the infliction of casualties.

The Detroit Light Guard represented another large portion of the response to Van Stan’s call for assistance. The Detroit Light Guard was formed in 1836, and was originally known as the Brady Guard. This unit served as an independent volunteer military company, taking part in local conflicts such as the Toledo War of 1837 and national conflicts such as the Mexican-American War of 1846. The Detroit Light Guard absorbed the Grayson Light Guard, another local force, in 1855. Following this absorption, the Light Guard’s enrollment usually totaled around fifty enlisted soldiers. During the Civil War, many Light Guard soldiers enlisted formally in the United States military, and were assigned to various infantry units. Light Guard soldiers were present at notable battles such as Bull Run and Gettysburg. A total of fourteen Light Guard soldiers were killed in the Civil War, though none of these casualties occurred during the Detroit Race Riot.

The Detroit Light Guard arrived at the scene two hours prior to the arrival of the Twenty-Seventh. However, though many of these soldiers had more experience than the younger soldiers of the Twenty-Seventh, the low enrollment in the Light Guard rendered the unit unable to take effective action against the rioters until the Twenty-Seventh arrived. Unlike the Twenty-Seventh,

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100 Clowes, *The Detroit Light Guard*, 23.
The Detroit Race Riot is briefly mentioned in the official records of the Detroit Light Guard. These records, compiled and published in 1900 by Walter F. Clowes, include a concise explanation of the Guard’s involvement, reading, “March 6th, 1863 – the company performed riot duty.” This inclusion is logical, given the Light Guard’s consistent presence in the city. However, the brevity of the inclusion once again speaks to the limited nature of the group’s involvement in the riot. The Light Guard suffered no casualties in Detroit and largely avoided any sort of violent confrontation with the rioters.

The Detroit Light Guard was mobilized and available near the site of the riot around 7:00 PM. The Light Guard, consisting of around fifty men, was sent to the scene as essentially the first organized response to the riot. The Guard, highly outnumbered by hundreds of rioters and a significantly small force in the face of the chaos occurring in southern Detroit, did not take violent action or begin to make arrests. Rather, the unit was directed to attempt to divert and disperse the mob as much as possible. Given the mob’s aggressive response to the Provost Guard’s earlier shots into the crowd, the Guard was cautioned to not employ more violence than was absolutely necessary. The Twenty-Seventh Infantry arrived at the scene around 9:00 PM. Upon the unit’s arrival, the Light Guard’s containment methods were formalized and continued. Companies A, B, C, F, and G of the Twenty-Seventh, numbering around four hundred men, were divided into eight patrol groups and sent to various areas of the city to attempt to contain the rioters. These groups, though fully armed, officered, and prepared for combat, served as more of an innocuous threat to rioters than a mobilized force marching into battle. Later in the evening,

102 Clowes, The Detroit Light Guard, 56.
the Indiana regulars arrived from Fort Wayne, Indiana. These regulars brought with them two
cannon, though no indication was given regarding the city’s willingness to utilize the cannon.104

Rather than responding to force, the mob essentially wore itself out within the borders
established by the Light Guard and Twenty-Seventh Infantry. The Detroit Free Press described
the dispersal as such: “Gradually, the excitement died away, the fires became less numerous, and
the crowds began to disperse.”105 Because of the late arrival of troops and the aggression of the
mob, responding troops would likely not have been able to forcefully disperse the mob without
inflicting massive casualties on the civilians. Rather, these troops employed fairly passive riot
control tactics, only beginning to make arrests once the majority of the mob had scattered.
Though martial law was never declared, the regiments remained in the city overnight, patrolling
each of their assigned districts and ensuring order for the remainder of the night.106

Conclusion

According to the New York Times, thirty-five buildings were destroyed by the mob. This
accounted for a large portion of the city’s south side’s public and private infrastructure, leaving
an entire section of Detroit both homeless and penniless.107 Though authorities were partially
successful in limiting the damage, the experiences and losses as described by the victims and
witnesses of the riot demonstrate the governmental unpreparedness that would come to
characterize the 1863 Detroit Race Riot. Injudicious action by the Provost Guard, inaction of city
leaders, and the apparent absence of civil authorities allowed mass chaos and fire to consume a
large portion of the city of Detroit, relatively unchallenged. By the time supporting troops

arrived, the only logical course of action was to use them to limit the already extensive damage
eaxed by the rioters. Though these troops arrived in relatively large numbers and brought
sufficient firepower, the mob had grown in size and ferocity to a level that could not be easily
suppressed. In order to avoid slaughtering civilians and making national headlines for doing so,
the troops in Detroit were left to wait it out.

The Detroit Race Riot represents an early inability of the Union government to anticipate
and prepare to counter violence on the home front. From the mob’s early clashes with Thomas
Buckner and Marcus Dale on Beaubien Street to terrorization of countless Fort Street residents,
civil and military authorities were unable to effectively protect the citizens of Detroit from
themselves. Future riots, such as those in New York City and Boston, exhibit much swifter and
forceful military responses. The 1863 Detroit Race Riot illustrated the capability and willingness
of northern masses to rise up and wreak havoc on their cities. This riot also illustrated the
necessity for federal assistance in riot control. Detroit’s initial reliance upon local authorities cost
the city and its residents precious time. Had federal troops been called to the scene even an hour
or two earlier, the conclusion of the riot could have looked much more like that of Boston.
Examination of the response to and results of the Detroit riot within the context of later riots
places it at the forefront of a rapidly developing Union home front pacification policy. The
Detroit riot illustrated the violent capabilities of home front uprisings and indicated the necessity
for swifter and more militaristic tactics in the riots to come.
CHAPTER III:
THE NEW YORK CITY DRAFT RIOTS

As the March riot in Detroit raged on, New York City remained fairly calm. Though Iver Bernstein writes that the March 3rd passage of the Enrollment Act “galvanized ongoing conflicts” between the city’s anti-war Democrats and the federal government, New York City did not experience an eruption of violence such as the Detroit Race Riot until months after the act’s passage. Though there were scattered instances of violence throughout the spring, the riot proper did not begin until the enforcement of the draft began. Bernstein argues that New Yorkers expected Democratic City officials, who had issued statements as radical as threatening secession during the war years, to protect them from the draft. However, realization that this protection would not exist appeared to sink in upon the draft’s second drawing on July 13th, 1863. Around 9am, Provost Marshal Charles Jenkins prominently displayed a spinning drum full of names on a table outside the Ninth District Provost Marshal’s office. A blindfolded man stood beside the table, prepared to draw names from the drum and resume the draft. Jenkins and the Provost Guard expected resistance. Jenkins placed acting Assistant Provost Marshal Robert Nugent in charge of a team of around twelve New York Police Officers and instructed him to assist in keeping the peace for the duration of the drawing. City officials expected these officers, in addition to the small group tasked with securing the Provost Marshal’s office, to serve as an ample peacekeeping force. However, a crowd numbering around two hundred had congregated

outside the office. Nugent’s team was forced to retreat as the crowd destroyed the wheel and tore up Jenkins’s draft records.109

On Tuesday, July 14th, the second day of the riot, the New York Times published an article detailing the events that occurred on the previous day. In this article, the writer argues, “No one anticipated resistance at so early a stage in the execution of the law, and, consequently, both the City and National authorities were totally unprepared to meet it.”110 Unbeknownst to the writer of the article, the New York City Draft Riot would rage on for three more days. Rioters continued to devastate the city relatively unchecked for the duration of July 14th, and resisted the efforts of the New York City Police Department, the New York State Militia, and the Union Army until these groups managed to break up the mob in the early morning of July 17th. Though casualty counts are still hotly contested, Adrian Cook writes that at least 105 people died in the riot. Cook reports that the riot resulted in the death of eleven black New Yorkers, eight soldiers, two police officers, and eighty-four rioters.111 James McPherson writes that twenty thousand Union soldiers were stationed in Manhattan in the months following the riot in order to maintain order. McPherson also writes that to this point, the New York City Draft Riot was the most destructive domestic disturbance in American history.112

New York’s unpreparedness to handle a riot of this magnitude appears similar to that of Detroit. In terms of riot control, the measures employed to preserve order by the Provost Marshals and Police Department were decidedly inadequate. The largely non-lethal measures utilized by the greatly outnumbered New York City Police Department on July 13th and 14th allowed the riot to grow. As such, the uprising at the Provost Marshal’s office quickly devolved

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112 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 610-611.
into mass chaos, evolving into a larger riot than the city or nation had ever seen. However, the harsher control tactics employed by the responding troops on July 15th and 16th differed greatly from those utilized by the Twenty-Seventh Michigan Infantry and the Detroit Light Guard. In his brief discussion of the riot, McPherson likens the violent tactics used by responding troops in New York to those used on the battlefront. McPherson writes, “…On July 15th and 16th they poured volleys into the ranks of rioters with the same deadly effect they had produced against rebels at Gettysburg.” These forceful tactics represent a distinct turning point in home front riot control policy. Though the measures used by police officers and soldiers in New York were by no means as extreme as those employed by Major Cabot and his troops in Boston, their aggressive approach was much more involved and combative than the relatively passive containment tactics seen in Detroit. The riot control policies adopted and employed by local, state and federal authorities over the course of the New York City Draft Riots serve as a definitive step toward Hard War in maintaining civil control on the northern home front, replacing cautious tactics with aggressive ones and valuing the restoration of order over the lives of individual rioters.

The Context

In 1863, New York City was at the peak of a population explosion. Between 1820 and 1860, the city’s population grew from 123,706 to 813, 662. This growth was fueled by rising immigrant populations, over seventy percent of which landed in New York, as well as stimulation of industry and commerce in the city. Over half of these immigrants were Irish, and around one quarter of the immigrants were German. As is to be expected, this rapid growth

resulted in tensions and growing pains between the city’s growing social classes and ethnic groups. Much of the city’s burgeoning industry was located in the southern neighborhoods of Manhattan, resulting in a stronger concentration of immigrants and working class New Yorkers. The rich inhabited the nearby northern neighborhoods. As a result of this economic disparity, the city’s southern wards possessed much denser populations than the northern wards. In 1860, 58% of New York City’s population resided in the city’s fifteen downtown wards. These southernmost wards made up only 9% of Manhattan’s geographic area. Similarly to Detroit, these crowded conditions rendered New York City poised for conflict. The overpopulation of New York City’s south side led to horrific living conditions for the poor. Disease ran rampant through the city’s tenement houses, many of which offered no fire escape. Garbage was stored in overflowing ash boxes or simply strewn out into the street. Cook points out that this squalor “…was only a stones throw from the homes of the wealthy.” It is important to note that the city’s northern neighborhoods were located in what has become central Manhattan. In the 1860s, the rich had expanded as far north as Forty-Second Street, but many residents remained closer to the southern wards. The lives of New York City’s poor residents were juxtaposed against those of the rich, leading to tension and eventual conflict upon the enforcement of the draft.

Political factors also intensified New York City’s tensions during the Civil War. As previously noted, Bernstein writes that New Yorkers expected city officials to shield them from the draft. Governor Horatio Seymour promised his constituents that the state’s draft quota would be met through volunteers. If the call for volunteers yielded insufficient numbers, Seymour expected the state court to declare the draft unconstitutional, delaying or cancelling it

altogether. If Seymour failed to stop the draft, New Yorkers expected either the Tammany Democrats or the Peace Democrats to use either bureaucratic or violent means to do so. The Tammany Democrats, many of which held public office in New York City or State governments, were supporters and benefactors of the Tammany Hall political machine. Tammany Hall, a political organization founded in 1786, took advantage of the collapse of the Whig party in the 1850s, supporting immigrant candidates for public office and enforcing its organizational principles and values. In the 1860s, William M. “Boss” Tweed, an elected member of the New York State Senate, expanded Tammany Hall’s control into nearly all branches of New York City’s local government. New Yorkers were well aware of this political control. Because of the organization’s frequent support of poor immigrant candidates as well as its support of municipal and infrastructure development, Tammany Hall was largely viewed as a friend of the poor residents of New York City’s southern wards. However, Bernstein notes that New Yorkers viewed Tammany Democrats as somewhat sympathetic to the war and more likely to block only the more “invidious” components of the draft laws. The Tammany Democrats were expected to assist the poor, but would not take any extensive action that could threaten the party’s control on local politics.

Peace Democrats, also known as Copperheads, however, held a much stronger stance against the war. Peace Democrats rallied against the Lincoln Administration and the Republican Party, blaming their supposed political tyranny for the poverty and hardship experienced by the city’s working class. Peace Democrats argued that the Union’s whites had paid the price of the

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war through labor on the home front and service on the battlefront, while blacks avoided each by reaping the benefits of “misguided Republican philanthropy.” The Peace Democrats were far less uniform in their political views and policies than the highly centralized Tammany Democrats. They were, however, firmly united in their criticism of the Union’s continuing war effort against the Confederacy. Bernstein writes that the Peace movement’s influence reached its peak in June 1863, just prior to the enforcement of the draft and the subsequent riot. The Peace Democrats held a “peace convention,” openly criticizing Republican policies and arguing for peace. Even pro-war commentators, such as Herald editor James Gordon Bennett, speculated that Copperhead leader Fernando Wood had a legitimate chance of winning the presidential election in 1864. Ending the war defined the Peace Democrats’ party platform. The party’s “thinly veiled” threats of violent resistance to the draft ensured New Yorkers that the Peace Democrats would shelter them from conscription.

Neither of these groups, however, mounted organized resistance against the Enrollment Act. On Saturday, July 11th, Conscription drawings officially began. Joel Headley argues that the timing of the first drawing was unfortunate. Beginning the draft on a Saturday allowed the names of those drafted to be published in Sunday papers, drawing attention to those selected and to the continuing draft process itself. Headley writes, “To have a list of twelve hundred names that had been drawn read over and commented on all day by men who enlivened their discussion with copious draughts of bad whiskey, especially when most of those drawn were laboring-men or poor mechanics, who were unable to hire a substitute, was like applying fire to gunpowder.”

The draft inflated the political and social tensions that existed between the affluent northern

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122 Bernstein, The New York City Draft Riots, 11.
123 Bernstein, The New York City Draft Riots, 11-12.
wards and the decrepit and overcrowded southern wards. The poor, unable to pay the $300 substitution fee and betrayed by their supposed allies in Tammany Hall and the Peace Democrats, believed the draft unfairly targeted them. Seeing no option rather than submitting to the draft or employing physical resistance, many residents of New York’s southern wards took action.

Monday and Tuesday: Police Management of the Riot

Unlike the situation in Detroit, New York City possessed a distinguished police force in the summer of 1863. The New York City Police Department was established in 1844 following the passage of the Municipal Police Act. This act dismissed the city’s watch program and instated a formal police force. In 1863, New York City was divided into thirty-two precincts, each staffed with a captain, multiple sergeants, a group of patrolmen, and two doormen.125 John Alexander Kennedy served as the department’s superintendent and managed the force until the mob brutally assaulted him on Monday, July 13th. Commissioners Thomas C. Acton and John G. Bergen assumed management following Kennedy’s attack.126 In her 1885 department-sponsored history of the organization, Augustine Costello praises Acton’s performance during the riot. Costello writes, “He did not leave the Central Office for five days… From six o’clock on Monday morning until after two AM the following Friday, he never closed an eye in sleep.”127 Whether this statement is entirely true or if it is more of a romanticized institutional legend,

126 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 163.
127 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 168.
Costello’s discussion illustrates the department’s attitude toward Acton. It also exemplifies the consistency of the riot over the course of the week.

Prior to the outbreak of violence, police officers patrolled the city largely as a precautionary measure. Bernstein writes that local and national leadership did not anticipate significant violent resistance to the draft. To support his point, Bernstein discusses articles printed in the *Herald* and the *Daily News*. According to the *Daily News*, based on previous political activism, New Yorkers and city officials expected that any resistance to the draft would be led relatively peacefully by Copperhead Orators, rather than by violent rioters. Bernstein also quotes T.J. Barnett, a White House official, stating, “[Lincoln] has no belief that such an issue could be made to prevail even in the city of New York.”128 As such, the state militias that were stationed near New York City were sent to the battlefront. Other than officers who received special assignments, such as Nugent’s team, officers were primarily stationed within their own individual precincts. These officers, however, would serve as the city’s primary defense during the most violent and destructive days of the riots.

Consistent with Headley’s discussion regarding the timing of the draft drawing, the inciters of the New York City Draft Riot began preparations following the publication of draft records on Sunday, July 12th, 1863. According to the *New York Times*, rioters were well aware of the city’s unpreparedness to handle an uprising. In the article published on July 14th, the writer argues, “in [this unpreparedness], the rioters saw their opportunity… it is abundantly manifest that the whole affair was concocted on Sunday last by a few wire-pullers who, after they saw the ball fairly in motion yesterday morning prudently kept in the background.”129 Rather than immediately taking to the streets, as was the case in Detroit, New York City’s first wave of

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rioters held off and laid the groundwork for the uprising. On Monday morning, around sixty railroad workers and ironworkers on the city’s east side did not report to work, instead forming a procession. This group’s absence from work offered the police department its first warning. Upon hearing of the absences, Superintendent Kennedy telegraphed all precincts and instructed them to recall the officers that had been relieved from duty at 6am that morning. Though the force assembled by these officers would prove insufficient in quashing the riot, this call represents a swifter and more aggressive response than was exhibited in Detroit.

As Kennedy reassembled the police force, these truant workers traveled throughout the city’s most heavily industrialized wards, increasing in numbers as they encouraged laborers to leave their posts and join the resistance. In many cases, rioters used threats of violence to convince workers to join their ranks. Within the hour, the mob arrived at the Ninth District Provost Marshal’s Office. The crowd had increased in numbers to around five hundred. This rapid expansion would come to characterize the New York City Draft Riot, challenging local authorities and posing a continually larger threat to state and federal authorities as they arrived at the scene.

Shortly after 9am, Provost Marshal Jenkins began the drawing. Nugent and his small group of police officers stood guard as the unnamed blindfolded man drew names and Jenkins read them aloud. A group of around two hundred had congregated around the office, shouting obscenities and threats to the officers, but otherwise taking no action. Jenkins had successfully announced around a dozen draftees when the “wire pullers’” group arrived at the scene. This mob, made up of laborers from across the city’s industrial wards, stormed the scene and merged with the group already protesting at the office. Upon arrival, the mob mobilized and attacked the

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130 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 166.
office, easily overwhelming the Provost Marshals and the police officers. These officers were
forced to retreat, leaving the office largely undefended.132 Outnumbered by enraged New
Yorkers, the Provost Marshals, the clerks staffing the office, and the police officers tasked with
keeping order saw no alternative but to retreat and attempt to regroup with other police officers.
The marshals and police officers engaged the mob in hand-to-hand combat, but were forced to
retreat through the rear of the building.133

Following this retreat, the rioters stormed the Provost Marshal’s Office. They destroyed
furniture, machinery, draft records, and all other manuscripts and records found in the office.
Unfortunately for the rioters, the records of the previous day’s draft drawings were locked inside
an iron safe. When members of the mob found themselves unable to open the safe, they “gave
themselves wholly to devilish rage and fury,” setting the building on fire and hurling stones at
the upper stories of the office and its adjoining buildings.134 By 11am, the office was engulfed in
flames. New York City Fire Marshal Alfred E. Baker notes the office and two neighboring
buildings as total losses, totaling around $25,000 in damages.135

Upon receiving word of the clash at the Ninth District Provost Marshal’s Office, New
York City Police Superintendent Kennedy rerouted his patrol carriage for the scene. It is unclear
what Kennedy intended to actually achieve upon arrival. Regardless of these vague motivations,
however, primary accounts and historians agree that Kennedy did not find success. According to
the New York Times, Kennedy attempted to push through the crowd and gain access to the
building. First attacked with words and soon after with physical blows, Kennedy was severely

133 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 166.
beaten by the mob. Had a “strapping fellow” in the mob not felt inclined to defend Kennedy’s unconscious body, it is probable that the mob would have killed him.\textsuperscript{136} In \textit{Our Police Protectors: History of the New York Police from the Earliest Period to the Present Time}, Augustine Costello provides a similar narrative. Costello’s account, published around twenty years after the riots, includes a detailed discussion of Kennedy’s beating. According to Costello, Kennedy managed to weather the first round of blows from the mob. Kennedy escaped, but was quickly caught and tackled into a large puddle. Mr. John Eagan, quite possibly the “strapping fellow” identified by the \textit{New York Times} article, then defended Kennedy’s unconscious body until he could be placed on a cart and carried to safety.\textsuperscript{137}

Unfortunately for the New York City Police Department and the victims of the mob, Kennedy’s beating would become rather symbolic of the police department’s ineffective efforts to contain the rioters prior to the arrival of state and federal troops. Following the destruction of the Provost Marshal’s Office, the mob headed north. After destroying two brown stone buildings and their contents, racking up an estimated $28,000 in damage, the mob continued on to Bull’s Head Hotel on Forty-Fourth Street. Upon arrival, the hotel’s owner refused to serve the rioters alcohol. In response, the mob simply took what they pleased and burned the hotel to the ground with no police resistance.\textsuperscript{138} The mob did, however, meet resistance as they continued toward the armory and gun factory on the corner of Twenty-First Street and Second Avenue. Officers from the Eighth Precinct and the Broadway Squad first engaged the mob on Forty-Fourth Street. These officers, armed with revolvers and clubs, unsuccessfully engaged the mob in hand-to-hand combat, attempting to halt their progress. Rioters severely injured several officers and captured

\textsuperscript{137}Costello, \textit{Our Police Protectors}, 167.
\textsuperscript{138}Baker, “Incendiaryism of the Riot; Estimate of Losses.”
Sergeant Ellison, the leader of the group of officers from the Eighth Precinct. The rioters then pelted Ellison with rocks, and continued toward the armory. Following the retreat of the officers of the Eighth, waves of officers from the Ninth, Fifteenth, and Twenty-Eighth charged the mob as it traveled down Forty-Fourth Street. Each of these groups employed the same close combat techniques. Each of these groups incurred heavy losses as a result.139

Following the easy dispersal of the police resistance on Forty-Fourth Street, the rioters continued toward the armory. This five-story building, owned by the Marston and Co. firearms manufacturing company, received the same treatment as Bull’s Head Hotel. As the mob approached the armory, officers of the department’s Broadway Squad took defensive positions inside. The New York Times notes that these officers were instructed to fire if the building’s doors were breached. Using sledgehammers, rioters easily made their way into the building. Police fired on the mob, wounding four or five rioters and killing Michael Vaney, an apparent ringleader of the mob. Vaney’s death did not stop the mob, which pressed harder through the doors. Rioters torched the building, leading the police present in the armory to escape through a private entrance in the back. Retreating officers sent a messenger to police headquarters detailing their situation. Those officers still trapped inside resorted to jumping or climbing out of the building’s upper windows, many breaking legs or sustaining other serious injuries.140 Fortunately for the police, many of the guns stored the armory had been relocated to the Union Steam Works, a better enforced building on the corner of Twenty-Second Street and Second Avenue.141 Baker estimates $75,000 of damage in the destruction of the building and its contents.142

139 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 169.
142 Baker, “Incendiaryism of the Riot; Estimate of Losses.”
As the casualty count rose and defeats piled up, the police department realized that a change in tactics was necessary. Deploying waves of officers from various precincts had resulted in the robbery, maiming, or death of many officers. Around 3pm, Commissioner Acton sent a telegram to all precincts. This telegram called for all officers to report to police headquarters, in order to muster a sufficient force to defend the building and make progress toward regaining control of the city. Mayor George Opdyke began sending telegraphs to Washington detailing the city’s plight, but the majority of them never arrived. Because a storm had disabled most of Maryland’s telegraph and railroad lines, Washington remained essentially unaware of Monday’s events until the following day. General John E. Wool, Commander of the army’s Department of the East, sent similar pleas for help. Because nearly all troops had been called to Pennsylvania in response to Lee’s invasion, Wool was left with a regiment of the Invalid Corps and the soldiers garrisoning the harbor forts. Because of this lack of available troops, the police department was largely left to fend for itself until well into Tuesday afternoon.

Around 5pm, Inspector Daniel Carpenter led a group of around two hundred officers that had congregated at headquarters toward the rapidly approaching mob on Broadway. In an episode that foreshadowed the later tactics used in the city by the military, Carpenter’s forces used lethal force to deter the mob. Cook notes that Commissioner Acton adamantly refused to take prisoners, instructing Carpenter, “Kill! Kill! Kill! Put down the mob. Don’t bring a prisoner in till the mob is put down!” These tactics departed from that used by the military in the

143 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 172.
144 R. Gregory Lande, “Invalid Corps,” Military Medicine 173 No. 6 (2008): 525; The Invalid Corps consisted of soldiers injured in battle or affected by disease that were still capable of performing garrison duty. Twenty-Four regiments existed during the Civil War, staffing forts, hospitals, and occasionally capturing deserters.
146 Cook, The Armies of the Streets, 74.
Detroit Riot and the police in the earlier stages of the New York Riot. Acton’s lethal tactics would come to characterize the military response in the later stages of New York and the Boston Riot. Carpenter led the officers as if they were a military unit, commanding them to flank the mob’s right side using lethal force. Seeing the change in approach and the death of the crowd’s front lines, the rioters quickly scattered.\(^\text{147}\)

Despite Carpenter’s victory and the success of Acton’s new tactics, however, uniting the police department at its headquarters left the vast majority of the city undefended. Undeterred by police resistance, rioters dispersed throughout the city, targeting draft-related buildings, black New Yorkers, and institutions that served the city’s black population. Rioters easily destroyed two other Provost Marshal’s Offices. These offices, led by Provost Marshals John Duffy and B.F. Manniere, fell easily as the majority of the city’s police officers had returned to the department’s headquarters.\(^\text{148}\) The focus of the mob, however, would soon shift to the city’s black residents. As evening approached, rioters arrived at the city’s Colored Orphan Asylum, located on Fifth Avenue, between Forty-Third and Forty-Fourth Streets. This establishment housed 233 black orphans, and was staffed and protected only by a matron and a superintendent. As rioters entered through the front of the building and began to destroy its contents, the asylum’s matron ushered children out the back door. All 233 children survived and escaped the city.\(^\text{149}\) The mob set fire to a number of other buildings following the asylum, including the home of the city’s postmaster and the stationhouse of the Twenty-Third precinct.\(^\text{150}\)

\(^{147}\) Costello, *Our Police Protectors*, 173.
\(^{149}\) “Burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum,” in *Report of the Committee of Merchants for the Relief of Colored People, Suffering from the Late Riots in the City of New York*, (New York: George A. Whitehorne, 1863), 24-25.
\(^{150}\) Alfred E. Baker, “Incendiaryism of the Riot; Estimate of Losses.”
Fortunately for the city, heavy rain began to fall around midnight. This rain dispelled rioters and extinguished many of the fires they had set throughout the city. The *New York Times* took note of this good fortune, as well as the change in tactics by the police department. In an article published on Tuesday, July 14th, a *Times* writer states, “The rioters had it pretty much their own way yesterday, but if they resume their demonstrations to-day a good share of them will come to a bloody and well-deserved end of their career.” As the riot stalled overnight, General Wool worked to mobilize marines and sailors from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, West Point, and New York Harbor. Several companies of marines and around three hundred sailors made their way to Manhattan, bringing with them cannon, guns, and ample ammunition. The *New York Times* proudly announced their arrival, as much a warning to any rioting readers as a statement of fact.

Prior to the arrival and gradual activation of these troops, however, rioters resumed their unchecked attack on New York City. The brutal murder of James Costello serves as a potent example of the vicious mob violence that continued into Tuesday morning. Costello, a black shoemaker residing on Thirty-Third Street, was accosted on the street near his home. When a large man began pursuing him, Costello, apparently seeing no other option, produced a pistol and shot him. A large group of rioters immediately charged Costello and hung him. The rioters cut him down, dragged his body through the streets and burnt his corpse. This episode was but one of many. The *New York Times* reported, “There is no question that the rioting of [Tuesday] was

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engaged in by vastly larger numbers than on Monday." As such, the police department continued to function as a military unit, rather than as individual precincts. Officers heeded Acton’s call for lethal force during Tuesday’s action. In addition, military units arrived at police headquarters throughout the day also assisted the officers. These units, made up of regulars from Governor’s Island, the marines and sailors responding to Wool’s call, were placed under the command of Major General Charles Sandford, the commander of the New York State Militia.155

Historians often characterize the confrontations between authorities and rioters on Tuesday as battles. On the surface, this characterization reflects the brutal nature of the riot and the extent of its damage to the city and its residents. In addition, it must be noted that this characterization also reflects the lethal tactics employed by the police department and responding military units. The first “battle” occurred Tuesday morning in a black neighborhood on Thirty-Fourth Street. Around 8:30am, police headquarters were informed via telegram that a large crowd had gathered at the corner of Thirty-Fourth Street and Second Avenue, and was threatening to burn down the entire district. Inspector Carpenter, who saw success defending Police headquarters on Broadway Monday afternoon, was once again given command of around two hundred officers. Carpenter’s group loaded into trolley cars and set out toward the neighborhood. Partway to their destination, the officers discovered that rioters had obstructed the tracks. Exiting the trolley cars, the officers formed up and marched toward the mob as a unit, with guns drawn.156 Carpenter’s approach to the mob on Thirty-Fourth Street illustrates a dramatic shift in policy from the previous day’s riots. On Monday, disjointed waves of officers charged the mob and attempted to scatter the rioters using hand-to-hand combat. On Tuesday

morning, surviving officers marched into battle with revolvers drawn, prepared to treat rioters as enemy combatants.

Another difference between this episode and Monday’s events was the eventual appearance of organized military troops. Shortly after their dramatic arrival, rioters began to throw stones and other shrapnel at the soldier. As some officers began to falter, Carpenter ordered them to fire. The rioters began to retreat into buildings and down the streets. Carpenter's officers gave chase, using revolvers and clubs to disable resisting rioters. For a time, it appeared as though the mob on Thirty-Fourth Street had been calmed.\(^{157}\) As Carpenter’s officers marched on they encountered Col. Henry F. O’Brien, commanding officer of the reorganizing Eleventh Regiment of the New York Volunteer Infantry. This unit saw combat in 1861 and sustained heavy casualties. As a result, the unit was mustered out of service in June 1862. O’Brien was given control of the unit in June 1863, and tasked with recruiting 250 soldiers a month for the duration of the summer. O’Brien, leading a small unit of soldiers placed under his command by Sandford, joined Carpenter’s officers in standing down the mob.\(^{158}\) The mob remained calm, and in an echo of Superintendent Kennedy’s actions the previous day, O’Brien symbolically approached them. O’Brien, walking closer to the mob than to his own soldiers, dramatically drew his saber and his pistol. The mob, seeing the gap between O’Brien and his men, swarmed and brutally murdered him. The rioters once again became enraged, and chased the officers and soldiers out of the neighborhood.\(^{159}\) Despite the initial success achieved by Carpenter’s militaristic tactics, the police officers and soldiers were still too greatly outnumbered to achieve lasting victory over the mob.


Another battle between police and the mob occurred just after 12pm at the Union Steam Works. It was no secret to the rioters that the weapons formerly held at the Marston and Co. building had been moved to the better-fortified Union Steam Works building. Thousands of rioters seized control of the building, taking control of the arms held within. At 2pm, a procession of around three hundred police officers approached the building, in a style similar to Carpenter’s officers on Thirty-Fourth Street. The officers came in firing, immediately killing eighteen rioters and wounding countless others. The officers secured the building, successfully repelling the chaos that ensued outside following the casualties. These officers held the building until the arrival of military assistance the following morning.\textsuperscript{160}

Aside from the police’s handful of forceful responses, much of the city was left unprotected and open to the mob for the remainder of Tuesday. Though police and scattered military detachments confronted the mob using organized and lethal tactics, there were simply not enough officers and soldiers present to contain the rioters and limit the damage. Structural damage and brutal murders continued throughout the afternoon. Baker notes six separate fires after the confrontation at the Union Steam Works building. Each consumed multiple buildings, including the homes and workplaces of black families or public servants.\textsuperscript{161} This sort of damage came to characterize the first two days of the riot. Though Carpenter’s officers and other groups organized and made inroads into quelling the riot, there were simply too many rioters for local authorities to handle. Despite tactical improvements, the police officers would have to wait until more troops arrived on Wednesday to make progress in restoring order.

\textsuperscript{160} “Eighteen Persons Reported Killed, Several Fatally Injured,” \textit{The New York Times}, July 15\textsuperscript{th} 1863.

\textsuperscript{161} Baker, “Incendiaryism of the Riot; Estimate of Losses.”
Wednesday and Thursday: Military Response and Order Restored

On Tuesday evening, Secretary of War Edward M. Stanton sent a dispatch to Mayor Opdyke, assuring him of Washington’s notice of the riot and detailing the first stages of the federal government’s response. Stanton replied, “Five regiments are under orders to return to New York. The retreat of Lee, now become a rout, with his army broken and much heavier loss of killed and wounded than was supposed, will relieve a large force for the restoration of order in New York.”¹⁶² This response effectively signifies the turning point of the New York Draft Riot. The arrival of Federal troops, particularly the specialized Seventh New York National Guard Regiment, ensured the restoration of order. The arrival of combat-seasoned soldiers and additional firepower allowed Wool and Sandford to fully transition the city’s response from Monday morning’s attempts of non-lethal containment to that of aggressive assaults against the rioters on Thursday.

However, the riot control tactics employed prior to the arrival of the Seventh must not be ignored. In The Armies of the Streets, Cook adamantly argues that Wednesday, July 15th was the most “critical” day of the riot. Cook points to political actions taken by local and federal officials, such as the eventual suspension of the draft, as evidence of a turning point in shutting down the riot.¹⁶³ However, Cook’s declaration of the importance of Wednesday also applies to the arrival of soldiers and the more efficient application of lethal tactics. The assembly of volunteer units from veterans in the city as well as the arrival of organized units from the battlefront resulted in streamlined mob dispersal techniques, using battlefront procedures and technologies to deal harsher punishments and encourage rioters to surrender their cause. Though the Seventh New York would not arrive in New York City until Thursday, examination of

¹⁶³ Cook, The Armies of the Streets, 147.
Wednesday’s riot control methods shows a continuation of the shift toward Hard War begun by Acton, Carpenter, and the local police officers on Monday and Tuesday.

Rioters continued to target black New Yorkers into Wednesday morning, relatively unchecked. Police and military groups responded based on their availability, which in many cases was dreadfully limited. The death of Abraham Franklin is an appalling example of this unavailability. Franklin, a 23-year-old coachman and cripple, was captured and strung up on the corner of Twenty-Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue. Fortunately for Franklin, a group of soldiers arrived and cut him down. Franklin, clearly in bad shape, managed to raise an arm and signify that he was still alive. Unfortunately for Franklin, the soldiers had to move on in response to one of the countless other instances of mob violence taking place in the vicinity. Immediately upon the soldiers’ departure, rioters returned to the scene and strung Franklin up once again, this time “cutting out pieces of flesh and otherwise mutilating it.”164 In many similar cases, soldiers and police officers were unable to intervene. William Henry Nichols, a boy living with his mother on East Twenty-Eighth Street, was beaten over the head with a crowbar and left for dead. Rioters ripped off his mother’s dress as she and a number of neighbors ran for the Twenty Ninth Precinct’s Station House. The captain, Francis Speight, turned them away due to lack of resources.165 Nichols’s mother fled the city, finding refuge only when she arrived in Jersey City.166 Similarly to Tuesday, authorities were limited in their responses to the scattered episodes of violence that occurred throughout the city.

164 “Abraham Franklin,” in Report of the Committee of Merchants for the Relief of Colored People, Suffering from the Late Riots in the City of New York, 14.
165 Costello, Our Police Protectors, 201.
166 “Wm. Henry Nichols,” in Report of the Committee of Merchants for the Relief of Colored People, Suffering from the Late Riots in the City of New York, 16-17.
Despite these consistent atrocities, the steady arrival of troops and equipment enabled Wool and Sandford to face larger concentrations of rioters head on. On Wednesday morning, Captain Thaddeus Mott set out with detachments of the Fourteenth Regiment New York Cavalry and the Eighth New York Volunteer Infantry to cut down the body of a black murder victim that rioters had strung up on Tuesday night.\textsuperscript{167} Mott, a veteran of the Mexican American War, served in the Third Independent New York Artillery, later known as “Mott’s Battery,” from the beginning of the Civil War until 1862. Mott was promoted to Captain of the 14\textsuperscript{th} Regiment following his departure from Mott’s Battery, and was stationed on Riker’s Island prior to his arrival in the city during the riot.\textsuperscript{168} As the unit, each soldier armed with a rifle and with a battery of cannon in tow, approached the scene of the hanging on Thirty-Second Street, they met strong mob resistance. Mott, leading the detachments in their advance, ordered the mob to disperse. As they had on Monday and Tuesday, the rioters refused and began to advance upon the soldiers. Mott ordered his men to fire. In all, three rounds of grapeshot were fired into the crowd. Around twenty-five rioters fell victim to these volleys, and the crowd scattered.\textsuperscript{169} Mott’s direction of the 14\textsuperscript{th} Calvary and the 8\textsuperscript{th} Infantry represented a stronger show of force against the rioters than the police or prior military groups had shown on Monday or Tuesday. Adequate military forces employed lethal tactics, effectively dissuading rioters and defending the city and its residents.

Colonel Cleveland Winslow, commander of the Fifth New York Volunteer Infantry, continued to employ Mott’s tactics Wednesday evening in a confrontation with rioters on First Avenue. Winslow, with three companies of volunteers from the Fifth and two howitzer cannon,
headed toward a reported mob gathering on First Avenue, between Eighteenth and Nineteenth Streets.\footnote{170}{“An Evening Riot on First Avenue,” \textit{The New York Times}, July 16\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.} Cook provides a cinematic overview of this tragic confrontation. As Winslow and his men approached the scene, thousands of rioters took up defensive positions on the streets, in windows and on the roofs of nearby buildings. As the mob began to fire on Winslow’s detachment, he ordered his soldiers to fire the howitzers. In a blunt expression of force, soldiers manning the cannon fired ten rounds of canister into the mass of rioters on the street. However, though these blasts did disable around forty rioters, Winslow’s detachment was still greatly outnumbered. Seeing many soldiers fall dead or wounded, especially artillery commander Colonel E.E. Jardine, and fearing losing the two cannon to the mob, Winslow ordered his men to retreat.\footnote{171}{Cook, \textit{The Armies of the Streets}, 153-154.} The \textit{New York Times} took note of the mob’s organization, functioning as a cohesive unit and firing on the command of an unidentified lead rioter.\footnote{172}{“An Evening Riot on First Avenue,” \textit{The New York Times}, July 16\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.}

Similar confrontations, though less deadly, occurred throughout the city well into Wednesday evening. A force similar to that of Colonel Winslow, led by Captain Henry Putnam of the 12\textsuperscript{th} United States Infantry Regiment, returned to First Avenue to rescue injured soldiers that had been left behind. The mob attacked the unit as they had Winslow’s. However, Putnam ordered that the cannons be trained on the buildings. Five rounds of grapeshot were fired, injuring countless rioters and causing dangerous structural damage to the buildings that many rioters had taken shelter in. Their positions compromised, the majority of the rioters fled the scene.\footnote{173}{“An Evening Riot on First Avenue,” \textit{The New York Times}, July 16\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.} Putnam, exhibiting less regard for the lives of rioters and the city’s infrastructure, was successful in completing Winslow’s task. For police and military responders, this success foreshadowed Thursday’s victories. Cook notes a sense of optimism held at police headquarters
as more soldiers arrived in the city. These additional troops would continue and expand the authoritative measures used on Wednesday, building on Mott and Putnam’s successes.  

Around 5am Thursday morning, the Seventh New York National Guard arrived in New York City. The soldiers of the regiment, though entering what equated to hostile territory, were relieved to be returning north from their previous engagement at Gettysburg. The Seventh Regiment held an international reputation in its record of riot control and service. The Seventh was instrumental in putting down the Arsenal and Abolition riots of 1834, the Stevedore riots of 1836 and 1852, the Flour riots of 1837, the Croton Works riot of 1840, the Astor Place riots of 1849, the Mayor Wood, Mackerelville, and Sixth Ward riots of 1857, and the Quarantine riot of 1859. Prior to the unit’s arrival, Governor Seymour instructed commanding officer Colonel Marshall Lefferts via telegraph to land at the Canal Street Pier and to report immediately to police headquarters. Landing at Canal Street allowed the Seventh to avoid possible resistance entering the city via New Jersey railways. Several other groups – The Twenty-Sixth Michigan Volunteers, the 152nd New York Volunteers, and the Seventy-Fourth Regiment of the New York National Guard - accompanied the Seventh. Cook notes that by Thursday evening, there were over 4,000 soldiers in New York City. In addition to these soldiers, news of the suspension of the draft arrived in the city. Though rioters would continue to plunder the city following the arrival of this news, removal of their principle motivation greatly assisted troops in scattering the remainders of the mob.

Thursday evening, General Wool sent a confident telegraph to Secretary Stanton. Wool writes, “During the day the rioters and robbers were quiet. A large number assembled near Gramercy Park this evening. They have been driven from the houses, many of which they sacked. I think we will close the affair to-morrow. Three regiments arrived this afternoon, and one yesterday, with two Howitzers. We will probably receive two more to-morrow.”

Thursday’s addition of the Seventh and the other arriving regiments to the city’s responding force ensured the successful achievement of Wool’s prediction, and the return of the city to order.

Upon arrival at police headquarters, under the direction of Wool and General Harvey Brown, the Seventh Regiment headed to the Seventh Avenue Arsenal on the city’s east side. Lefferts was given control of New York’s east side neighborhoods, from Seventh Street to Sixty-Fifth Street. As detachments of the Seventh patrolled the area, they frequently took fire from side streets and rooftops. In response, soldiers fired volleys of shots in the direction from which they were attacked. Faced with the decision to flee the scene or be targeted by the soldiers of the detachment, most of the rioters scattered. Soldiers continued to fire volleys at remaining rioters well into the evening, effectively securing the area well after sunset Thursday evening.

The mob’s final stronghold was located on the city’s upper-east side, near the location where Colonel O’Brien had been murdered earlier in the week. In a very similar fashion to Wednesday’s events, Mott’s Fourteenth Cavalry were the first on the scene. As was the case on Wednesday, the regiment sustained heavy fire from armed rioters in nearby buildings. Mott

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ordered a retreat, and again the dead and wounded were left behind.\textsuperscript{183} Upon his return to police headquarters, Brown and Acton agreed to send Putnam to assist. The \textit{New York Times} characterized the lethal confrontation that followed as “the most desperate and sanguinary fight of the whole riot.”\textsuperscript{184} Upon arrival, Putnam and his men found Mott’s troops under fire from rioters perched on rooftops. As more rioters began to fire, Putnam ordered his men to clear the buildings, killing anyone that could not be otherwise subdued. Putnam’s men, a combination of Brown’s soldiers and Acton’s officers, drove rioters from room to room as if fighting on the battlefront. Once the buildings had been cleared, Putnam re-formed his troops and drove the remainder of the mob up Second Avenue. A similar confrontation occurred at the corner of Thirty-First Street and Second Avenue. This confrontation, featuring similar tactics, resulted in the breakup of the remainder of the mob on the Upper East Side. Putnam’s leadership in the affair was lauded, earning him recognition from Secretary Stanton.\textsuperscript{185} Though scattered stragglers still marauded through the city, the riot had been suppressed.

\textit{Conclusion}

From Superintendent Kennedy’s attempt to address the mob on Monday morning to Putnam’s deadly raid on Thursday evening, New York City’s riot control tactics dynamically shifted. At first resembling the riot control efforts exhibited by the Provost Guard, the New York riots quickly became a federal issue. Joint military and police efforts coordinated by Acton, Wool, Sandford, and Brown replaced waves of disjointed police officers armed with revolvers and club. These coordinated efforts were consistently strengthened throughout the week,

\textsuperscript{183} Cook, \textit{The Armies of the Streets}, 163.
\textsuperscript{184} “Is the Riot Ended?,” \textit{The New York Times}, July 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.
culminating in Putnam and Lefferts’s East Side raids on Thursday evening. Rioters transitioned from wayward citizens to errant combatants in the local and national eye, influencing subsequent riot responses in other cities across the north.

The devastation wrought upon the city on Monday, July 13th and Tuesday, July 14th had a lasting impact on the Union’s policy toward home front uprising. The federal government never again sent National Guard troops to the battlefront, leaving an ample force in New York City and across the home front. The effects of the brutal zero tolerance policies exhibited on Wednesday, July 15th and Thursday, 16th as well as the actions of Major Cabot in Boston can be seen in the peaceful resumption of the draft on August 19th. The Union’s response to the New York City Draft Riots clearly illustrates its greater transition toward “Hard War” in the North, including a continued military presence and the demonstration of the swift and stalwart consequences of uprising. These factors allowed the Union to suppress dangerous dissent on the home front as well as to ensure victory on the battlefront.

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CHAPTER IV:
THE BOSTON DRAFT RIOT

As New York City authorities battled rioters in the morning of Tuesday, July 14th, conscription enforcement officers canvassed the city of Boston. Boston’s Provost Marshals tasked these officers with door-to-door delivery of conscription notices to men whose names had been drawn in the draft. As is to be expected given the popular response to the Enrollment Act in Detroit and New York, many Boston residents resented the implementation of the draft. According to Emma Sellew Adams, an Irish resident of Boston’s north side, the “patriotic” men of Boston had already enlisted. The conscription officers were often required to approach the homes of Boston’s “less patriotic men,” who had been unwilling to voluntarily enlist in the army. These conscription officers met resistance from the targeted men, as well as their wives and children. In one instance, Adams writes that the wife of an attempted draftee hurled a flatiron at David Howe, a “slight and frail-looking conscript-man,” as he approached her door. The man fled, and the woman gave chase. Unfortunately for Howe, the woman’s residence was located near the Gas Company Works, an employer of many North End laborers. Draft-resistant men and their families joined the chase, eventually amassing a mob of around two hundred rioters. Howe managed to escape relatively unscathed, but the crowd continued to grow. State and local leadership had seen the damage inflicted by rioters in Detroit, New York, and other cities across the North, and knew that swift action was necessary to ensure order and safety in the city of Boston.

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This swift action came in the form of a call to Major Stephen Cabot, commanding officer of the First Massachusetts Volunteer Heavy Artillery Regiment. Massachusetts Governor John Albion Andrew, after meeting with Boston Mayor Frederic Walker Lincoln Jr., sent word of the riot to Fort Warren, located on Gorges Island in Boston Harbor. Governor Andrew’s secretary delivered this message by hand, arriving at the fort’s wharf aboard the City Boat Henry Morrison. Cabot, who was napping following a long morning of duty as “officer of the day.”

In his account of the day’s events, Cabot emphasizes his rapid response to this call. Cabot and men from a number of units stationed at Fort Warren arrived in Boston a mere twenty five minutes following Cabot’s reception of the Governor’s call. Cabot and his men, armed with rifles and clad in fatigue dress, marched to the Cooper Street Armory. This armory soon became the epicenter of the riot, housing the only two cannon in the city. Having seen the rapid growth of mobs across the north and the progression of the mob attempting an assault on the Cooper Street Armory, Cabot ordered immediate and devastating action, firing a cannon directly into the mob. This blow effectively scattered rioters and quelled the uprising.

As was the case in Detroit and New York City, casualty totals resulting in the Boston Draft Riot are unclear. Following the firing of the cannon, many of the dead and wounded were dragged to safety and hidden in order to avoid arrest. Cabot writes that firing the cannon saved more lives than it took, protecting soldiers, police officers, and innocent Boston residence while punishing “…those who had paid the penalty for lawlessness.”

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William Schouler echoes these sentiments, writing, “The one volley in Cooper Street did the work and saved many lives from death and much valuable property from destruction.”

Examination of the Boston Draft Riot’s breakout and dramatic conclusion within the contexts of the other 1863 riots demonstrates the potency of the example set by Boston’s governmental and military actions. The decisive management of the Boston Draft Riot represents the culmination of the Union’s shift toward Hard War on the home front, treating rioters as enemy combatants and not hesitating to utilize lethal tactics. Cabot and his men employed deadly force only hours into the riot, effectively exchanging the lives of rioters for the continuity of order and for the lives of Boston residents and responding troops. The firing of a cannon into a crowd comprised partially of women and children presents a radical shift from the actions of soldiers responding to the Detroit riot. This action also represents a shift from the relatively passive actions of the police and Provost Guard in response to the early stages of the New York City riot. The military’s stalwart actions in Boston were influenced by the destruction wreaked in these previous riots, and greatly assisted in dissuading northerners from rioting for the remainder of the Civil War.

*The Context*

In 1863, Boston faced circumstances similar to those in New York City. Of the city’s 182,000 residents, more than 50,000 were recent immigrants from Ireland. These immigrants primarily worked as laborers in the city, and lived in highly concentrated Irish enclaves throughout the city. One of the city’s two largest enclaves was located in Boston’s North End. William Hanna notes that the North End’s population began to rise dramatically in the 1840s,

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resulting in overcrowding and harsh living conditions. Hanna writes, “Packed into squalid tenements that lined dark and filthy streets, they attempted to scrape out a meager existence as dock hands, construction laborers, or domestic servants. Their poverty, with its attendant crime, disease, and idleness, placed a heavy and unwelcome burden on the city's resources.”\textsuperscript{194} The living conditions in Boston’s Irish enclaves were very similar to the overcrowded tenement houses and general filth of New York City’s lower wards. The tensions between Boston’s rich and poor citizens echoed that of New York City as well. As Hanna states, rich Bostonians viewed the immigrants as an “unwelcome burden on the city’s resources.”\textsuperscript{195} The Irish were aware of these attitudes, resulting in great apprehension upon the passage of the Enrollment Act. Though the rioters in Boston did not actively target blacks, their inability to afford the $300 commutation fee enraged them in a manner exceedingly similar to the rioters in Detroit and New York City. The poor felt that the “burden of war” was falling entirely on their shoulders.\textsuperscript{196}

Though the Irish secured a place in the community, Oscar Handlin writes that they stayed distinct as a group. Handlin writes, “Depressed to the status of helpless proletarians by the conditions of their flight from Ireland and by the city’s constricted economic structure, driven into debilitating slums by their position as unskilled laborers, and isolated intellectually by their cultural background and physical seclusion, the Irish felt an insuperable barrier between themselves and their neighbors.”\textsuperscript{197} Though the Irish immigrants had found a home in Boston’s North End, clear distinctions existed between their neighborhoods and those of richer native Bostonians. In his examination of Boston’s evolving politics in the eighteenth and nineteenth

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\textsuperscript{194} Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 262.  
\textsuperscript{195} Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 262.  
\textsuperscript{196} Jesse, “In Search of Excitement: Understanding Boston’s Civil War Draft Riot,” 2.  
\textsuperscript{197} Oscar Handlin, \textit{Boston’s Immigrants 1790-1865: A Study in Acculturation} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1941), 221.
\end{flushright}
centuries, Geoffrey Blodgett echoes Handlin’s sentiments. Blodgett writes that Boston remained ethnically divided from the pre-Civil War wave of Irish immigration through the 1880s. These ethnic and economic divisions, paired with ideological rivalries between native Protestants and immigrant Irish Catholics, strengthened dissent upon the passage of the Enrollment Act.\textsuperscript{198}

Despite these clear factors, historians often dispute the motivations of Boston’s rioters. Ian Jesse contests Hanna’s straightforward summation of the rioters’ motivations, arguing, “The event in Boston should not be seen as a political protest but as a group of rowdy people looking for excitement.”\textsuperscript{199} Rather than connecting the motivations of the Boston rioters to the Detroit and New York Rioters, Jesse highlights the differences between the circumstances in Boston and those in other cities that experienced rioting across the North. Jesse references factors such as the lack of race-based attacks and the apparent absence of a mob leader set the riot apart in support of his argument. He also highlights the fact that youths and drunks perpetuated the riot, in search of amusement rather than political or racial justice.\textsuperscript{200} Jesse’s primary evidence is rather weak, instead highlighting missteps by previous historians of the riot. Jesse concludes that Boston’s Riot can hardly be considered a “draft riot,” focusing rather on the rowdiness and makeup of the crowd.

Regardless of Jesse’s dissent regarding motivations of the rioters, it is evident that the Civil War took a brutal toll on Boston’s North End. Massachusetts produced two entirely Irish regiments. “North Enders” populated much of the Ninth and Twenty-Eighth Massachusetts Volunteer Regiments, as well as Company E of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment. These


\textsuperscript{199} Jesse, “In Search of Excitement,” 1.

\textsuperscript{200} Jesse, “In Search of Excitement,” 12-13, 5-6.
units sustained heavy casualties in infamous confrontations such as the Peninsula Campaign, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. Many North Enders were among those killed or severely wounded in battle, taking a toll on the soldiers as well as their families back in Boston.\(^{201}\) The neighborhood’s high casualty toll only increased tensions upon the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Enrollment Act. The Emancipation Proclamation led many Northerners to oppose the war effort, viewing it as a war for the rights of blacks rather than as a war to preserve the Union. The passage of the Enrollment Act radically increased this opposition in the North End.\(^{202}\) In addition to the lives the neighborhood had already lost in the war, those who had not served or survived service were now expected to fight a war that much of the city’s Irish population no longer supported. As authorities had recently experienced in Detroit and New York City, Boston’s North End was ripe for a rebellion.

\textit{Tuesday Morning: The Riot Begins}

Unlike in New York City, Boston’s actual conscription drawings went smoothly. Massachusetts officials conducted their draft during the week prior to the riot, receiving no violent resistance from Boston or anywhere else across the state. However, delivery of draft notices did not begin until the morning of Tuesday, July 14\(^{th}\).\(^{203}\) This delayed notice to draftees is likely the cause of the city and state’s peaceful week following the drawing of names. In New York City, the names of those drafted were immediately published and distributed. In Boston this was not the case, and violent resistance was delayed accordingly. However, unfortunately for David Howe and his fellow conscription enforcement officers, violent resistance began

\(^{201}\) Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 262-263.
\(^{202}\) Thomas O’Connor, \textit{Civil War Boston: Home Front and Battlefield} (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 139.
\(^{203}\) Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 263.
immediately following the commencement of draft enforcement. Similarly to the trial of Faulkner in Detroit, Howe’s confrontation with the woman served as a catalyst for the tensions already present in the city. The woman shrieked at Howe as she attacked him, drawing the attention of neighbors and passersby. Many of these witnesses quickly joined the woman in her pursuit of Howe, congregating in the North End’s Haymarket Square. Adams writes, “…They immediately began a violent demonstration, the anger quickly fanning to a white heat, they started to vent their spite and take vengeance on the conscript-man, and taking up the chase, rapidly closing in on him.”

The apprehension and rage that took over New York City the previous day had arrived in Boston. Hanna, referring to a report written by Adjutant General William Schouler, notes that Boston Police Chief John W. Kurtz was informed of the New York City events the day before violence broke out in Boston. Hanna writes that as word of violence in the North End arrived at the State House, Chief Kurtz “…was huddled with [Mayor Lincoln] making contingency plans for just such an event.”

As these men feared, the mob quickly grew, increasing in size, intensity, and severity of violence in its actions, drawing from the anger inspired by the Enrollment Act, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the conscript-men delivering the news to the men of the North End.

During the Civil War, Boston’s police department served as an organizational midpoint between the department’s of Detroit and New York City. Detroit’s lack of an organized police force stands in strong contrast to Boston’s department. Additionally, New York City’s centralized and well-organized department also stands in contrast with Boston’s. Boston’s police department was formed in 1854, first consisting of two hundred and fifty men. Patrolmen, making up the majority of the force, were armed only with fourteen-inch nightsticks and paid $2

a day for their services. Until reform in 1878, the mayor and the city’s alderman appointed patrolmen for each of their individual districts. Jobs for favorable patrolmen were often awarded as a reward for an alderman’s altruistic partisan activity. As such, during the Civil War, the city’s small police force was in a constant state of transition. Officers, armed only with clubs, were largely new to the force. These officers also represented the recipients of political favors, rather than the most qualified job candidates.206

The inadequacy of Boston’s police department to handle a riot of the scale of New York City’s is demonstrated through Adams’s description of the riot’s early stages. According to Adams, North End residents not participating in the riot immediately turned to the city’s police officers for protection from the mob. Adams’s widowed mother, hoping the action would end shortly, sent her eight-year-old son, Adams’s brother, to the nearby District One police station for protection. Unfortunately, upon Howe’s escape, the mob turned its attention to the police officers at the scene and moved toward the District One station house. Adams writes that around eight officers were at the scene, armed only with clubs and greatly outnumbered by the mob, now consisting of between two and three hundred rioters. She describes the scene in rather graphic detail, writing, “It was a most horrible sight to see them battered and kicked by those raging men.”207 Hanna notes the testimony of a patrolman named Officer Ostrander. Ostrander, a first responder to the riot, experienced the full brunt of the mob’s fury. After being knocked down by a rioter, twelve other rioters pounced on him. Ostrander crawled home, pursued and pelted with bottles and rocks by a group of women and children.208 Officer Trask, from District

Two, was stabbed in the face, though not severely. Another officer found refuge in the Adams household. Adams writes that her mother and the other unnamed woman living with them pulled an officer into their home. The officer was severely injured, and the women had to wipe the blood from the doorstep to deter the mob and better hide the officer. They cleaned and bandaged the officer’s wounds before providing him with a disguise and sending him safely on his way. This rout, though small in scale compared to the waves of officers that were defeated by the mob in New York City, indicated the mob’s destructive potential. No arrests were made in Haymarket Square or in the confrontation outside the District One station house. If prompt action was not taken, Chief Kurtz, Mayor Lincoln, and Governor Andrew feared that Boston could experience similar chaos and destruction.

Fortunately, the swift and thorough defeat of the North End police did not go unnoticed by local and state officials. Governor Andrew and Mayor Lincoln quickly ordered more police officers to the North End. According to The Liberator, around two o’clock in the afternoon, the mob numbered around five hundred. As the mob expanded, its varied makeup persisted. Women and children continued as major contributors to the riot, attacking police officers and inciting disorder. Seeing this expansion of the mob, Governor Andrew instructed the Eleventh Battery Light Artillery and the Forty Fourth Infantry, under the command of Captain Edward Jones, to prepare for action. These calls, just hours after the confrontation between Howe and the Irish women, present a strong improvement over the responses in Detroit and New York City. Having seen the carnage wrought in these other cities, Governor Andrew and Mayor Lincoln would not underestimate the rioters. Where acting Detroit Mayor Phelps sympathized with the rioters, the

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Boston leaders immediately viewed the mob, despite its inclusion of women and children, as hostile. Nor would the Boston leaders follow the example led by New York City Police Superintendent Kennedy, approaching the rioters without a clear plan of action. Governor Andrew’s early call for troops, following his briefing from Chief Kurtz and his observation of the early stages of the riot, represents the application of lessons learned from these other riots, enacting an aggressive response shortly after the breakout of violence.

The Eleventh Massachusetts Battery Light Artillery was organized in Boston in 1862. Made up of local volunteers, the Eleventh was trained and mustered into service for nine months’ service at Readville, Massachusetts on August 25th, 1862. On November 3rd, the company departed for Washington D.C., tasked with defense of the capital. For the remainder of 1862 and spring 1863, the Eleventh shuffled from camp to camp near the capital, reporting to Camp Barry, Halls Hill, Fairfax Station, Union Mill, Centreville Heights, Upton’s Hill, and Forts Ramsey and Buffalo. The Eleventh returned to Boston in May, and was mustered out of battle front service on May 29th, 1863. During this period, the Eleventh reported no casualties. The regiment was placed under state control until its reorganization and second mustering into federal service on January 2nd, 1864.213 Similarly, the Forty Fourth Massachusetts Infantry was organized in Readville and mustered into federal service on September 21, 1862. The regiment was also sent to Washington D.C., tasked with defense of the capital and the Civil War’s Western Theatre. However, the Forty Fourth saw much heavier combat than the Eleventh. Participating in skirmishes throughout Northern Virginia throughout the winter of 1862 and spring of 1863, the soldiers of the Forty-

Fourth reported 41 casualties following their term of service. The regiment returned to Boston and was mustered out of service on June 18th, 1863.\footnote{Dyer, \textit{A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, Volume III: Regimental Histories}, 1264.}

The soldiers of the Eleventh and the Forty Fourth, upon receiving word of their call to state service, reported individually to the armory located on the corner of Cooper and North Margin Streets, around two blocks from Haymarket Square. This armory contained the only two cannon in the city, and was dangerous close to the epicenter of the rapidly growing riot.\footnote{Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 266.} Though many of the soldiers of the Eleventh had not seen combat, the soldiers of the Forty Fourth were seasoned combat veterans. Though their regiments had been mustered out of service, men rapidly donned their uniforms and returned to duty, reporting to the armory throughout the afternoon. Because the mob was still centered a few blocks away, Hanna notes that the soldiers entered the armory with no resistance.\footnote{Hanna, “The Boston Draft Riot,” 266.} Captain Jones instructed his men to take up rifles and to prepare to defend the armory and the city of Boston as a whole.

\textit{Tuesday Evening: Cabot’s Arrival and the Riot’s Conclusion}

As the soldiers of the Eleventh Battery and the Forty Fourth Infantry reported to the armory and prepared for duty under Jones, the mob continued to grow. Fortunately for authorities and bystanders, however, the rioters were largely unarmed. Unfortunately for Jones and his men, rioters meant to acquire arms as soon as possible. Adams writes, “Meantime the crowd had surged on and as they had no arms, started for the gun-stores to break into them for supplies.”\footnote{Adams, “A Remembrance of the Boston Draft Riot,” 38.} The closest of these gun repositories was the Cooper Street armory, occupied by Jones and his men. As rumors of an assault on the armory rose from the riot and reached the
soldiers and the authorities, Governor Andrew sent the official order to Fort Warren to request Major Cabot’s assistance. Governor Andrew’s secretary delivered this order, issued around six o’clock, to Colonel Justin Dimick. Cabot writes that Governor Andrew requested “all the troops the colonel could let him have.” Dimick called Cabot to duty, placing him in charge of a detachment of the First Massachusetts Battery Volunteer Heavy Artillery. 167 men from the battery’s B, C, and D Companies donned combat fatigues and were armed with rifles and twenty rounds of ammunition. Cabot and his men traveled to the city of Boston by boat, arriving a mere twenty-five minutes after receiving the order from Dimick. Cabot, in a show of pride for his detachment’s rapid response, notes that this response would have been faster had the journey not been delayed by fog.

The early record of the First Massachusetts Battery Volunteer Heavy Artillery is very similar to that of the detachments serving under Jones. Organized and mustered into service as the Fourteenth Massachusetts Infantry on July 5th, 1861, the regiment’s designation was changed to the First Heavy Artillery on January 1st, 1862. From January 1862 to 1865, the regiment was tasked with assisting in the defense of Washington D.C. Companies of the regiment travelled between Fort Warren in Massachusetts to the Military Districts of Washington D.C. and Alexandria throughout 1862 and early 1863. Unlike the Eleventh Light Artillery and the Forty Fourth Infantry, the soldiers of the First Heavy Artillery had not been mustered out of duty prior to the Boston Draft Riot. Following the riot, the First Heavy Artillery remained instrumental in defending Washington and confronting Confederate troops in Maryland and Northern Virginia. The regiment, significantly larger than the Eleventh and the Forty Fourth, endured four hundred

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eighty four casualties over the course of the war.\textsuperscript{220} Cabot and his companies, like many of the regiments responding in New York, had combat experience. Having heard of the carnage wrought in previous riots, these men prepared themselves for battle as they approached the city.

Upon arrival in the city, Cabot and his men loaded their rifles before entering ranks and marching to the State House. After consulting with Governor Andrew, Mayor Lincoln, and Chief Kurtz regarding the situation and its similarities to the New York City riot, Cabot sent a company of fifty-five men under the instruction of Captain Niebuhr to guard the armory on the corner of Union and Marshall streets, in case of a mob redirection or rapid expansion. Cabot, along with his remaining one hundred and twelve soldiers, marched through the city toward the Cooper Street Armory and the heart of the mob.\textsuperscript{221} In marching through the city, Cabot’s men travelled down popular thoroughfares and busy roads. In doing so, the disciplined regiment attempted to send an intimidating message to bystanders.\textsuperscript{222} Though rioters followed them from the State House through the city and to the armory, Cabot writes that the soldiers did not break ranks. Though these rioters hurled stones, bricks, and insults at the men, they marched on undeterred.\textsuperscript{223} Upon arrival, Adams notes that the soldiers filed into the armory and prepared for “serious work.”\textsuperscript{224}

As Cabot’s final soldiers entered the armory, the men inside closed the doors and shuttered the windows to better protect themselves from hurled projectiles. The rioters did not respond well to this action, turning their full attention to the armory and tossing paving bricks and stones at its walls. Many women held infants above their heads, daring soldiers to shoot at

\textsuperscript{220} Dyer, \textit{A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, Volume III: Regimental Histories}, 1240-1241.
\textsuperscript{221} Cabot, \textit{Report of the “Draft Riot” in Boston, July 14\textsuperscript{th} 1863}, 2.
\textsuperscript{222} “Mobocratic Resistance to the Riot,” \textit{The Liberator}, July 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1863.
\textsuperscript{223} Cabot, \textit{Report of the “Draft Riot” in Boston, July 14\textsuperscript{th} 1863}, 2.
them. Inside the armory, Jones briefed Cabot on the situation. The conversation between Jones and Cabot offers a rather frank illustration of the Union’s transition from a hesitant response to swift and harsh tactics. Jones, who was present at the scene throughout the afternoon, recommended the soldiers fire only blanks into the crowd in order to ensure the safety of the women and children present. Cabot, focusing rather on the possible ramifications of an escalated riot, ignored Jones and ordered his men to load the armory’s two six pound cannon with canister. One cannon was aimed out of each of the armory’s two doors. Jones resisted this command, insisting upon the application of more passive tactics such as those employed in Detroit and the early stages of New York City. Upon this resistance, however, Cabot threatened to relieve Jones and his men of duty. Cabot writes, “…he could obey my orders or I would place my own officers and men in charge of the guns. At this he had the guns loaded, and did his duty like a man.”

Just as Governor Andrew and Mayor Lincoln had placed an early call to troops, Cabot declined to employ a cautious response. Rather, he aimed a loaded six-pound cannon at a crowd including multiple women holding infants above their heads.

As the sun went down, the crowd grew. Around Seven Thirty PM, a police department detective arrived at the armory and reported that Lieutenant Sawin, a slow reacting member of the Eleventh, had been captured by the mob in his attempt to report to the armory. Cabot sent Lieutenant White and twenty men from the First’s C Company to the corner of Cooper and Blackstone Streets, where Sawin was being held and beaten. These men moved in formation, using fixed bayonets to secure a path through the crowd. Though bayonets did stop the rioters from attacking the soldiers from up close, they hurled stones at them from afar. Cabot sent another group of around twenty men under the command of Captain Livermore to follow and

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defend White’s group. Sawin was secured and carried to the armory, but both soldiers and rioters in the process fired shots. Cabot writes, “Quite a good many gun and pistol shots were fired by the mob. This firing over the heads of the mob encouraged them to suppose we were using blank cartridges, and rendered them more bold and aggressive.”227 Interestingly enough, Adams’s testimony reflects this confusion. Adams writes, “To repel the attack the troops fired blank cartridges into the crowd but they had no effect, and, in fact, added fuel to the flame.”228 The fact that the soldiers were actually firing live cartridges aside, hearing these gunshots infuriated the mob. Seeing nobody fall victim to the shots injected the rioters with both anger and courage, and they soon began a full-fledged assault on the armory.

As the door closed behind the last returning members of the White-Livermore rescue team, Cabot writes, “…The attack began in earnest.”229 Stones became large pieces of slag and fists became axes and hammers against the front wall of the armory. Each cannon was placed around fifteen feet from the door, with twenty men posted on each side to protect the men operating the guns. As rioters began to breach the door, first breaking through its upper panels with axes and projectiles, Cabot ordered the cannon primed. Rather than fleeing out the back door as so many groups had done upon becoming overwhelmed in previous riots, Cabot stuck by his command. When the soldier tasked with priming the cannon was driven to the ground by a flurry of stones, Cabot commanded him to return to his feet and prime the gun.230 As soon as the cannon was properly primed, Cabot gave the order to fire. Canister was blasted into the crowd, “killing several and wounding several more.”231 As was the case in previous riots, casualty were

difficult to estimate due to the swift removal of the dead and wounded by friends and relatives. Hanna writes that estimates are usually around twenty, though he had only been able to confirm eight. William Currier, the seventy-two year old father of a Boston patrolman who was looking for shelter at the moment of the assault, was one of the eight. Three of the other seven were boys under fourteen years of age. Another of the victims was a girl of the same age.\(^{232}\) Cabot, however, justifies his rather controversial command, writing, “Upon going into the street, nothing was to be seen of the mob, except those who had paid the penalty for lawlessness.”\(^{233}\) The rioters had scattered, and the city avoided what could quickly have become a major conflict. Mayor Lincoln soon arrived at the scene on horseback, leading Major Charles Wilder, two companies of infantry, and a battalion of dragoons. Mayor Lincoln audibly instructed the soldiers to prime their weapons, and cleared the area of stragglers.\(^{234}\) These soldiers patrolled the streets for the remainder of the night, but the city remained quiet.

**Conclusion**

The tactics employed by the leaders and soldiers in Boston clearly demonstrate that authorities valued the preservation of order over the preservation of the lives of civilians. Governor Andrew sent his personal secretary to request the assistance of experienced soldiers only hours after Howe was chased out of the house. These soldiers arrived in uniform and with weapons loaded, prepared to take the necessary action to avoid a reprise of the turmoil in New York City. After marching through the city’s busiest areas in strict ranks, they took up defensive


positions around the city’s largest available weapons. When the time came to fire or retreat, Cabot ordered his men to fire into the crowd.

Cabot’s decision to fire the cannon presents the completion of the northern transition to Hard War on the home front. Though many civilians were killed, order was quickly restored to the city’s North End. Boston’s success in putting down its riot was as unprecedented as it was controversial. Never before had women and children been blasted by a cannon at point blank range. Responding soldiers regarded those attempting to disrupt order and violently oppose the war effort, regardless of sex or age, as enemy combatants. The devastation wrought in the New York Draft Riots taught northern cities and states a lesson. Boston represents the successful application of this lesson, demonstrating the measures necessary to extinguish fires on the home front and ensure the Union’s ability to support its troops on the battlefront.
On Thursday, July 16th, a New York City resident named John Gibbons opened a letter from an unnamed friend from Boston. Gibbons, whose family’s house was sacked in the riot, was reportedly beginning to feel the emotional shock of his family’s loss. His friend offered encouragement, writing that the country had “learned to deal with mobs… In this matter, I cannot help thinking that our example will have precedence. In mercy to the rabble, bullets and canister first, blank cartridges afterwards.” In many ways, this statement characterizes the shift in tactics from the Detroit Race Riot to the Boston Draft Riot. Though it is unclear whether Cabot’s merciless response to the Boston riot was ever adopted as a formal federal policy, local and state governments were made aware of his success. Peace Democrats and other would-be rioters likely thought twice about rising up, fearing swift and lethal punishment.

The response to the riots did indeed create precedence. Following the conclusion of the New York City and Boston Draft Riots, the Union home front largely remained at peace. With Detroit’s riot essentially in the past, troops remained present until order could be ensured. A newly christened professional police force began patrolling the streets in 1865. The federal government continued sending troops to New York City until twenty thousand soldiers were present to ensure the successful reimplementation of the draft on August 19th, 1863. These men successfully preserved order in the city, ensuring that the city would see not see chaos for the remainder of the war. In Boston, infantry and cavalrmen patrolled the streets overnight and throughout the week following the draft riot. Though rumors arose of “secret organizations” that

235 Schecter, The Devil’s Own Work, 231-232.
237 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 610-611.
had plans to rise on Wednesday, the city’s North End remained quiet for the remainder of the week. Each of these forces ensured peace in their own designated cities, and set examples for other cities across the North.

In shifting from cautious response tactics to “bullets and canister first, blank cartridges afterwards,” local, state, and federal authorities across the North embraced Hard War as a means of handling and discouraging future riots. As was the case in the South, it must be noted that the northern shift resulted from the actions of both ground level officers and soldiers and upper level decision makers. Authorities at each of these levels ensured the continuity of not only peace on the home front, but also in the reinstatement of the draft. In each of the affected cities, drafts were reinstated. Soldiers stationed in cities across the north ensured that the Union army was able to fill its ranks with volunteers and conscripts. Peace Democrats and other groups were restricted to vocal protest rather than violent, and each district provided sufficient troops and enabled the Union’s army to continue the fight.

Further examination of Union home front unrest will likely reveal much regarding the cultural implications of the riots and their subsequent police and military responses. Assessment of the tactics employed by responding police and military groups reveals much about the Union’s local, state, and federal responses to riots and attitudes towards rioters. However, further investigation of the economic, ethnic, and racial motivations of the rioters in each of these cities will reveal crucial insight regarding the role of class and race on the Union home front and in the 1863 draft riots. Examination of these factors would also reveal the possible role of class, ethnicity, and race in the response to each riot. This investigation would compliment this thesis,

239 McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, 611.
affirming the importance of the riots within the context of the Civil War as well as within the social and cultural contexts of 19th Century American History.

Effective enforcement of the Enrollment Act greatly assisted the Union in achieving victory over the Confederacy and restoring the United States. With ranks bolstered by conscripts, Union generals and their subordinates led the Union’s armies south. With Lee’s northern push effectively quashed and the violent uprisings on the home front crushed, Union forces marched south, engaging the Confederate armies in numerous battles until April 1865. Contextualization of the results of aggressive riot response tactics in the North within the Civil War as a whole reveals the implications of these actions. Had the antiwar movement seen further success in promoting dissent on the northern home front, it is entirely plausible that the Confederacy could have survived and fought on. However, decisive action by police and military groups ensured the termination of violent resistance to the draft and the war effort. The Union’s ranks were filled, and the Confederacy was defeated.
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