



Draft Riots in New York, July, 1863: The Metropolitan Police, Their Services during Riot Week, Their Honorable Record (Civil War)

David Barnes

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Excerpt from The Draft Riots in New York, July, 1863: The Metropolitan Police; Their Services During Riot Week; Their Honorable Record

The following compilation is a record of facts relating to the operations of the Police during the memorable "Riot Week," embracing an account of the riots, and scenes and incidents connected therewith. The articles were prepared for the New York Times, and are reprinted nearly as therein appearing.

The riots commenced on Monday morning, July 13, and were not entirely suppressed until the following Friday. The only protection the city had, on the outbreak, was the Metropolitan Police, - all the regularly organized militia regiments being off in the service of the Government.

The riot which commenced on the first day of the Draft was ostensibly in opposition to it, but early took the character of an outbreak for the purposes of pillage, and also of outrage upon the colored population. For the first three days business in the city was almost entirely suspended, the railroads and omnibuses ceased running, the stores on Broadway, the avenues, and throughout the greater portion of the city were closed, and prowling gangs of ruffians rendered it unsafe to walk the streets.

The services of the Metropolitan Police, officers and men, during Riot Week, won for them the admiration and confidence of the community. Never did men meet an emergency so fearful with more promptness, unanimity, and courage, and never was hazardous and prolonged duty discharged with more willingness and fidelity. There was no flinching or faltering in any quarter, and to their courageous and unaided efforts on Monday and Tuesday can be attributed the safety of the more valuable portions of the city.

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