

“AN UPRISING OF THE PEOPLE”:
MILITARY RECRUITMENT IN NEW YORK STATE DURING THE CIVIL WAR

By

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William D. Hickox

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Chair: Sheyda Jahanbani

Co-Chair: Jennifer L. Weber

Theodore A. Wilson

Peter H. Welsh

Laura L. Mielke

Date Defended: 1 September 2017

The dissertation committee for William D. Hickox certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

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Chair: Sheyda Jahanbani

Co-Chair: Jennifer L. Weber

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the experiences of New Yorkers during the American Civil War as they participated in mobilization while striving to preserve their own autonomy and that of their state and communities. At the war's beginning in 1861, New York State was preeminent for having the largest population and strongest economy of the United States, and Governor Edwin D. Morgan had an influential role in the Republican Party. The federal government assigned manpower quotas and other directives but relied on—and often deferred to—state governments and their citizens in military recruitment. In a society of small government infrastructure, Morgan and other leaders depended on the support of ordinary citizens, their communities, and associational culture to raise manpower. New Yorkers saw the war effort as voluntary—even after the advent of conscription in late 1862—and tried to mitigate the conflict's drastic social and economic effects by securing enough volunteers to avoid drafting, opening the military's ranks to nearly anyone willing to serve, and debating the terms of their obligations to the cause. The second half of the war saw widespread recruitment fraud and conflicts over quotas as New Yorkers sought to preserve traditions of voluntarism and personal choice.

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INTRODUCTION

Six weeks after the outbreak of the American Civil War, John J. Peck—an Onondaga County, New York, native destined for high rank in the Union Army—passionately defended his state’s right to appoint generals to command its own troops. The issue had become a sticking point for New Yorkers as they wrestled commitment to the national cause with their own local and state interests. Peck’s argument rested on the sacrifices New Yorkers had made and would continue making for the Union. “Now we are told that the Empire State is to have but one general,” Peck complained to the superintendent of the state’s Banking Department. “New York is to bear the brunt of this mighty conflict of arms,” he continued. “Her trade and commerce will be paralyzed, and her citizens made bankrupt. She will keep up national credit by taking the government loans. Already more than 25,000 of her best sons are in the field,” and three million dollars of state funds pledged for their needs. Residents of Onondaga, he continued, urged Governor Edwin D. Morgan to fight for their state’s sovereignty in the matter of the generals. New York deserved nothing less, given its current and future commitment. “When further calls are made,” Peck maintained, “she will respond with the same alacrity, and the same spirit of patriotism, already evinced by her people.”¹

New Yorkers would indeed answer every call made upon them for troops, money, and other vital resources. But Peck’s state pride and the war’s massive scale led him into some faulty predictions. The war’s financial costs would indeed skyrocket, but most New Yorkers would not be bankrupted. Furthermore, they were not destined to feel the “brunt” of the war’s effects despite the sacrifices of many individuals. A good many of them, in fact, would experience

¹ John J. Peck to H. H. Van Dyck, May 27, 1861, box 10, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library (hereafter EDM Papers, NYSL).

America's deadliest conflict as only a distraction from local and personal concerns.² But Peck's letter to an important financial official demonstrates how the war for the Union provoked smaller conflicts of autonomy between Lincoln's administration and the states. Stemming from localism and small federal infrastructure, squabbles over states' rights hindered mobilization at a time when the Union desperately relied on support from the loyal states. That state-level assistance itself grew out of patriotic efforts by communities and individuals across New York and the North. Peck's words summarized New Yorkers' belief that their monumental efforts on behalf of the Union earned them more respect and consideration from federal authorities—this, in fact, was one of few notions having virtually total support among residents of the deeply divided Empire State. Peck's prediction of enormous economic hardship and additional calls for men also echoed a common refrain: The conflict engulfing America would likely be sustained and dreadful, requiring near-total commitment from Union loyalists. This idealistic concept of common sacrifice, never universally popular, would fade as the war ground on. By its third year, many New Yorkers looked to their leaders and communities to *save* them from having to sacrifice for the cause. The question of state authority in appointing generals that so captivated Peck was short-lived—the War Department soon cemented its right to select generals for federal forces—but the larger issues of state mobilization he connected to it did not. From first to last, recruitment of manpower formed a particularly inescapable and defining aspect of the war years.

Arguments

This dissertation looks at military recruitment—how legislators and officers planned it, how it happened at town rallies and provost marshal offices, and how it guided northern efforts

² Thomas Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent: Agrarianism in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 4; J. Matthew Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 128.

to win the war—through the prism of the Union’s richest, most populous state. Recruitment is considered here as the most vital component in wartime mobilization. During the Civil War era, “mobilization” almost always referred to preparing and moving forces on campaign.³ I use the term in its most common current definition as a nation’s process of gathering resources, especially troops, for war. I examine recruitment in New York State to argue that northerners saw the war effort as a voluntary endeavor from beginning to end. Raising manpower depended on the support of citizens and state leaders who jealously guarded their rights of democracy and choice; greater federal direction during the war reflected this reality. To a large extent, mobilization rested on popular support and non-governmental associations.

My dissertation employs New Yorkers’ war experiences as a means and an end, presenting both a case study and a specific history of the state’s mobilization during the war years. In the early 1980’s, Jerome Mushkat studied Democratic Party membership in New York during the era to draw conclusions “beyond its borders” about the national party’s attempt at a comeback.⁴ Examining struggles to raise troops in New York similarly helps us come to grips with the procedures and significance of mobilization in the entire North. Recruitment is one of the first and most vital components in a nation’s preparation and conduct in a long, large-scale conflict like the Civil War. Wartime recruitment opens windows onto a government and public’s war aims, expectations, levels of support for the conflict in the face of setbacks, and how the nation succeeds or fails in its efforts for victory.

³ Based on textual searches in the compiled orders and reports of commanders during the war, digitized by Cornell University Library staff. Cornell University Library, *Making of America*, <http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/m/moawar/index.html> (accessed November 18, 2016).

⁴ Jerome Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981), 9.

The Civil War occurred in a worldwide era when nationalism was overtaking older, localized forms of political allegiance. Benedict Anderson argued that nationalism emerged in the Industrial Revolution as mass media and other unifying forces prompted people to form “imagined communities.”⁵ While Anderson did not discuss the United States in any depth in his most important work, nationalist language from newspaper editors and speechmakers during the Civil War supports an interpretation of the Union and Confederacy—and each of their states—as imagined communities in which citizens did not all know each other but felt bonded by language, government, and the printed word. A theme running throughout Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* is the question of how nationalism convinced people to sacrifice themselves in large-scale people’s conflicts such as the American Civil War; his work provides no definitive answers. Historians of the mid-nineteenth-century United States and the Civil War bring us closer to understanding why two sections of the United States went to war and how they sustained themselves in the fight.⁶ Those who sought greater public loyalty and commitment to national efforts contended with localism—Americans’ tendency to privilege their local communities over the nation—yet also relied on it. By the mid-nineteenth century, Americans most often tackled public and national movements through small communities and voluntary associations. This community and associational culture encouraged participation in politics and devotion to American democracy while taking the place of weak national authority.⁷ Melinda Lawson has shown that northern political and community leaders relied partly on localism to

⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006)

⁶ For an examination of scholarship on American nationalism placing it in the context of Anderson’s work, see Jennifer Rose Mercieca, “Choice, Loyalty, and Safety in the Construction of a Distinctly American Imagined Nationalism,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9 (2006): 279-302.

⁷ Brian Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 219-264; Phillip Shaw Paludan, “A People’s Contest”: *The Union and Civil War, 1861-1865*, 2nd ed. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 10, 14.

“forge a new American nationalism” and encourage their people onward to victory.⁸ These efforts to preserve the Union belonged to a longer process of constructing an American sense of nationhood.⁹

In the context of the great struggle that gripped America in the 1860’s, narrowing one’s focus to a particular state—and through the state to its smaller communities—brings these matters into clearer view. As many scholars have shown, the majority of New Yorkers and other Americans were devout republicans who treasured individual liberty and expected government to preserve it even in times of national crisis.¹⁰ Thanks to republicanism, states and their governments often loomed just as large or larger than national authority in both the Union and Confederacy. Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, and their war departments appealed directly to governors and state populations repeatedly over the course of the war for manpower and political support. States’ rights, a concept most often associated with the South, proved a potent force in the North’s war.¹¹ John J. Peck demonstrated how state and community pride jockeyed with devotion to country in the minds of Americans and enhanced it. Citizens believed their efforts on behalf of the national cause brought honor upon their states and smaller communities, and they expected national authorities to recognize and reward these contributions.

⁸ Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

⁹ See John M. Murrin, “A Roof Without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity,” in *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, ed. Stephen Botein, Richard R. Beeman, and Edward Carlos Carter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 333-348.

¹⁰ Discussions of scholarship on American republicanism are found in Robert E. Shalhope, “Toward a Republican Synthesis: The Emergence of an Understanding of Republicanism in American Historiography,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 29 (1972): 49-80; Daniel T. Rodgers, “Republicanism: The Career of a Concept,” *Journal of American History* 79 (1992): 11-38. For the endurance of republicanism in the Civil War era, see Donald K. Pickens, “The Republican Synthesis and Thaddeus Stevens,” *Civil War History* 31 (1985): 57-73; Andrew F. Lang, “Republicanism, Race, and Reconstruction: The Ethos of Military Occupation in Civil War America,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4 (2014): 559-589; Ricardo A. Herrera, *For Liberty and the Republic: The American Citizen as Soldier, 1775-1861* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2015).

¹¹ Michael E. Woods points to the importance of states’ rights in prewar northern resistance to southern proslavery aggression in “‘Tell Us Something about State Rights’: Northern Republicans, States’ Rights, and the Coming of the Civil War,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 7 (2017): 242-268.

Soldiers were “devoted state loyalists even as they formed and fought in the largest national army of the century,” Phillip Shaw Paludan noted.¹² That national army was composed largely of regiments formed by individual states, and these regiments were made up of companies often recruited in individual towns and villages. As I will argue, traditions of localism and states’ rights hampered the Union war effort while also providing vital support. New York, with its diverse population, varied regions, and strong agrarian, industrial, and transportation economies, reflected the northern states as a whole and provides fertile ground for examining northern mobilization.

New York’s role in the Civil War is also worthy of examination in its own right. As its nickname indicates, for most of the nineteenth century and long into the twentieth New York enjoyed an imperial reputation as the wealthiest and most populous of the United States. During the Civil War, New York drew on these assets to provide more troops, money, arms, and other resources to the Union cause than any other state. Federal officials from President Lincoln down sought guidance from New York’s leaders and people in mobilization. New Yorkers’ impressive display of patriotism and martial fervor at the war’s outbreak inspired all Union loyalists; later, the success of the federal draft in 1863 depended on how it proceeded in New York City. The Draft Riots of that year starkly illustrated the depth and bitterness of political, social, and ethnic divisions in that huge, diverse city, divisions that caused nationwide concern throughout the war. After Horatio Seymour—an outspoken critic of Lincoln’s administration—had become governor earlier in 1863, Lincoln reached out to him. The president noted that having the cooperation of the Union’s “greatest state” was essential to the national war effort, and Lincoln hoped the two

¹² Paludan, “*A People’s Contest*,” 19.

men could avoid “difference of purpose.”¹³ Lincoln’s careful handling of Seymour and his Democratic constituents in New York was something like his relationship with the Border States. Lincoln believed “to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game.”¹⁴ Unlike the Border States, there was no chance of New York seceding from the Union (much less joining the Confederacy) despite the conservative antiwar faction among its populace. But Lincoln knew the Union would have faced extreme difficulties in waging war without the political, popular, and materiel support most New Yorkers provided.

Recruitment of troops in the democratic, decentralized, yet nationalistic United States determined the course of the war to a degree most historians have not appreciated. In an influential 1989 article, Maris A. Vinovskis issued a wake-up call to social historians to examine how the Civil War transformed American life.¹⁵ In examining recruitment, scholars tend to concentrate on the federal draft that debuted in 1863, since this marked a turning point of centralized power in wartime and proved a lightning rod for Lincoln’s domestic enemies. Federal conscription, however, was one component of an overall effort to retain public support for volunteering. Historian Russell L. Johnson points out that scholarly “focus on conscription . . . oversimplifies the complicated process of manpower mobilization for the Union Army.”¹⁶ As I will show, government at all levels relied on community groups to meet their manpower needs, and this was a major aspect of the cruciality of states and localities during the war. Northerners connected recruitment at home with the battlefield, recognizing that progress in campaigning

¹³ Lincoln to Seymour, March 23, 1863, in Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953-1955), 6: 145-146.

¹⁴ Quoted in William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States: Preserving the Union* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011), 101.

¹⁵ Maris A. Vinovskis, “Have Social Historians Lost the Civil War? Some Preliminary Demographic Speculations,” *Journal of American History* 76 (1989): 34-58.

¹⁶ Russell L. Johnson, “Volunteer While You May: Manpower Mobilization in Dubuque, Iowa,” in *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments*, ed. Paul A. Cimballa and Randall M. Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 32.

depended on progress in troop raising. Greater federal oversight as the war ground on did not improve efficiency in mobilization, or at least recruitment, and states and smaller communities continued to guide efforts right up to the end in the spring of 1865.

Issues of class and ethnicity, meanwhile, factored greatly in the work of mobilization. Questions of whether recruitment and the draft made it “a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight”—a cliché that summarized class controversies in military service and continues to inform scholarship—and what form African Americans’ participation and their rewards should take, decisively influenced the northern war effort and postwar America. The evolution of the North’s war from a struggle to save the Union to one focusing on both the Union and emancipation was seen in, and partly guided by, mobilization. Many blacks and their white allies believed enlistment and service to the Union cemented black claims to civil rights. Rochester abolitionist and recruiter Frederick Douglass may have said it best: “Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder, and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on the earth or under the earth that can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship.”¹⁷ But black service and citizenship faced bitter opposition from millions of conservative whites in New York and elsewhere. While a host of scholars have documented the North’s transition from a limited war for the Union into a “second American revolution,” the words and deeds of the Empire State’s white citizens reveal that preserving the republic remained their dominant war aim. In their eyes, African American emancipation and recruitment were mainly attractive as war-winning measures rather than moral imperatives.¹⁸

¹⁷ Frederick Douglass, “Speech of Mr. Frederick Douglass,” in *Addresses of the Hon. W. D. Kelley, Miss Anna E. Dickinson, and Mr. Frederick Douglass, at a Mass Meeting, Held at National Hall, Philadelphia, July 6, 1863, for the Promotion of Colored Enlistments* (Philadelphia: n. p., 1863).

¹⁸ For the neo-abolitionist school emphasizing black freedom as a northern wartime principle, see for instance Kenneth M. Stampp, *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950); James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964); McPherson, *Abraham Lincoln and the*

The conflict saw Americans of all backgrounds make choices about whether and how to engage in the struggle; recruitment, with its appeals to both patriotic duty and self-interest, reflected this. Families and individuals constantly addressed the question of whether they owed service to the Union, while villages, towns, and cities faced the task of contributing sufficient men to preserve local honor and meet quotas. Together, these dilemmas brought the war home to northerners. The struggle to provide manpower and avoid draft-related turmoil became a cause rivaling the Union and emancipation in its importance to communities across the United States. “The greatest concern [of the entire war] was caused by the draft,” a German immigrant in New York City reflected at its end.¹⁹ Furthermore, policy failures in mobilization seriously hampered the war effort. Years afterward, no less an authority than General William T. Sherman identified recruitment and promotion practices as the worst mistakes the Union made during the war.²⁰ These facts underscore the vitality of recruitment in the North’s war, its outcome, and impact on citizens. While the Union Army and Navy fought a war to the south, northern citizens waged a conflict to secure sufficient manpower while preserving their autonomy. This dissertation examines that domestic conflict in New York.

Historiography

My research draws on, and reckons with, much scholarship on northern mobilization during the war. While relatively few historians have tackled Civil War recruitment directly,

Second American Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Random House, 2007). My findings fall closer to those of Gary W. Gallagher in *The Union War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011). On the importance of the Union to northerners, see also Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners and Their War for the Union* (New York: New York University Press, 1988).

¹⁹ Karl Wesslau to “Dear parents,” June 13, 1865, in Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Johannes Helbich, eds., *Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home*, transl. Susan Carter Vogel (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 71.

²⁰ William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, 2nd ed. (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1891), 2: 387.

together they present a large body of work touching on the roles of individuals and communities, their motivations, government growth, conscription, social change, and other topics relating to mobilization. The handful of works dealing with nationwide recruitment concentrate on the draft; supplementing these are many more military, state, community, and social histories incorporating manpower mobilization and its effects. If any general impressions can be taken from such disparate works, they might include the fact that scholarship on the entire war or the Union side of it tend to portray a federal government struggling to regulate state efforts, a process said to be well underway by the war's end and necessary to Union success.

A range of works have debated the extent of federal authority before the Civil War, or what Richard Franklin Bensele calls "the self-effacing antebellum state," and how Washington came to exert centralized control by the late nineteenth century.²¹ Bensele actually dates the origin of robust central power to the immediate prewar era, arguing that the Republican Party swept the 1860 elections by pledging to strengthen the national government into an entity capable of defeating southern secessionism. It is certainly clear that secession was facilitated by the impotence of the national government.²² But Brian Balogh and William J. Novak, among others, have argued that Washington exerted more power than traditionally believed, thanks in part (and perhaps paradoxically) to reliance on local groups. The "General Government," Balogh argues, asserted power on the periphery of the national scene through patronage, foreign affairs, and the Postal Service. Furthermore, by supporting capitalism and laissez-faire (the same governing philosophy seen at the state level in New York), federal authorities "laid the legal groundwork

²¹ Howard G. Brown describes an earlier model for centralization in wartime in *War, Revolution, and the Bureaucratic State* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). On federal growth in the post-Civil War United States, see Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

²² Richard Franklin Bensele, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 17 (quote), 68-69, 85.

for a world inhabited by groups and associations ... a world in which individuals increasingly exercised their political and economic preferences through groups.”²³ These groups undertook much of the work in mobilization when the Civil War began. In four classic volumes on *The War for the Union*, Allan Nevins described the process by which northerners transformed their unsuccessful “improvised war” of 1861 into the triumphant “organized war” of 1865.²⁴ One area in which national power undoubtedly gained sway was supply contracting. As Mark R. Wilson shows in *The Business of Civil War*, state governments tried to assert control over military contracting and purchasing, but the Department of War assumed much authority over the course of the conflict.²⁵ Historians like Fred A. Shannon, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and James M. McPherson have argued that predominantly decentralized government—adherence to states’ rights—weakened the Union’s war effort.²⁶ These scholars believe the Confederacy, with its earlier, more draconian conscription and long service terms for soldiers, among other policies, enjoyed an advantage in mobilization that partially compensated for its inferior resources. “These methods,” Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones assert, “made the Confederate war effort better mobilized and more effectually directed than that of the Union where civil and states-rights traditions more constantly impeded dedication to the Union.” Hattaway and Jones follow Fred A. Shannon in decrying the supposed poor job of the individual northern states in recruitment.²⁷

²³ Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight*, 11-13, 15 (quote); William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *Journal of American History* 113 (2008): 752-772.

²⁴ Allan Nevins, *The War for the Union*, 4 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1959-1971).

²⁵ Mark R. Wilson, *The Business of Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861-1865* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

²⁶ Fred A. Shannon, *The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1865*, 2 vols. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1928); Shannon, “States Rights and the Union Army,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 12 (1925): 51-71; Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 204.

²⁷ Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 273, 699-700 (quote), 721.

Some studies have cited the Enrollment Act of 1863—the basis for federal conscription—as a major departure in American mobilization that ceded power from states and localities to national authorities.²⁸ The federal draft is often seen as a particularly obvious example of how the Civil War brought about such centralization. Scholarship on northern mobilization under the Enrollment Act has centered on whether it worked, whether it made Union efforts “a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight,” and the degree to which it represented a shift to federal over state power. Historians of the draft writing since the Centennial years have generally agreed that despite its grotesque inefficiencies and opportunities for corruption, the draft succeeded by raising a decisive force of over one million troops, almost entirely volunteers.²⁹ While some have cast the draft controversy as a states’ rights issue, Rachel Sheldon used New York politics as a case study to demonstrate that conscription in 1863 was not a straightforward story of federal authority taking control over war making from the states and thus paving the way toward the modern, centralized nation. Rather, the Enrollment Act grew out of “vertical political relationships” between members of the national, state, and local governments. Lincoln’s administration assumed greater war powers, most notably national conscription, thanks in large part to a long campaign by influential figures at the state level and lower who believed that

²⁸ See for instance Alan R. Millett, Peter Maslowski, and William B. Feis, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 2012), 187.

²⁹ For studies of the federal draft making these arguments, see Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*; Murdock, *One Million Men*; Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*; Geary, *We Need Men*; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*; Russell F. Weigley, *A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History, 1861-1865* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Edward K. Spann, *Gotham at War: New York City, 1860-1865* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002); Tyler Anbinder, “Which Poor Man’s Fight? Immigrants and the Federal Conscription of 1863,” *Civil War History* 52 (2006): 344-372. Weigley, however, has a less favorable view of some of the Enrollment Act’s provisions than some of these other writers. “In 1863,” he asserts, “substitution and commutation were not only invidious; they made no military sense whatever.” Weigley, *A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History, 1861-1865*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 235.

victory depended on raising large armies. These men leveraged Washington officials into enacting a draft law.³⁰

This dissertation demonstrates that federal regulation was often intended to preserve state and local roles in mobilization, while greater central oversight did not improve efforts as the war went on. Meanwhile, individual choices and community endeavors guided recruitment throughout the conflict, for better and for worse. My scholarship draws on and supplements an important work of cultural history by J. Matthew Gallman, a leading authority on the northern home front. In *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, he describes how “the Union depended on the same sort of market forces that had driven growth and expansion in the antebellum years. Military and economic policies depended on northern citizens weighing options and making choices.”³¹ Federal and state authorities initially had no will or means to call out every available man. Furthermore, the United States, unlike the Confederacy, was not at great risk of attack, and opposition to the war was considerable. For all these reasons, mobilization had to be a matter of individual and communal choice until the war’s second summer (with the passing of the Militia Act) and remained so to a large degree until the end. The Enrollment Act, among other federal initiatives, placed much of the responsibility of troop-raising in state and community hands and retained the voluntary principle to a large degree.

Individuals, of course, based their choices on self-interest. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville described a uniquely American concept of self-interest. According to Tocqueville, self-interest was an eminently pragmatic virtue. By working for their own good, citizens improved society while undergoing a minimal amount of personal inconvenience.

³⁰ Rachel Shelden, “Measures for a ‘Speedy Conclusion’: A Reexamination of Conscription and Civil War Federalism,” *Civil War History* 55 (2009): 469-498 (quote p. 473).

³¹ Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 251.

Americans, he explained, “obligingly demonstrate how enlightened love of themselves regularly leads them to help one another out and makes them ready and willing to sacrifice a portion of their time and wealth for the good of the state.” Americans prided themselves on their ability to intertwine patriotism with self-interest. Tocqueville asserted that citizens of all classes subscribed to this unique virtue and had made it universal: “It lies at the root of all action. It crops up in everything Americans say.”³² Choice and self-interest figured greatly in Civil War mobilization. The tradition of compulsory militia service had faded away by 1861 (one reason why its projected reappearance in the Militia Act of the next year made that law momentous), and Americans were free to decide whether and how to serve. Militia tours of duty were short and volunteer terms based on a set length of time (usually varying from nine months to three years) rather than the war’s duration. New York soldiers staged numerous mutinies in the first half of the war when federal officials reneged on what the men saw as their contracted terms of service. Volunteers could choose their regiment and branch of the military, and so could draftees from 1864 on.

These decisions held great importance, and many men chose to remain civilians if their preferred rank or branch of service was unavailable. Few historians have appreciated how much care most enlistees placed in choosing their units. As Russell L. Johnson argues, potential recruits conceptually divided the branches of the service into different jobs to be weighed against each other, in addition to the better-known motivation to join a company with one’s relatives and friends.³³ In 1863, recruiters across New York began an impromptu media campaign promising potential soldiers safe and comfortable duty in specific branches and regiments—promises that

³² Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Library of America, 2004), 610-13.

³³ Johnson, *Warriors into Workers*, 147-49, 159, 162-63.

led to turmoil when they crumbled in the face of military necessity. My research also reveals that soldiers overwhelmingly supported mass mobilization, calling for a more comprehensive draft and for northern men to join them at the front. But many of these same soldiers urged their friends and relatives to reject such calls and remain civilians. In February 1865, a Rochester newspaper printed a letter from George Breck, an artillery officer who had seen much combat. “Come, good, loyal friends of Rochester,” Breck exhorted his readers, “come, fill up the ranks, step to the music of the Union, and don’t delay for the draft ...” One week later, however, Breck wrote his wife after learning a loved one might be drafted, vowing to purchase a substitute for him or resign and reenlist as a substitute himself, adding “I am in earnest. Frank shan’t come to the war if I can help it.”³⁴

New York’s small African American communities likewise grounded their wartime experiences in personal choice and reciprocity. Many expressed no interest in fighting a war to restore a Union that sanctioned slavery and otherwise denied them civil rights. When black regiments were finally authorized in the northern states, recruitment went poorly in New York until federal officers and well-connected civilian associations injected more system into it. James Kettner has shown that the American model of citizenship, which was still developing in the mid-nineteenth century, grew out of beliefs that the “tie between the individual and community was contractual and volitional, not natural and perpetual.”³⁵ Americans, especially in the democratic, free-market North, pridefully guarded their right to choose how they would

³⁴ “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatLCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016) (first quote); Breck to “My dear Ellen,” February 19, 1865, in Breck, “George Breck’s Civil War Letters from the ‘Reynolds Battery,’” in Blake McKelvey, ed., *The Rochester Historical Society Publications*, vol. 22: *Rochester in the Civil War* (Rochester: Rochester Historical Society, 1944), 149 (second quote).

³⁵ James Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608-1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 10.

participate in society and expected fair treatment from government and society in exchange for participating. Public responses to mobilization reflected this American concept of citizenship.

Fred A. Shannon pointed to community attempts to avoid the draft as bringing a “mercenary factor” into the army’s organization from 1863 on.³⁶ There is much evidence supporting Shannon’s contention, which was widely held by Americans who lived through the Civil War. They often assumed that sharp distinctions existed in motivation and reliability between men who enlisted in the war’s first two years and those who signed on in 1863 and afterward, and historians have commonly reinforced these distinctions. The men of 1861 and 1862 were mainly guided by patriotism and a spirit of adventure, the story goes, while those who came after the advent of national conscription were often little better than cowardly mercenaries. It is commonly believed that from first to last, the conflict rested on the shoulders of early-war volunteers rather than the motley masses of later conscripts and volunteers attracted by high bounties.³⁷

These stereotypes are grounded in some truth but obscure the complications of recruitment and motivation, which usually intertwined patriotism with a range of prosaic motives. The story of military recruitment in the Civil War is one of patriotism and financial security intertwined. This is seen most vividly in the great importance of aid funds for soldiers’ families. Historians most often concentrate on bounties, commutation, and bonds in discussing the monetary aspects of mobilization, but family aid was an early and just as crucial component

³⁶ Fred A. Shannon, “The Mercenary Factor in the Creation of the Union Army,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 12 (1926): 523-549; Shannon, *The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1865*; Shannon, “States Rights and the Union Army.”

³⁷ See for instance James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 606; McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 8-9, 101-102. Eugene C. Murdock claims that with the advent of the Enrollment Act in 1863, the “‘love of country’ boys of 1861-62 had now given way to those who had to be bribed with bounties before they would enlist,” men he designates as “‘love of money’” volunteers ...” Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 16.

in attracting men to the colors.³⁸ “Young men, without families, hardy, vigorous, and brave, ... who can go without disregarding obligations hardly less sacred than those due to their country,” should volunteer first, opined an editor in Herkimer, New York, two days after Lincoln’s first troop call, but in fact many of those composing the first waves of enlistees were family men.³⁹ Voluntary aid societies and limited government welfare (mainly for public education) were defining institutions for New Yorkers in the era, and from the earliest days of mobilization they recognized that assurance of support for soldiers’ families would be vital for raising a large volunteer army. Family relief was a major concern that grew to encompass countless small and large agencies and, as some historians argue, contributed to the growth of federal welfare policy.⁴⁰ Richard F. Miller argues that state and local aid societies have received short shrift in historiography compared to the national organizations that historians often cite to support the centralization thesis.⁴¹ Despite popular and scholarly belief, Union recruitment from the war’s beginning was colored by financial reward, however meagre, and it was linked to the national cause.

There is no denying, however, that recruitment did involve a “mercenary factor” that became pronounced from 1863 on. Three books by Eugene C. Murdock concentrated on the details of that evolution (or devolution) in manpower procurement and what it looked like on the

³⁸ McPherson recognizes family aid payments as “implicit bounties.” McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 605.

³⁹ *Herkimer Democrat*, April 17, 1861.

⁴⁰ William J. Novak depicts extensive governmental concern for regulation and social welfare in the antebellum era in his *The People’s Welfare: Laws and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). For the development of welfare policy in New York, see David M. Schneider, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State, 1609-1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938). For a study of aid on the local level, see Blake McKelvey, “Historic Origins of Rochester’s Social Welfare Agencies,” *Rochester History*, vol. 9, nos. 2 and 3 (April 1947): 1-36. Joan E. Marshall summarizes the historiography of Civil War family relief in Marshall, “Aid for Union Soldiers’ Families: A Comfortable Entitlement or a Pauper’s Pittance? Indiana, 1861–1865,” *Social Service Review* 78 (2004), 208-209.

⁴¹ Richard F. Miller, “For His Wife, His Widow, and His Orphan: Massachusetts and Family Aid During the Civil War,” *Massachusetts Historical Review* 6 (2004): 70-106.

ground. Examining recruitment and the operations of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau in Ohio, New York, and the entire Union, Murdock chronicled the policies and lurid violations that had inspired the notion of "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight," such as draft commutation, substitution, and growing enlistment bounties. He concluded, however, that it was not exclusively a "poor man's fight;" paying commutation to avoid the draft, for instance, was available to all classes.⁴² James W. Geary agreed with Murdock and disputed other scholars, such as W. P. Rorabaugh, who believed recruitment and the draft primarily brought in the social and economically disadvantaged. But Geary injects complications by showing that the draft was an important element in "determining the type of recruit who entered the Union army after the midpoint of the war." More older and higher-status men enlisted in late 1864 after commutation was repealed and in areas where substitutes were not readily available.⁴³

Other authors have tackled the weighty topic of class in mobilization. James M. McPherson's data led him to conclude that Civil War armies were not disproportionately working-class but generally reflected the social makeup of their societies.⁴⁴ Yet McPherson hits on a matter of great concern for wartime New Yorkers when he observes, "The half-billion dollars paid in bounties by the North represented something of a transfer of wealth from rich to poor."⁴⁵ Enlistment bounties were a powerful weapon in the battle for recruits, and communities from the war's second year on competed with one another to offer the highest local bounties and thereby meet their quotas with volunteers. Russell L. Johnson's community study of wartime

⁴² Eugene C. Murdock, *Ohio's Bounty System in the Civil War*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1963); Murdock, *Patriotism Limited 1862-1865: The Civil War Draft and the Bounty System* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1967); Murdock, *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1971); Murdock, "Was it a 'Poor Man's Fight?'" *Civil War History* 10 (1964): 241-245.

⁴³ James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 90-92 (quote), 97; W.J. Rorabaugh, "Who Fought for the North in the Civil War? Concord, Massachusetts, Enlistments," *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 695-701.

⁴⁴ McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 386-388; McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 182.

⁴⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 605.

Dubuque, Iowa, reveals: “The recruiting system in Dubuque passed through a series of phases—voluntarism, coercion, controlled market, and free market. In each phase, local war supporters placed emphasis on pushing working and poor people into the army.”⁴⁶ While I have not found such distinct phases in my own research into New York, the situation there for most of the war fit into Johnson’s second observation. The fervent patriotism of citizens in nearly every city and town at the war’s outbreak led them to call for an all-out commitment to save the Union. As early as the fall of 1861, recruiters shifted to targeting manual laborers and the unemployed. New York civilians largely accepted this and called on monied people to contribute to the cause through funds while those less well-off shouldered muskets. Soldiers, on the other hand, wanted everyone (except their own family and friends) to join them in the ranks and expressed anger at times when only social misfits and the poor seemed to be doing so. The summer and fall of 1862 saw renewed appeals for volunteers across the socioeconomic strata, but thereafter the focus shifted back to the working classes and poor. Class analysis of New York servicemen is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Whether accurate or not, however, the impression was widespread, especially by 1864, that recruits largely came from the poorer segments of the northern population. The shocking, widespread corruption of civilian recruiting agents and collusion from officers and civilians at all levels of authority brought countless unfit men and boys into the Union ranks; filling quotas and gaining enlistment credits overtook larger war aims in the minds of too many northerners. I argue that the continuation and exacerbation of this fraud belonged to the overall trend among New Yorkers to keep mobilization a matter of choice: rather than

⁴⁶ Johnson, ““Volunteer While You May,”” 34. Johnson expanded his observations in *Warriors into Workers: The Civil War and the Formation of Urban-Industrial Society in a Northern City* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

enforce a comprehensive draft, they looked to unscrupulous officers and middle-men and opened the ranks to virtually anyone willing to serve.

Here my work partially belongs to a “dark” or “antiwar turn” in Civil War studies.⁴⁷ “Sacrifice Is Out. Selfishness Is In,” as Stephen Berry has characterized this trend, which is part of a larger “new revisionism” and inspired by the post-9/11 atmosphere of incessant war and partisanship. Berry observes that many scholars are dropping time-honored interpretations of the Civil War in favor of “a war with fewer heroes and victims, more opportunists, unintended consequences, and mixed motives.”⁴⁸ The new revisionists seek to overturn older, celebratory interpretations of the war by emphasizing selfishness among its actors and the vast suffering the war caused.⁴⁹ There is much of merit in the new revisionism, but their discounting of ideology is not entirely borne out in the people I researched for this project. New Yorkers certainly viewed the war and mobilization as matters of choice and self-interest, but this attitude was inextricably bound up in devotion to American democracy and the Union. It is also worth remembering that many of them were only marginally affected by the war’s transformations and devastation.

Loyalty to their communities vied with patriotism in the minds of northern citizens. Geary differed with Shannon and Murdock, who viewed local pride as a potent entity for communities during the entire war, in arguing that local pride and disgrace associated with drafting faded away “once quotas were assigned on a district [instead of community] basis with

⁴⁷ For a summary of new revisionist interpretations, see Yael A. Sternhell, “Revisionism Reinvented? The Antiwar Turn in Civil War Scholarship,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3 (2013): 239-256.

⁴⁸ Stephen Berry, “Forum: The Future of Civil War Studies,” *Journal of the Civil War Era*, <http://journalofthecivilwarera.com/forum-the-future-of-civil-war-era-studies/> (accessed 29 Feb. 2012). See also his introduction to *Weirding the War: Stories from the Civil War’s Ragged Edges*, ed. Stephen Berry (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 1-12.

⁴⁹ For the celebratory interpretation, see Drew Gilpin Faust, “‘We Should Grow Too Fond of It’: Why We Love the Civil War,” *Civil War History* 50 (2004): 368-383. For examples of work emphasizing the war’s destructiveness and misery, see Jim Downs, *Sick from Freedom: African-American Illness and Suffering during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Michael C. C. Adams, *Living Hell: The Dark Side of the Civil War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

the Enrollment Act” of March 1863.⁵⁰ J. Matthew Gallman, viewing conscription through the lens of popular culture, has complicated this notion. Gallman identifies a “paradox” of self-interest and community spirit. From 1863 on, northerners interpreted their responsibilities in the war effort as no longer involving an individual obligation, but in finding someone to serve—not necessarily themselves or family members—thereby helping their communities avoid a shameful draft.⁵¹ Widespread mockery of draft evaders in late 1862, Gallman argues, indicates that northerners thought “the man who cooperated with the enrolling officers and waited patiently to see if his name had been called was a truly patriotic citizen.” This attitude—which foreshadowed principles behind the adoption of Selective Service in 1917—changed with the advent of the Enrollment Act and more overt resistance, at which point criticism from draft supporters became more bitter. But Union loyalists remained committed to personal choice. “The specter of conscription did not eliminate that free choice,” Gallman writes of prevalent attitudes in 1863, “it simply shifted the ground on which the good citizen must reconsider decisions.”⁵² New Yorkers’ policies, rhetoric, and actions indicate that community pride remained crucial throughout the war. Governor Edwin D. Morgan established a policy of recruitment by senatorial districts in the summer of 1862, and populations and recruiting committees in each district worked energetically to raise the “senatorial district regiments” assigned them. Furthermore, New Yorkers expressed concern for community honor until the end of the war and beyond to the postwar era of memorial statues and local war histories. Local pride led citizens to celebrate when they met their quotas and express mortification when they did not, but also to expect justice when they thought state and national authorities demanded too much of their communities.

⁵⁰ Geary, *We Need Men*, 195-196n40.

⁵¹ Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 162-163, 167, 169.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 157 (first quote), 186 (second quote).

Community and social histories document an array of efforts among individuals and groups on the northern home front to hold onto autonomy as the Union asked them for more and more commitment. In his work on the growth of Springfield, Massachusetts, Michael H. Frisch asserts: “The complex business of meeting the quotas was the war’s most direct manifestation, reaching deeply into almost every aspect of community life.”⁵³ It is, in fact, possible to see the whole history of Civil War mobilization as a series of concentric struggles for authority between levels of government, communities, and individuals, all of them involved in the war to varying extent but having different and evolving interests along with their common interest in winning the war. Important works on the Union governors by William B. Hesseltine and Stephen D. Engle, a handful of state histories published in recent years, and the voluminous correspondence between state and federal officials in the War Department’s published records have all helped me come to grips with the vital but often thorny relationships between governors and Lincoln’s administration and between state governments and their citizens.⁵⁴ In his massive *Gathering to Save a Nation*, Engle exhaustively tracks the interactions of Lincoln’s government with the governors to show that leaders on both sides of these exchanges recognized and supported states’ extensive authority in prosecuting the Union’s war. He chronicles governors’ activities in commanding their state militias and working with Lincoln to answer troop calls on their states. In a twist to long-established wisdom, Engle argues for an expansion of both federal and state power during the war and believes governors’ work on behalf of the Union helped spur a new

⁵³ Michael H. Frisch, *Town into City: Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Meaning of Community, 1840-1880* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 60.

⁵⁴ *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), especially the five volumes of Series 3. Important recent works focusing on states’ experiences in the Civil War era include Thomas R. Baker, *The Sacred Cause of Union: Iowa in the Civil War* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016); Matthew Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2011).

nationalism.⁵⁵ My research into the papers of New York's three wartime governors—Edwin D. Morgan, Horatio Seymour, and Reuben E. Fenton—as well as their correspondence in the *Official Records* supports the notion that governors retained considerable influence throughout the war. While New York State's war years have not received extensive recent study, I have benefited from older works belonging to the sphere of traditional political history, along with dissertations and several studies of nineteenth-century community growth, in fleshing out how New Yorkers experienced the conflict.⁵⁶

Among the array of community histories appearing in the 1960's through 1980's, Frisch's work was rare in giving full attention to the impact of the Civil War. In recent decades, however, a host of community studies have expanded our knowledge of how ordinary people experienced the war. Phillip Shaw Paludan led the way with "*A People's Contest*." This groundbreaking work examines northern society, underscoring the importance of self-government and communities to mid-nineteenth-century northerners, and portrays the war as a force for major social change. A great many regional and community histories have appeared since the release of Paludan's book. Dominated initially by work on cities, the field has widened

⁵⁵ Stephen D. Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation: Lincoln and the Union's War Governors* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016). See also William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Union Governors* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), for another recent look at these crucial relationships. To some extent Engle and Harris refute William B. Hesseltine's conclusion in *Lincoln and the War Governors* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), that Lincoln's superior political skills helped him gain dominance over the governors and states' rights.

⁵⁶ Sidney David Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War* (New York: Columbia University, 1911); De Alva Stanwood Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, vols. 2 and 3 (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1906); John Kirm, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2003). References to New York community studies are found in notes to Chapter One. On New York State during the war, see also Harold Holzer, ed., *State of the Union: New York and the Civil War* (New York: Fordham University Press and New York State Archives Partnership Trust, 2002); Holzer, *The Union Preserved: A Guide to Civil War Records in the New York State Archives* (New York: Fordham University Press and New York State Archives Partnership Trust, 1999); Richard F. Miller, *States at War Volume 2: A Reference Guide for New York in the Civil War* (Lebanon, NH and London: University Press of New Hampshire, 2014); Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*; James A. Frost, "The Home Front in New York during the Civil War," *New York History* 59 (1961): 273-297; Robert J. Rayback, "New York in the Civil War," *New York History* 42 (1961): 56-70.

since to include the types of smaller towns and villages in which most mid-nineteenth-century Americans lived.⁵⁷ As it had for decades beforehand, the city at the mouth of the Hudson exerted great influence in the war. New York City contributed massive resources of men, money, and materiel to the Union, drew endless attention from the authorities, and almost functioned as its own state. Several historians have enhanced our understanding of how Gotham's diverse neighborhoods answered and resisted the challenges of mobilization.⁵⁸ But J. Matthew Gallman makes a convincing case in his studies of the northern home front and wartime Philadelphia that the Civil War did not bring about drastic change.⁵⁹ My dissertation mainly supports Gallman's conclusion—many New Yorkers, forgoing enlistment or other sacrifice, did not see their lives transformed by the great conflict in any meaningful way—but reiterates the cruciality of communities large and small to the process of raising troops.

As I will demonstrate, it was the voluntary associations that residents formed within their communities that really deserve the lion's share of credit for providing men and meeting quotas.

⁵⁷ Useful regional and community studies include J. Matthew Gallman, *Mastering Wartime: A Social History of Philadelphia during the Civil War* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Adam Arenson, *The Great Heart of the Republic: St. Louis and the Cultural Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Edward L. Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America, 1859-1863* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003); Margaret S. Creighton, *The Colors of Courage: Gettysburg's Forgotten History: Immigrants, Women, and African Americans in the Civil War's Defining Battle* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Nicole Etcheson, *A Generation at War: The Civil War Era in a Northern Community* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2011); Johnson, *Warriors into Workers*; Robert M. Sandow, *Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania Appalachians* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009); Stephen J. Buck, "'A Contest in Which Blood Must Flow Like Water': Du Page County and the Civil War," *Illinois Historical Journal* 87 (1994): 2-20; Jeremy Prichard, "In Lincoln's Shadow: The Civil War in Springfield, Illinois," (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2014); Edythe Ann Quinn, *Freedom Journey: Black Civil War Soldiers and the Hills Community, Westchester County, New York* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015); Matthew E. Stanley, *The Loyal West: Civil War and Reunion in Middle America* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2016). Edmund J. Raus chronicles a small New York town's wartime experiences in *Banners South: A Northern Community at War* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2005).

⁵⁸ For New York City's war years, see Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Ernest A. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Spann, *Gotham at War*.

⁵⁹ J. Matthew Gallman, *The North Fights the Civil War: The Home Front* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1994); Gallman, *Mastering Wartime*.

Communities and voluntary associations are key to understanding the North's slow, chaotic, and decentralized learning curve in mobilizing for the largest war Americans had ever seen. The antebellum reform spirit combined with localism and weak government infrastructure to cause a proliferation of community-based committees and other volunteer groups for firefighting, poor relief, temperance, and virtually every other need except the mails. As one historian explains: "When the need arose to accomplish some project of general importance in the nineteenth century, Americans most likely formed an association" instead of turning to government.⁶⁰ (Although political clubs were one of the most common forms of association.) Tocqueville identified such groups as the source and sustaining power of American democracy.⁶¹ Some scholars have long interpreted voluntary associations as a rejection of government and unbound by nationwide organization. Others, however, argue that associations "grew parallel to the institutions of national republican government" in the mid-to-late nineteenth century and "were not just scattered local creations, but were linked into well-institutionalized national networks. ..." Increased governmental reach as a result of the Civil War was a major impetus for this trend.⁶²

⁶⁰ Brian Greenberg, *Worker and Community: Responses to Industrialization in a Nineteenth-Century American City, Albany, New York, 1850-1884* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 89. See also Gerald Gamm and Robert D. Putnam, "The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (1999), 511-557.

⁶¹ See Johann N. Neem, "Taking Modernity's Wager: Tocqueville, Social Capital, and the American Civil War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41 (2011): 591-618.

⁶² Theda Skocpol, Marshall Ganz, and Ziad Munson, "A Nation of Organizers: The Institutional Origins of Civic Voluntarism in the United States," *American Political Science Review* 94 (2000): 527-546 (quote p. 542). See also Jocelyn Elise Crowley and Theda Skocpol, "The Rush to Organize: Explaining Associational Formation in the United States, 1860s-1920s," *American Journal of Political Science* 45 (2001): 813-829; Arthur M. Schlesinger, "Biography of a Nation of Joiners," *American Historical Review* 50 (1944): 15-16; Robert T. Anderson, "Voluntary Associations in History," *American Anthropologist* 73 (February 1971): 209-222; Don H. Doyle, "The Social Functions of Voluntary Associations in a Nineteenth-Century American Town," *Social Science History* 1 (1977): 333-355; , Gerald Gamm and Robert D. Putnam, "The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (1999): 511-557; Jessica Wang, "Dogs and the Making of the American State: Voluntary Association, State Power, and the Politics of Animal Control in New York City, 1850-1920," *Journal of American History* 98 (2012): 998-1024.

The burden of procuring manpower and other resources fell largely on state and local governments, who in turn relied on community leaders to organize their neighbors for the cause. Most community associations were just as committed to local needs as they were to the Union; often these loyalties combined in the minds of members as they strove to answer the call, but associations could prioritize their community over the nation as well. President Lincoln's characterization of the Union war effort early on as "essentially a people's contest" was perhaps more perceptive than he knew, summarizing the way northerners waged the war as well as their goal of saving democracy.⁶³ To a large extent, it was war by committee.

Here as in other aspects of nineteenth-century public life, New Yorkers led the way, and their experiences demonstrated how reliance on voluntarism both hampered and saved the Union cause. Northern mobilization saw a combination and clash of government, community, and individual interests, many of which had formed before the war began. Associational culture shaped mobilization from the war's beginning to its end. On April 16, 1861, the day after Lincoln called on Americans for seventy-five thousand militia to put down the rebellion, Manhattan attorney George T. Strong gathered with several acquaintances at the New York Club. "Our talk was of war," he noted, and Strong added his name to a subscription fund for equipping a militia regiment and a roster for a "projected Rifle Corps." Strong and his circle did what came naturally to them: knowing that government and military forces were inadequate in the crisis, they stepped in to volunteer their money and services.⁶⁴ Three and a half years later and roughly four hundred miles to the west, the provost marshal district comprising Erie County was threatened with a draft. The Sixty-Fifth New York National Guard—a German-American

⁶³ Abraham Lincoln, "Message to Congress in Special Session," July 4, 1861, in Lincoln, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 4: 438.

⁶⁴ George Templeton Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, ed. Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 3: 122.

militia regiment based in Buffalo—volunteered for one year’s federal service, completing the county’s quota and saving its residents from a hated draft. The federalized Sixty-Fifth was almost immediately dispatched to Virginia and went into its first battle within weeks of mustering into service, many of its men loading their muskets for the first time as they advanced toward the enemy.⁶⁵ The services that voluntary associations like the New York Club and National Guard regiments provided often were amateurish and fell short of needs, but they filled gaps that government could not, and New Yorkers and their fellow northerners experienced the war to a large degree through these groups and the communities they helped form.

Voluntary associations drew much of their membership from middle and upper-class women. The scholarship on northern women in the war years is large and vibrant, but only recently has the directly consequential role they played in recruitment been explored in any depth. Historians agree that the importance of widespread ideological support in the Union and Confederacy made the Civil War a milestone for American women, who claimed new spaces as a result, but what was the nature of that milestone and those spaces? Americans of the 1860s placed great reliance on the need for home and family to nurture good citizens, which enlarged the influence of women as wives, mothers, and guardians of morality.⁶⁶ Females also exerted an impact they had gained with the market revolution, enjoying greater say as breadwinners with the growth of dairy farming, for instance.⁶⁷ Historians estimate that ten thousand women’s aid

⁶⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1865), 1: 55; “187th Regiment, NY Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/187thInf/187thInfCWN.htm> (accessed March 3, 2017).

⁶⁶ Patricia L. Richard, *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 1-2.

⁶⁷ Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 101; Sally Ann McMurray, *Transforming Rural Life: Dairying Families and Agricultural Change, 1820-1885* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

organizations assisted the Union cause during the war as they filled essential posts outside the home.⁶⁸

Yet Judith Giesberg's research on female reformers and on working-class women in wartime Massachusetts and Pennsylvania indicates that the war was primarily a localized affair for northern females. Many women were caught up in the patriotic fervor of 1861 as much as men, and many more felt the effects of large-scale mobilization, sometimes including suffering and displacement when husbands and sons went to war.⁶⁹ They were critical components of the war effort despite most of them not engaging in the public spheres of activism and politics. From their kitchens, fields, and desks, women kept their homes and farms running and produced writings that alternated enthusiastic support for the Union cause with strong criticism when the war appeared to demand too much of their families.⁷⁰ Giesberg and Nina Silber show that northern women were increasingly valued for their commitment to the "expanding nation-state," but that those who actively supported the war effort realized "that the war, and their government, demanded their allegiance more than it encouraged their critical interaction."⁷¹ Working-class women's opposition to the draft from 1862 on laid them open to criticism from the larger society and unfavorable comparisons with the supposedly more devoted women of the Confederacy.⁷² Despite the multitude of roles they assumed, female reform work was not drastically changed by the war—in part thanks to men's unwillingness to cede authority—and women did not win

⁶⁸ Elizabeth D. Leonard, *Yankee Women: Gender Battles in the Civil War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), xvii.

⁶⁹ Judith Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000), 15-16, 170; Giesberg, *Army at Home: Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 44-67.

⁷⁰ Giesberg, *Army at Home*, 19-20; Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 190-191.

⁷¹ Giesberg, *Army at Home*, 13-14; Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 11-12 (quotes); Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), xv-xvii.

⁷² Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, 51-53.

greater freedoms beyond what Silber calls their “new civic identity.”⁷³ However, the experiences of New Yorkers indicate that female influence in mobilization was largely welcomed, widespread, and not the preserve of middle-class literati. From the first days of recruitment, women frequently led the way in gathering family relief funds for recruits. To an unknown extent, women also shamed their male relatives and acquaintances into enlisting or pressured them to stay at home.

The Civil War wrought great disruption to New York State—even though many New Yorkers avoided or minimized their involvement. Over four hundred thousand men were credited to the state on Union muster rolls, communities drove their citizens into debt to finance enlistment bounties and commutation, and the economy dipped, then surged thanks to war-related turmoil. These changes did not last, however, and neither did most of the sites and memories of New York’s mobilization. “The persistent, irreversible disappearance of New York’s scarce but meaningful Civil War sites,” Harold Holzer reflected in 2002, “has made it easier for twenty-first century Americans to all but ignore the state that raised so many of the soldiers, and provided so much of the wealth to sustain them.”⁷⁴ New York’s role in the great conflict deserves to be remembered. In particular, recruitment in the state is a story of a localized but patriotic people determined to preserve their autonomy even as they responded to a national crisis and government called on their aid. It is a story worth resurrecting for what it can tell us about the Americans who experienced the nation’s deadliest conflict.

Chapters

Chapter One introduces the reader to New Yorkers in early 1861 and the divisions marking their society. The Empire State was a place of large population, great diversity, and

⁷³ Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood*, x-xi, 175; Silber, *Daughters of the Union*, 11-12, 192-193 (quote).

⁷⁴ Holzer, *State of the Union*, xviii.

economic wealth. All citizens had become connected through the market economy, widespread literacy, and common concern over sectional tensions between North and South. New York was in flux, however, as these developments inspired extensive dislocation and class conflict. Young families and unattached men moved away. Marginalized laborers and small farmers pushed back against capitalist exploitation. Ethnic groups increasingly insulated themselves from one another. Republicans, Democrats, and abolitionists argued over whether the Southern “Slave Power” posed a threat to northern free labor and, if so, how to meet it. In a world of decentralized authority, citizens revered their state and nation but most often looked to voluntary associations, community leaders, and local politics in addressing their needs. At the same time, however, New Yorkers stood transfixed by worsening tensions between the slave and free states. Governor Edwin D. Morgan, a Republican Party leader, voiced a majority opinion among the state’s residents when, in the Secession Winter of 1860-1861, he urged Washington officials to seek peace with the breakaway southern states while still preparing to uphold United States law.

Chapter Two describes the frenzied martial atmosphere when mobilization began after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter and lays out the process of volunteering. Tensions quickly developed between Lincoln’s administration and that of Morgan over authority and responsibility in calling out New York’s militia and volunteers. Morgan was constantly frustrated by what he viewed as interference and incompetence when Lincoln and the War Department bypassed the state to appoint commanders for New York troops. Both nation and state, however, depended on the huge outpouring of popular and associational support for mobilization. The governor and his military staff were alternately sustained and stymied by the committee-forming and associational impulses that resulted, most prominently, in New York City’s Union Defense Committee. While such bodies diluted authority, they also filled gaps in

recruitment and other necessities of mobilization. Given the weakness of established federal and state military forces and the formidability of the Confederacy, many New Yorkers argued the North could only triumph quickly by raising large forces. The volunteer impulse ruled the hour and possibly kept the Union cause alive in those anxious early-war days.

Chapter Three recounts myriad conflicts between the Union's new soldiers and their military and civilian leaders. New York volunteers, as good republicans, entered service upon certain conditions and expected authorities to meet their obligations. When Washington or Albany failed to follow through by not supplying the soldiers properly or holding them to longer enlistments, volunteering slowed and troops protested. The war's first full year also witnessed controversies and tensions over which groups would be allowed to serve in this new people's army. Women and girls had expected roles to perform in mobilization and recruitment: they inspired their male relatives and friends to volunteer and often led fundraising efforts for soldier and family relief societies. But females had autonomy as well and sometimes discouraged service. The very visible outpouring of enthusiasm at the war's beginning obscured the fact that New Yorkers were guided by self-interest as well as patriotism and reserved the right to choose their level of involvement in the war. Morgan's energetic dedication to answering the country's call while safeguarding the rights of his state continued after the disaster at Bull Run. The governor worked with Lincoln's administration to introduce greater efficiency in recruitment and logistics, only to be met with a new crisis in mid-1862.

In Chapter Four, we see New Yorkers respond to major battlefield setbacks with a new surge of volunteering and demands for greater efficiency in mobilization. Lincoln's administration called for enormous reinforcements, prompting Morgan to reorganize his state's recruiting by offering an enlistment bounty and placing responsibilities in the hands of senatorial

district committees. In July and August, communities around New York came together at rallies and in committees to redouble popular support for the Union cause and meet the need for troops, an impulse captured in the popular poem and song “Three Hundred Thousand More.” Officials and recruiters emphasized filling up regiments in the field rather than organizing new ones; this policy achieved only modest success thanks to the decentralized nature of recruitment, and attrition continued to exact a heavy toll on the army. Civilians and soldiers alike believed large reinforcements would allow the Union to finally win the war, and the summer and fall of 1862 saw rising recruitment fraud and competition between officers and communities. A growing chorus of northerners urged opening enlistment to African Americans and granting them freedom, but these proposals received bitter opposition from conservative Democrats. As casualties mounted and a draft appeared on the horizon, Irish-Americans increasingly rejected calls to enlist and become cannon fodder. Tensions like these and an improving economy ultimately caused New York to fall short of its volunteer quotas that year despite all the efforts at injecting more organization and popular enthusiasm into the war effort.

The paradox of conscription and acceptance of limited mobilization marked New York’s recruitment by 1863, as recounted in Chapter Five. The large recruiting drive in the fall and fall of 1862 had been inspired in part by the Militia Act passed that August, which opened the door to limited conscription. New York adopted an enrollment plan for military-age men based on War Department guidelines. Enrollment spawned widespread anxiety and complications about discrepancies in data and who was exempt under state and federal law. By the late fall, however, volunteering had gathered steam (thanks in part to fears of a draft), and Albany officials were able to postpone the state draft until after the new year. Discontent over battlefield failures and Lincoln’s policies of conscription, curbing dissent, and emancipating southern slaves had broken

the spirit of cooperation between administration supporters and opponents and caused resounding Democratic victories in the November elections. Horatio Seymour assumed the governorship of New York in January 1863 determined to raise enough volunteers to avoid a hated draft. The year saw state and federal officials offer larger bounties and a range of other enticements to secure enlistments and reenlistments. At the same time, the Provost Marshal General's Bureau undertook a new national enrollment mandated by the Enrollment Act. This legislation authorized the first federal draft in United States history but provided many mechanisms for decentralized control and encouraging volunteering; Americans remained wedded to localism and individual choice in mobilization. Feverish efforts to meet state and local quotas with volunteers inspired reckless enlistment fraud that swept in the unfit and men enlisted under false pretences. But the draft came that summer anyway, and the New York City Draft Riots in July sent a chill through the North. Communities intensified their efforts to secure volunteers and avoid having to draft their citizens. Thus, the Enrollment Act worked much as it was intended to. Federal conscription and northerners' responses demonstrated widespread support for maintaining a voluntary war effort.

Chapter Six tells stories of desperation, corruption, and hope in the final eighteen months of the war. Determined to avoid mass coercion in the war effort, New Yorkers accepted a variety of legal and illegal methods for meeting manpower quotas without drafting. The War Department and state officials encouraged veterans to reenlist, while black and white civilian association finally sidestepped Seymour's opposition to recruitment of black troops in New York. The enlistment and outstanding service of black New Yorkers inspired war supporters and helped fill quotas, but unequal treatment in the Union Army undermined further African American recruitment. Eighteen sixty-four dealt more setbacks to idealism as brokers and

unscrupulous recruiting officers perpetrated fraud on a wide scale, bringing countless unfit and unreliable men and boys into the ranks. Emphasis on meeting numbers over quality or preparation of recruits brought thousands of reinforcements into the ranks in time for the spring 1864 campaigns. Relentless fighting from May onward highlighted these serious defects in northern mobilization and prompted a new call for troops in July. Communities and committees either indebted themselves to raise unprecedented bounties or tried to get their quotas reduced with credits from previous enlistments. These efforts paid off as the state exceeded its quota. Even as the war turned firmly in the North's favor in late 1864 and early 1865, New Yorkers reacted with apathy and angst as federal authorities hit them with yet more troop quotas. Concerns over mobilization persisted right up to the date when the War Department halted recruitment and drafting in April 1865.

CHAPTER ONE

“INTERESTS THE MOST VARIED AND HOPES THE MOST EXALTED”:

NEW YORKERS ON THE EVE OF THE CIVIL WAR

Wednesday, January 2, 1861, was the second day of the Eighty-Fourth New York State Legislature. The 160 members of the Senate and Assembly met in their respective chambers in Albany’s Capitol building at 11 A.M. Both houses took care of preliminary business before settling in for a lengthy and important ritual: the reading of the governor’s annual message to the Legislature.¹ Governor Edwin D. Morgan’s private secretary, Lockwood L. Doty, delivered copies to both houses, where the address was then read aloud by the clerks, James Terwilliger in the Senate and Hanson A. Risley in the Assembly.² Annual messages reviewed state and national affairs, explained a governor’s policies, and recommended specific actions on the part of the Legislature. But the annual message to be delivered this day was especially important, for everyone knew 1861 would be a year of high drama.

Morgan began his long, eloquent, and wide-ranging address with a nod to current events. “You have met under circumstances of more than usual interest,” he told his audience.³ Two months earlier, the most intense political campaign in living memory had resulted in Morgan’s reelection and given the presidency to another, more controversial Republican. The election of

¹ *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Albany, on the First Day of January, 1861* (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1861), 5-6.

² *Ibid.*, 6; *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session, Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Albany, on the First Day of January, 1861* (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1861), 10. For state legislative procedure during the era, see Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” 1: 188-189, 264.

³ Edwin D. Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” in Charles Z. Lincoln, ed., *Messages from the Governors: Comprising Executive Communications to the Legislature and Other Papers Relating to Legislation from Organization of the First Colonial Assembly in 1683 to and Including the Year 1906, with Notes*, vol. 5: 1857-1868 (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1909), 249.

Abraham Lincoln had prompted several southern states to call secession conventions, and on December 20, South Carolina seceded from the Union. Other Deep South states were sure to follow. Disunion gave New York's political leaders ample cause for alarm. Not only did secession threaten to destroy the republic they loved; it also damaged their state's economy. New York City relied heavily on its cotton trade with the South, and the sectional crisis had caused economic panic in the nation's largest city—a wave of business failures and layoffs that was spreading to other cities.⁴ Already, in the first months of a struggle that would last more than four years, patriotic and practical concerns melded in the minds of New Yorkers. As merchant-turned-governor Morgan reminded the legislators: “[Y]ou represent the sovereignty of the State of New York, the noblest, the grandest commonwealth that ever had existence; an empire of nearly four millions of people, imperial in all its proportions, with interests the most varied and hopes the most exalted.”⁵

The governor had good reason to extol his state. New York was the wealthiest and most populous of the United States and had been for several decades. In fact, the wealth and population of the Empire State made it both outstanding and typical among American states and especially crucial in national events.⁶ New York in early 1861 was the Union writ small: a province of mounting economic and social diversity whose residents did indeed have varied interests and exalted hopes.

“Let us each recollect that the people are the source of all political power, that their will is the simple and safe rule of our conduct,” Morgan noted early in his address.⁷ The most important

⁴ Russell A. McClintock, “Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword? Northern Political Culture and the Crisis of Secession, 1860-1861” (Ph.D. diss., Clark University, 2004), 107-108, 212; *New York Herald*, December 23, 1860.

⁵ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 250.

⁶ The nickname “Empire State” became common around 1820. Milton M. Klein, Introduction to *The Empire State: A History of New York*, ed. Milton M. Klein (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), xix.

⁷ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 250.

aspect of any era in history is the humanity involved, and this would hold true in the coming Civil War, when procuring sufficient manpower would loom as the single greatest wartime issue for New Yorkers. The 1860 census counted over 3,800,000 people in New York, nearly a million more than lived in the next most populous state, Pennsylvania. New York boasted the nation's largest city, of course, but also its third largest, Brooklyn (then a separate city); New York City and Brooklyn combined surpassed one million people. Also stunning was the rate of the state's population growth: eleven fold since 1790 and a double increase since 1830, a greater growth rate than seen by the nation as a whole.⁸ In the five years ending in 1860, the number of New Yorkers had grown by over four hundred thousand.⁹ Settlements large and small felt the population boom; what had been the little town of Buffalo in 1810 was America's tenth largest city fifty years later.¹⁰ The population of the "Queen City of the Lakes" had almost doubled in the last decade alone, while Brooklyn's expansion was even greater, and a host of lesser cities swelled seemingly overnight.¹¹

Then as now, New York was famed as a gateway for immigrants and a place of great diversity. State authorities had actively encouraged immigration since 1847; within thirteen years, over three-quarters of European arrivals to America were entering through the receiving station at New York City's Castle Garden. After a two-year slump following the financial panic of 1857, immigration had rebounded tremendously.¹² "During the year 1860," Morgan informed the

⁸ *Statistics of the United States (Including Mortality, Property, &c) in 1860, Compiled from the Original Returns and Being the Final Exhibit of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1866), xviii, xx (hereafter referred to as *1860 Census*). The final revised number was 3,880,735, an increase of over sixty thousand from the initial estimate Morgan gave in his 1861 Annual Message.

⁹ For the 1855 population, see Franklin B. Hough, *Census of the State of New York, for 1855* (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen & Sons, 1857), xii.

¹⁰ *1860 Census*, xviii.

¹¹ Paula Baker, "The Gilded Age (1860-1914)," in Klein, *The Empire State*, 421.

¹² Raymond L. Cohn, *Mass Migration under Sail: European Immigration to the Antebellum United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 79, 88, 156, 161; Richard H. Leach, "The Impact of Immigration upon

legislators, “the emigrants arriving at the port of New York numbered one hundred and four thousand three hundred, being an increase of more than twenty per cent. over the preceding two years.”¹³ One out of every four New Yorkers—over nine hundred thousand in total—had been born abroad.¹⁴ Irish and Germans made up the bulk of migrants and, by 1861, dominated whole neighborhoods and trades. Twenty-six percent of New York City residents were Irish-born, as were twenty-two percent of Brooklynites and nearly forty percent of Albany’s population.¹⁵ Irish tended to remain in cities and perform unskilled manual labor, while the more diverse Germans and British went everywhere and took up farming or skilled work.¹⁶ The canals and railways that had jumpstarted the market economy were largely the work of Irish-American laborers, and Irishwomen filled the ranks of domestic servants from New York City to Buffalo.¹⁷ German-Americans had established an exclusive, close-knit neighborhood called Kleindeutschland on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, where they specialized in tailoring and shop keeping. As one historian notes: “Only Vienna and Berlin had larger German populations than New York City,” and the city’s Germans outnumbered the total populations of all but three U. S. cities.¹⁸ Far to the north, migrants crossed the state’s long, largely unregulated Canadian border with ease. By 1861, thousands of German and French Canadians had settled in New York’s northern counties.¹⁹

New York, 1840-1860,” *New York History* 31 (1950), 19-21; David A. Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism: Buffalo, New York, 1825-60* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 115.

¹³ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 278.

¹⁴ Franklin B. Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865* (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen & Sons, 1867), lxxii.

¹⁵ Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 13.

¹⁶ Cohn, *Mass Migration under Sail*, 181, 184, 205.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 210; Richard B. Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis: Class, Ethnicity, and Youth in Antebellum New York City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 61; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 127.

¹⁸ Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 1.

¹⁹ Nora Faires, “Leaving the ‘Land of the Second Chance’: Migration from Ontario to the Great Lakes States in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1990*, ed. John J. Bukowczyk (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 80; Barbara Lorenzkowski, *Sounds of Ethnicity: Listening to German North America 1850-1914* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press,

Despite hostility from the native-born, immigrants factored mightily in New York's economic and democratic growth, and communities would come to rely on their bodies for the war effort. Migration from Europe was also the single greatest contributor in population expansion. Many of Governor Morgan's listeners would have agreed with his assumption that the large, rapidly growing population of the Empire State confirmed its glory and success.

Those seeking further confirmation might have turned to the four pillars of New York's impressive economy: agriculture, shipping, manufacturing, and finance. Thanks to the changes wrought by the market and transportation revolutions over the preceding forty years, in 1861 the state was an empire of wealth as well as population. Agriculture was the brightest jewel in New York's crown. Farmers and farm laborers together made up the largest share of the state work force, and farms employed even more people at harvest time.²⁰ These workers had an extraordinary output in a long list of categories. New York ranked first among the states in improved acres and in the cash value of its farms, farming implements, and machinery. Among its non-human residents, the state was first in milch cows and swine, second in sheep, third in horses and oxen, and first in value of livestock and animals slaughtered. New York produced more oats and potatoes than any other state and was second in rye and wool, seventh in wheat, and even eleventh in tobacco—not a crop usually associated with this northern state. New York led in the cash values of its produce, butter, cheese, hay, grass seed, hops, flax, maple sugar, beeswax, and honey, and enjoyed a high ranking in the value of nearly every other agricultural product. New York farms churned out almost twenty-seven percent of America's barley, twenty-nine percent of its

2010), 11-12; Preston Jones, "Civil War, Culture War: French Quebec and the American War Between the States," *Catholic Historical Review* 87 (2001), 57.

²⁰ Paul W. Gates, "Agricultural Change in New York State, 1850-1890," *New York History* 50 (1969), 116; Clarence H. Danhof, *Change in Agriculture: The Northern United States, 1820-1870* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 74-75. In nineteenth-century terminology, farmers were distinct from farm laborers.

buckwheat, forty-six percent of its cheese, forty percent of its flax, twenty-eight percent of its maple sugar, and most of its hops.²¹ Such output is even more impressive considering that the number of farmers in the state was declining.²²

New York led not only in production but in shipping and what was termed “scientific farming”—agricultural research and development. For decades, politicians and major landholders had encouraged (and often forced) innovations that brought all corners of the state into the market economy.²³ By 1861, numerous canals and railroads connected Upstate farmers and their distant competitors with the huge, hungry populations of the cities.²⁴ In West Albany (about four miles from the Capitol), the seven hundred cattle cars of Congressman Erastus Corning’s New York Central Railroad brought endless herds to the NYCRR’s livestock pens, where they were slaughtered and packaged for local sale or fed before being reloaded onto cars for Boston.²⁵ At Buffalo Harbor—the largest grain port in the world—tourists gazed in admiration as steam-powered grain elevators loaded bushels of wheat onto boats for the 363-mile trip up the Erie Canal.²⁶ Meanwhile, traditional, family-operated subsistence farms were being overtaken by market-oriented operations using hired labor to produce saleable commodities.²⁷ New York

²¹ These 1860 statistics are from Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, ciii.

²² *Ibid.*, lxxv.

²³ L. Ray Gunn, “Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860),” in Klein, *The Empire State*, 316; Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent: Agrarianism in Nineteenth-Century New York*, 89-90, 97.

²⁴ L. Ray Gunn, *The Decline of Authority: Public Economic Policy and Political Development in New York State, 1800-1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 35-40; David Stradling, *The Nature of New York: An Environmental History of the Empire State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 53. The classic argument for a transportation revolution is George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860* (New York: Rinehart, 1951). For the market revolution, see Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: New York University Press, 1991).

²⁵ Brian Greenberg, *Worker and Community: Responses to Industrialization in a Nineteenth-Century American City, Albany, New York, 1850-1884* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 15, 19; Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 34. According to Irene D. Neu, the NYCRR “was at the time of its founding [in 1853] the largest corporation in America.” Neu, *Erastus Corning: Merchant and Financier, 1794-1872* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960), 161.

²⁶ Stradling, *The Nature of New York*, 68. See also Henry H. Baxter, *Grain Elevators*, *Adventures in Western New York History*, vol. 26 (Buffalo: Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, 1980).

²⁷ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 18, 21; Gates, “Agricultural Change in New York State,” 125.

publishers led in the production of agricultural books and journals (as they did in all forms of printing), and the state government sponsored agricultural societies, fairs, and trials for new machinery such as mechanical reapers and mowers.²⁸ The spirit of innovation affected humbler technologies as well. Over the course of their own lifetimes, older country people had seen plows transform from crude wooden instruments into cast-iron models that doubled productivity.²⁹

New York farmers' leadership in the market economy boosted their profits and reputations. From 1850 to 1860, the cash value of the average farm in the state had risen to \$4,180, a gain of more than \$900.³⁰ Prices of manufactured goods failed to increase much over this period, but prices of agricultural products exploded.³¹ Several regions set standards in product quality; Orange County butter and Herkimer County cheese, for example, were widely considered the best in the nation.³² Farm ownership conferred status in rural communities and New York farmers took great pride in their vital occupation.³³ Others also acknowledged its importance. "We are poor or rich as our agricultural productions are meagre or bountiful," Governor Morgan told the legislators. "This pursuit, engaging nearly or quite one-half of the population of the State, sets in motion the wheels of internal commerce and crowns with plenty and happiness, the homes of our people."³⁴ For historians, the magnitude of New York farming in the 1860s complicates the common but simplistic image of the Civil War as a fight between an industrial North and an agrarian South.³⁵

²⁸ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 55-59, 60, 234-235; Gates, "Agricultural Change in New York State," 116-117, 118-122, 127-128.

²⁹ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 183; Martin Bruegel, *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of a Market Society in the Hudson Valley, 1780-1860* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 109.

³⁰ Gates, "Agricultural Change in New York State," 128.

³¹ Donald H. Parkerson, *The Agricultural Transition in New York State: Markets and Migration in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1995), 7-8.

³² *Ibid.*, 125-126; Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 43.

³³ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 17; Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 2. These attitudes toward farm ownership were not limited to New Yorkers, of course, and existed long before the market revolution.

³⁴ Morgan, "Annual Message, January 2," 290.

³⁵ For northern agriculture as a corrective to this enduring cliché, see Adam Wesley Dean, *An Agrarian Republic: Farming, Antislavery Politics, and Nature Parks in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 1-2.

Morgan—no rookie in matters of commerce—was right to link New York’s agriculture to its other industries. The urban population boom and the integrated economy ensured that the urban and rural populations were each the largest consumer of the other’s products: city dwellers lived on food from Upstate farms while rural families spent their growing wealth on city-made tools and luxuries.³⁶ Meanwhile, as in farming, so it was in industry: the northeastern states led the nation and the Empire State led everyone. The value of the nation’s yearly manufacturing product hovered near \$2 billion, making America the world’s second industrial power after Britain.³⁷ Almost three-quarters of this output were concentrated in the Northeast, and in 1860 New York industry alone had generated over \$378 million, nearly twice the amount from all the southern states combined. New York outclassed all other states in the number of its manufacturing establishments (22,363) and manufacturing workers (230,112), while the value of capital invested in the state’s industry (almost \$173 million) trailed only that of Pennsylvania.³⁸

As discussed below, more and more rural New Yorkers were pulling up stakes, moving west or to the booming towns along transportation routes, leading to declining numbers of farmers and artisans and a growth in non-agricultural and wage workers. These tendencies boosted urban industry.³⁹ Thanks to a trend toward specialization and subcontracting, New York did not lead in as many manufactured commodities as it did in agricultural ones, but many industries had seen striking growth since 1850. Consider printing, a quintessential New York industry and one that

³⁶ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 19-20. The U. S. Census Bureau defines settlements of at least 2,500 people as urban.

³⁷ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 25.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 25; *Manufactures of the United States in 1860: Compiled from Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), 729. Figures in the latter source are for the year ending June 1, 1860.

³⁹ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 45. From 1855 to 1865, numbers shrank for farmers, quarrymen, blacksmiths, carpenters, sawyers, tailors, and weavers. On the other hand, growth occurred for laborers, iron workers, manufacturers, factory operatives, engineers, machinists, railroad men, students, teachers, telegraph operators, and workers in the alcohol and tobacco trades. Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, lxxv-lxxvi.

would prove crucial in wartime mobilization. The state accounted for forty percent of the value of the book, job, and newspaper trades in the United States, and New York print revenue in 1860—more than \$12 million—was greater than that of the *entire nation* ten years before and a doubling of the state’s own print revenue. The printing houses in New York City’s Fourth Ward alone made nearly one-tenth of the print income in the United States.⁴⁰ Newspapers were major shapers of public knowledge and opinion.⁴¹ In 1860, New York printers had churned out 542 newspapers, magazines, and journals, and their total annual circulation was 321 million, an increase from 428 and 115 million, respectively, in 1850—a telling signal of the intertwined growth of literacy and capital during the decade.⁴² In the year ending June 1, 1860, 28,600,000 copies rolled off the presses of Horace Greeley’s New York *Daily Tribune*.⁴³ James Gordon Bennett’s New York *Herald* had the largest daily circulation of any newspaper in the world to date, and its April 14, 1861, edition reporting the surrender of Fort Sumter would set a global record for copies sold.⁴⁴ Gains also occurred in the fields of agricultural implements, cotton goods, coopering, papermaking, meat packing, sugar refining, metal work, and retail, and anything connected with the alcohol and tobacco trades flourished.⁴⁵

New York City was the economic heart of the nation. A constant stream of raw materials entered the city to supply an outward flow of manufactured products worth roughly \$159 million annually.⁴⁶ Like its namesake state, the city exhibited to an outstanding degree trends affecting the

⁴⁰ *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*, cxxxiii.

⁴¹ Douglas Fermer, *James Gordon Bennett and the New York Herald: A Study of Editorial Opinion in the Civil War Era, 1854-1867* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986), 1-3; Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” 1: 113-114, 125.

⁴² Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, cxvii; Gunn, “Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860),” 352.

⁴³ *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*, cxxxiii.

⁴⁴ Fermer, *James Gordon Bennett and the New York Herald*, 1, 184.

⁴⁵ Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, cviii, cx-cxix, cxxv.

⁴⁶ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 47.

entire United States. Just twenty percent of the American population was urban, compared to thirty-nine percent in New York State, but both figures had grown with each census.⁴⁷ New York City's commercial development advanced up the island of Manhattan and had nearly reached 42nd Street by January 1861. Eleven percent of Gotham's population, some 90,000 people, made their living in manufacturing.⁴⁸ Mechanization was in its infancy. In 1861, the most industrialized city in America was powered mostly by human bodies. The Novelty Iron Works was the city's largest manufactory; 950 workers toiled at its five-acre facility on the East River. But firms employing hundreds of people were rare, and the average shop size in the city was twenty-one workers.⁴⁹ Far more common than state-of-the-art steam-powered factories were the homes and small workshops where whole families of immigrants squinted in the dim light, sewing ready-made clothing by hand. (The garment industry employed more people than any other sector.)⁵⁰ Even metalworking firms tended to employ ten workers or fewer, and the tradesmen who smelted, assembled, and repaired their products relied on skill and brawn more often than machinery. Manufacturing in Albany and Buffalo also witnessed this preference for bodies over mechanization.⁵¹

What made New York City a capitalist center was not its manufacturing—which had declined in several trades during the 1850s—but the activities of New York Port, the shipping and financial sectors, and the city-based businessmen who controlled production and freight across a

⁴⁷ Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 7; Gunn, "Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860)," 310.

⁴⁸ Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 7, 11.

⁴⁹ Richard B. Stott, "Hinterland Developments and Differences in Work Setting: The New York City Region, 1820-1870," in *New York and the Rise of American Capitalism: Economic Development and the Social and Political History of an American State, 1780-1870*, ed. William Pencak and Conrad Edick Wright (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1989), 58, 65; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 43.

⁵⁰ Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 37-42, 127. Stott notes that "in 1860 some 75% of the city's employees worked in an unpowered setting." *Ibid.*, 64.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 46-47; Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 17; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 240.

region extending upstate and into New Jersey.⁵² This is demonstrated by New York State's cotton goods trade, headquartered in the city. In the ten years before 1860, the number of cotton mills and warehouses in the state, the capital invested in them, and their workforce all diminished while the costs of raw materials and labor rose. Yet the industry was not withering but thriving: Over the same period, the value of the state's cotton goods increased by twenty percent.⁵³ Small wonder that the threatened secession of several cotton-growing states (which were also markets for northern finished cotton goods) in late 1860 sent New York into a financial panic. The cotton goods trade exemplified the benefits and dangers of the maturing, integrated market economy.⁵⁴

Urbanization, industrialization, and integration wrought their changes in the state's great hinterland as well. Thanks largely to the economic effects of the Delaware and Hudson Canal, the population of historic Kingston (New York's first state capital) grew over 275 percent from 1840 to 1860. By the later date, nearly half of the village's male residents over age fifteen performed semiskilled or unskilled wage labor instead of farm work.⁵⁵ The consequences of change were considerable. As one historian notes, "Manmade schedules rather than the sun's natural periodicity took over the rhythm of daily lives."⁵⁶ Instead of painstakingly crafting cloth, shoes, and other items at home, people in Kingston and elsewhere in the Hudson Valley used their new disposable income to purchase cheap, ready-made products shipped from New York City. Cash transactions

⁵² *Ibid.*, 9; Stott, "Hinterland Developments and Differences in Work Setting," 49-52, 56. "By 1860," writes L. Ray Gunn, "two thirds of the nation's imports and one third of its exports passed through the Port of New York." Gunn, "Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860)," 318.

⁵³ *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*, xii; Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, cx-cxi. In contrast with the iron industry, textiles mechanized greatly in the antebellum era, as witnessed by "a dramatic nine fold increase in the number of spindles per cotton mill between 1815 and 1860" in Cohoes, New York. Daniel Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town: Iron and Cotton Protest in Troy and Cohoes, New York, 1855-1884* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 8.

⁵⁴ For cotton's importance to the New York City economy, see Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 18, 20.

⁵⁵ Stuart M. Blumin, *The Urban Threshold: Growth and Change in a Nineteenth-Century American Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 2, 69.

⁵⁶ Bruegel, *Farm, Shop, Landing*, 159.

were replacing the age-old tradition of bartering, and farmers now commonly thought in terms of distant markets.⁵⁷ Trends in the valley were replicated on larger scale some 250 miles to the west in Rochester. As cheap grain brought in from the west overtook the local wheat market, Rochester had transitioned from the “Flour City” into the “Flower City”—a gardening and vining center where plants from around the country were grown, sold, or made into wine. (Of course, this integration was cold comfort to suffering wheat farmers.)⁵⁸ As in New York City, smaller cities enjoyed diverse economies. Albany, with a population of 62,000, was a major center for printing, lumber, stoves, agricultural implements, railroad servicing, slaughtering, and meat packing.⁵⁹ Yet at the same time, business methods like consolidation led to some smaller cities and towns being dominated by one or two industries, such as Cohoes and its cotton mills or nearby Troy and its iron foundries—the latter being largely controlled by the resourceful president of the NYCRR, Erastus Corning.⁶⁰ In the first two years of the war, Troy’s iron molders would enlist in large numbers, affecting a range of communities: their city, neighborhoods, industry, and local union.⁶¹

“Our present Banking Capital is larger than ever before,” Governor Morgan reported in his Annual Message, alluding to the fourth major element in New York’s economic boom.⁶² The 1850s had been revolutionary for finance as New York politicians and businessmen established the capitalist system that would later flower in the Gilded Age. Following the lead of other state governments, New York’s 1846 constitution had enshrined a trend toward restricting the Legislature’s power to regulate finance, trade, and industry, thus legalizing laissez-faire and

⁵⁷ Ibid., 91, 98, 145, 159; Blumin, *The Urban Threshold*, 61-62.

⁵⁸ Blake McKelvey, *Rochester: The Flower City, 1855-1890* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1949), 12-13. Rochester’s clothing industry was overtaking gardening, however. Ibid., 14.

⁵⁹ Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 2, 9, 14, 16, 19. Albany’s lumber market and railroad works were both the largest in the United States. Ibid., 14, 16.

⁶⁰ Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 9-10, 19, 23, 51-52.

⁶¹ Ibid., 13, 88-89, 99n31.

⁶² Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 274.

permitting business to incorporate, speculate, and exploit mostly at will.⁶³ Over the next decade, railroad construction and incorporation—with all of their possibilities for speculation—gave New York the most advanced money markets of any state.⁶⁴ Corning and Morgan were two of several powerful New Yorkers helming the railroad surge and other lucrative ventures.⁶⁵ New York City was the nation’s financial capital, with Wall Street seeing dramatic growth in banking, investing, contracting, insurance, and consequent fraud at all levels of power.⁶⁶ One aspect of the money-market boom—a proliferation of insurance firms—was exemplified in 1860, when the leading residents of the city’s German-American enclave joined with merchants in forming a nationwide insurance company for German immigrants.⁶⁷ A small but diverse group of financiers enjoyed considerable influence in the city. Notable among them were German-born banker August Belmont and his faction, who bankrolled the local Democratic establishment and expressed great optimism about American progress through capital.⁶⁸ In January 1861, the Belmont circle and other business elites—derided in the Republican-leaning *Tribune* as “dry goods southerners”—were marshaling their considerable power in the Democracy in hopes of achieving compromise with the South and saving their cotton interests.⁶⁹ Yet soon Belmont and his peers would unite

⁶³ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 1, 188-189; Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” 1:268, 399. Kirn, however, notes that “the state continued to exercise a strong influence on commercial activity.” *Ibid.*, 1: 268.

⁶⁴ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 55; Gunn, “Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860),” 321.

⁶⁵ See Neu, *Erastus Corning*; James A. Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883: Merchant in Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955). Corning, Morgan, and other investors benefited tremendously from the consolidation of several lines into the NYCRR in 1853. Neu, 167-168.

⁶⁶ Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 200.

⁶⁷ Nadel, *Little Germany*, 85.

⁶⁸ Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 129, 132-133. For the rise of New York City’s merchant elites from 1850-61, see Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 3-97. For Belmont, see August Belmont, *Letters, Speeches, and Addresses of August Belmont* (Privately printed, 1890); David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial Press, 1981); Irving Katz, *August Belmont: A Political Biography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968).

⁶⁹ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 94-97.

with Republicans in efforts to meet the city's wartime manpower goals, drawing on their well-honed skills in community leadership and fundraising.

For leading New Yorkers, the market and transportation revolutions had produced a perfect storm of prosperity. Within months, as the war that mercantilists dreaded would become a reality, New York's population, agriculture, industry, finance, and transportation networks would all prove vital, and the state was destined to contribute more men, money, and materiel to the Union cause than any other.

Population and wealth were not the only qualities of New York that inspired native pride. Decades of national economic growth had been matched by democratic reforms in which the Empire State blazed trails for the republic. The 1821 state constitution extended suffrage to most adult white males, ushering in an era of pervasive interest and participation in politics.⁷⁰ With suffrage now based on residency and participation in one's community rather than property ownership, voting and party loyalty linked to patriotism and civic duty, and campaigns offering entertainment for the masses, New York's voter turnout for presidential elections reached ninety percent by the late antebellum years, while an 1856 estimate put the number of political clubs in the state at forty thousand.⁷¹ In the spring of 1861, party politics would channel into mobilization through the efforts of politicians and factions such as New York City's Tammany and Mozart Halls.

The extension of the franchise drew partly from an older reform culture based in central and western New York—the famous Burned-Over District—during the Second Great Awakening.

⁷⁰ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 71; Edward Countryman, "From Revolution to Statehood (1776-1825)," in Klein, *The Empire State*, 302-303.

⁷¹ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 58, 66-67. See also Lee Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961); William E. Gienapp, "'Politics Seem to Enter into Everything': Political Culture in the North, 1840-1860," in *Essays on American Antebellum Politics, 1840-1860*, ed. Stephen E. Maizlish and John J. Kushma (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1982), 15-79. The 1821 constitution "changed specific property requirements for voting into a requirement of paying taxes, working on the roads, or serving in the militia." Countryman, "From Revolution to Statehood (1776-1825)," 303.

A long list of leaders in revivalism, utopianism, feminism, education reform, and abolition either lived in or hailed from the region, and some of them, including Gerrit Smith and Frederick Douglass, would take leading roles in wartime mobilization.⁷² African Americans in Western New York, overwhelmingly concentrated in Buffalo, relied on Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal churches to meet their religious and social needs, and these churches also hosted movements for black voting rights and other reforms.⁷³ Advances in education had the widest influence on New Yorkers of any reform movement. “Our Educational System is justly the pride of the commonwealth,” Morgan proclaimed in his Annual Message. “Granting to all a thorough course of common school education, New York fully recognizes the duty of the State to educate her children.”⁷⁴ The necessity of literacy for life success had been a well-established principle for years, and even children of poor farm workers commonly attended state-funded public schools during the winter. Schooling was more extensive for middle-class youths.⁷⁵ By 1861, the fruits of education reform were seen in a falling illiteracy rate, the proliferation of libraries and lyceums (New York had sixty percent of the school libraries in the United States), and the huge consumption of books and periodicals.⁷⁶ Not even civil war would halt the spread of learning; in

⁷² For Upstate reform efforts, see Judith Wellman, *Grassroots Reform in the Burned-over District of Upstate New York: Religion, Abolitionism, and Democracy* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000). Two classics on the Burned-Over District are Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), and Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978).

⁷³ See Ena L. Farley, “Afro-American Presence in the History of Western New York,” *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 14 (1990): 27-89.

⁷⁴ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 273.

⁷⁵ Joseph F. Kett, *The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties: From Self-Improvement to Adult Education in America, 1750-1990* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 38-39; Lee Soltow and Edward Stevens, *The Rise of Literacy and the Common School in the United States: A Socioeconomic Analysis to 1870* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 191; Jacqueline S. Reinier, *From Virtue to Character: American Childhood, 1775-1850* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 136-137, 142; Nancy Beadie, “Academy Students in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Social Geography, Demography, and the Culture of Academy Attendance,” *History of Education Quarterly* 41 (2001), 252-256, 262.

⁷⁶ Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 490-491; 1860 Census, 503; Gunn, “Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860),” 361.

September 1864, for instance, the village of Adams would celebrate the opening of the Hungerford Collegiate Institute, one of numerous academies founded to educate rural youth.⁷⁷ As with market developments, widespread literacy and political participation tightened links between farm and townhouse and between New Yorkers and their fellow Americans. Despite New Yorkers' tendencies toward localism, the late antebellum years were also a time of growing interest in national issues.⁷⁸

Yet all was not prosperous in the Empire State. By 1861, statistics demonstrating population growth and modernization also represented major dislocation and class conflict across New York.⁷⁹ Northerners had long championed their free-labor system as superior to southern slave society, but market improvements frequently seemed to benefit the middle and upper classes while leaving poorer folk out in the cold.⁸⁰ Canals and railroads had slashed shipping costs to the point that businessmen, western farmers, and Canadians reaped profits at the expense of countless rural New Yorkers. The prairies of the western states produced more and cheaper products than did the smaller, rockier plots of the Northeast, and New York tycoons took advantage. The cattle riding east on Corning's NYCRR were mainly western, not New York raised, and so were the endless bundles of wheat shipped out of Buffalo.⁸¹ The railroad boom of the 1850s had caused

⁷⁷ *Watertown Daily Reformer*, Sept. 3, 1864. For the rise of academies in rural New York, see Beadie, "Academy Students in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," 252-256; Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy*, 306.

⁷⁸ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 293; Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 144.

⁷⁹ Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 55-56. As Kirn notes, "New Yorkers [in the 1846-76 period] believed politics and society were in a state of great flux." Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 14. Although "the world seemed to be embarking upon a new era of progress," New Yorkers also felt "intense strain" and "constant tension" over the speed of change. *Ibid.*, 2-3. See also Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 21.

⁸⁰ On northerners' "sharp distinctions between 'free' and 'unfree' forms of labor," see Reeve Huston, *Land and Freedom: Rural Society, Popular Protest, and Party Politics in Antebellum New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 7 (quote); McClintock, "Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword?" 36; Dean, *An Agrarian Republic*, 3, 12; Susan-Mary Grant, *North Over South: Northern Nationalism and American Identity in the Antebellum Era* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 153.

⁸¹ McKelvey, *Rochester*, 10; Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 34; Gates, "Agricultural Change in New York State," 137; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 23.

economic stagnation for settlements such as Rochester that relied on canal traffic; meanwhile, railroad magnates wrested control of lines from communities and charged higher rates for in-state shipping than for out-of-state imports. Many farmers and communities benefited little from railroad development and resented it.⁸² Market fluctuation and exploitation disrupted the lives of rural people. While land ownership remained common in the rural North and class distinctions less rigid than elsewhere, small holders and tenants remained vulnerable to the whims of powerful landholders. In a system reminiscent of feudalism, landlords such as the Wadsworths in the Genesee Valley alternated between ignoring tenant needs in favor of speculation and forcing “improvements”—hops cultivation, for instance—that eroded small farmers’ independence.⁸³ The market economy had also spawned despised “middle-men” who exploited farmers, buying up their goods and selling them at inflated prices.⁸⁴ (In their unpopularity, lack of scruples, and apparent necessity, middle men presaged the bounty and substitute brokers who would emerge during the manpower crisis.) Mounting debt, land prices, and unemployment added to this state of flux. Economic changes had made the traditional family-owned farm, passed down through generations, an increasingly unobtainable ideal.⁸⁵

Economic dislocation and class tensions were even worse in the cities.⁸⁶ In the turbulent 1850s, industrialization, decentralization of authority, the growth of popular politics, and increasing diversity had replaced old social and economic ties with competing factions of

⁸² Baker, “The Gilded Age (1860-1914),” 447; John J. Bukowczyk, “Migration, Transportation, Capital, and the State in the Great Lakes Basin, 1815-1890,” in *Permeable Border*, 58, 205n132; McKelvey, *Rochester*, 2-7; Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 46.

⁸³ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 90; Gates, “Agricultural Change in New York State,” 133-134; Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 89-90, 94-95.

⁸⁴ Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 44-45.

⁸⁵ Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 90, 104, 106; Huston, *Land and Freedom*, 203.

⁸⁶ Amy Bridges argues that the “effects of industrialization (and immigration) on social structure and social relations were most radical in cities.” Bridges, *A City in the Republic: Antebellum New York and the Origins of Machine Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6.

merchants, industrialists, artisans, and wage workers.⁸⁷ Class divisions hardened with the maturation of the market economy. State legislators and elites had abdicated much of their traditional responsibility for social welfare, passing it off to reform groups and party bosses.⁸⁸ Wealthy elites divided into rival industrialists and merchants, while both groups opposed worker activism, viewing it as an attack on their authority by the “dangerous classes.”⁸⁹ New York City’s high property costs led many industrialists to move their operations elsewhere; those who stayed either subcontracted or deliberately undermined their workers, minimizing their tasks to prevent development of skills and wage increases.⁹⁰ These were, in fact, statewide trends. Skilled workers everywhere considered themselves an endangered species as their numbers and status eroded.⁹¹ Once proud members of the middle class, these artisans found themselves and their families trapped in “physical isolation and the drudgery of unending toil.”⁹² In Cohoes, weaving was the only surviving skilled or semiskilled trade, and the ubiquitous cotton mills now were staffed by Irishwomen earning less than a living wage.⁹³ In New York City’s Kleindeutschland, consolidations, sweatshops, and sewing machines were forcing German-born women out of tailoring and leaving them with little recourse except laundering or prostitution.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Gunn, “Antebellum Society and Politics (1825-1860),” 308-309; Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 11, 45-46; Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 1.

⁸⁸ Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” v. 1: 198, 268; Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 17, 146-147; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 67.

⁸⁹ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 47, 63, 73-74; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 163; Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 142-143 (quote).

⁹⁰ Stott, “Hinterland Developments and Differences in Work Setting,” 48-49, 59, 62; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 165.

⁹¹ Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 39; Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 150-152; Nadel, *Little Germany*, 68; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 240.

⁹² Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 80.

⁹³ Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 62-63.

⁹⁴ Nadel, *Little Germany*, 75-76. Compilers of the 1860 manufacturing census called the contraction of the garment industry through the introduction of sewing machines “a silent revolution.” *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*, lx.

Working-class New Yorkers commonly lived hard, precarious, and insular lives, which exacerbated class and ethnic strife. Skilled tradesmen, mostly native-born, and semiskilled workers and common laborers, who tended to be immigrants, stood on opposite sides of a widening social gulf, as did industrialists and merchants, middle-class and working-class people, and capitalists and workers.⁹⁵ People increasingly lived in social and ethnic enclaves.⁹⁶ The wealthy speculated in business ventures and lived ostentatiously, while many of their workers faced long hours for inadequate wages—at least in the seasons when work was available—and skyrocketing food and housing prices.⁹⁷ The obvious recourse for workers in many cases was organization and agitation. Exemplifying the emerging hostility between labor and the allies of capital, strikes by Rochester canal diggers in the 1850s had been put down by militia.⁹⁸ Immigrants and blacks endured vicious hostility from native whites, while Irish and German communities regarded each other with contempt.⁹⁹ In some rural areas, traditional antipathy between Dutch “Yorkers” and New England “Yankees” persisted, while political partisanship everywhere was bitter and pervasive.¹⁰⁰ Although divisiveness built and strengthened communities of like-minded peoples, it also would have

⁹⁵ Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 213; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 166, 168; Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 32; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 104. But Greenberg also argues that in Albany, “workers’ consciousness of class was mitigated by their attachment to the larger community.” Greenberg, *Worker and Community*, 1-2.

⁹⁶ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 55; Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 110-112; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 204; Nadel, *Little Germany*, 45-46.

⁹⁷ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 42; McKelvey, *Rochester*, 19-20, 21, 22; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 189-190. The seasonality of much work caused great difficulties for laborers; see Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 61, 110; Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 47n43. Labor subcontractors, many of whom ruthlessly exploited workers through practices such as skimming pay, were likely models for bounty and substitute brokers during the war years. For subcontractors’ practices, see Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 118-119. Immigrants were targets of “runners,” agents and scammers who tricked new arrivals out of their money and property. See Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 115.

⁹⁸ McKelvey, *Rochester*, 21-22.

⁹⁹ See Dale T. Knobel, *“America for the Americans”: The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996); Phyllis F. Field, *The Politics of Race in New York: The Struggle for Black Suffrage in the Civil War Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982). For the failure of Germans and Irish in Buffalo to bond despite their similar circumstances, see Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*.

¹⁰⁰ Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy*, 302; Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” v. 1: 28.

implications for the war effort. As Iver Bernstein shows in his study of the 1863 Draft Riots, it is impossible to understand wartime controversies over military obligation without reference to prewar social and political tensions.¹⁰¹

Discontent found expression in two developments: emigration and activism. Revealingly, New York's population boom did not reach all corners of the state. In the five years ending in 1855, one-third of the state's counties (nearly all of them in the northern and western regions) had fallen in population. The loss rate slowed over the next five years, but more than one in six counties still showed a decrease in 1860.¹⁰² Governor Morgan acknowledged in his 1861 Annual Message that "it appears the increase of population in this State is confined principally to our commercial centers ..."¹⁰³ But many New Yorkers living in cities and villages alike felt little encouragement to remain and raise large families. They frequently attempted to salvage their prospects by limiting family size and moving. The shrinking birthrate was a nationwide trend in the mid-nineteenth century but especially pronounced in the rural Northeast.¹⁰⁴ Wherever they lived, economic change left many merchants and farmers unable to provide their sons with property, forcing youths to seek opportunities elsewhere.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, passim.

¹⁰² Hough, *Census of the State of New York, for 1855*, xxxiv. Figures for 1855-60 are in Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, ccxxi. See also David P. Davenport, "Population Persistence and Migration in Rural New York, 1855-1860," (PhD. diss., University of Illinois-Urbana, 1983).

¹⁰³ Morgan, "Annual Message, January 2," 296. See also Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, lxxiii. In New York, urban growth had exceeded that in rural areas since at least 1830. Danhof, *Change in Agriculture*, 8.

¹⁰⁴ See Michael R. Haines and Avery M. Guest, "Fertility in New York State in the Pre-Civil War Era," *Demography* 45 (2008): 345-361; James Marten, *The Children's Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 21-22; Marten, *Children for the Union: The War Spirit on the Northern Home Front* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004), 28-29; Lee A. Craig, *To Sow One Acre More: Childbearing and Farm Productivity in the Antebellum North* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), ix-x, 1-2, 9, 96.

¹⁰⁵ Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 102, 106; Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 152-153. W. J. Rorabaugh argues that "blocked aspirations or economic decline produced a kind of social malaise, especially among clerks, farm laborers, and skilled workers," and that such individuals enlisted in the Union Army in order to reassert their worth. Rorabaugh, "Who Fought for the North in the Civil War? Concord, Massachusetts, Enlistments," *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 695-701 (quote p. 700).

By 1861, young adults and whole families were voting with their feet at a rate alarming to those who remained. Not every village adapted to change as did Kingston. A Jefferson County writer would later warn that the “population of many farming towns decreases with every decade, and not a few once prosperous and flourishing villages have thus gone into decline and decay” as residents, particularly young farmers, fled for brighter prospects in cities or out west.¹⁰⁶ Cities also hemorrhaged residents. Urban flight was not exclusively a working-class phenomenon; Rochester lost a substantial portion of its businessmen to points west, depriving the city of badly needed investment capital.¹⁰⁷ The 1860 census revealed that almost one quarter of Americans born in New York lived outside the state, while one quarter of those living in New York were foreign-born. Transplanted New Yorkers were especially prevalent on the cheaper land of the Old Northwest; thirty-six percent of Michigan’s heads of household, for instance, were New York natives, as would be eleven percent of Iowa’s wartime volunteers.¹⁰⁸ Despite effusions of state pride by Morgan and others, observers noted a general rootlessness and lack of birthplace ties among New Yorkers.¹⁰⁹ Turnover in population through immigration and emigration also reinforced the sense among the state’s residents that society was in a state of flux. During the war years, emigration and a resulting rise in the value of labor would cause difficulties in meeting manpower quotas, leading some New Yorkers to decry a supposed want of community spirit and patriotism.

Emigration was not the only strategy for those displaced by modernity. Many farm families embraced commercial agriculture, switching to dairying and other ventures that allowed females

¹⁰⁶ *Watertown Daily Reformer*, May 7, 1863. (All newspapers cited in notes were published in New York unless otherwise indicated.) See also Huston, *Land and Freedom*, 192; Parkerson, *The Agricultural Transition in New York State*, 13.

¹⁰⁷ Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 147; McKelvey, *Rochester*, 3, 19.

¹⁰⁸ Gates, “Agricultural Change in New York State,” 128-130; Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman, *To Their Own Soil: Agriculture in the Antebellum North* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987), 74; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 2, 1866* (Albany: C. Wendell, 1866), 351-352.

¹⁰⁹ Gates, “Agricultural Change in New York State,” 132.

to contribute as breadwinners.¹¹⁰ (Of course, movement in search of economic opportunity was another instance of market participation.)¹¹¹ Other rural New Yorkers fought rampant capitalism through politics and more drastic measures. In the mid-1850s they had swung their support to the new Republican Party and its message of agrarianism and free labor.¹¹² In areas where the notorious leasehold system was most prevalent—particularly Delaware and Albany counties—working-class people waged “anti-rent wars,” abandoning or buying their tenancies, taking political action against unfair leasing, and attacking landlord property. Despite crackdowns and evictions, by 1861 the Anti-Renters had largely broken the landlords’ power. Historian Reeve Huston calls the Anti-Rent Wars “one of the most powerful social movements of the antebellum era and the largest and most sustained farmers’ movement in American history before the 1870s.”¹¹³ This localized struggle over what Anti-Renters deemed “voluntary slavery” was to continue concurrently with the Union’s larger war for freedom, finally ending in May 1865.¹¹⁴

The cities of the Empire State were locus points for the constant battles between Americans over the proper role of government. In January 1861, local and state governments—including the legislators whom Morgan addressed in his Annual Message—still had greater impact on people’s lives than did officials in Washington. This was especially true in New York, where counties added

¹¹⁰ Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 101; Craig, *To Sow One Acre More*, 79. See also Sally Ann McMurray, *Transforming Rural Life: Dairying Families and Agricultural Change, 1820-1885* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

¹¹¹ Parkerson makes this point in *The Agricultural Transition in New York State*, 3.

¹¹² Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 145; Dean, *An Agrarian Republic*, 2-3, 12, 14, 40. See also Hendrik Booraem V, *The Formation of the Republican Party in New York: Politics and Conscience in the Antebellum North* (New York: New York University Press, 1983).

¹¹³ See Huston, *Land and Freedom* (quote on p. 5); Charles W. McCurdy, *The Anti-Rent Era in New York Law and Politics, 1839-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

¹¹⁴ McCurdy, *The Anti-Rent Era in New York Law and Politics*, 316 (quote), 329. McCurdy notes that some New Yorkers justified military evictions of lawbreaking Anti-Renters by linking such action with the war against the southern rebellion.

another layer to local administration.¹¹⁵ Federal and state could offer some support, as in 1858 when Buffalo's mayor beseeched Washington and Albany for money to employ the needy on public works. For the most part, however, elites formed voluntary associations to fill the void in poor relief, firefighting, militia duty, political action, and other community needs.¹¹⁶ The state legislature facilitated this movement by passing many acts sanctioning such organizations and handing off responsibilities to local officials. At the same time, a push for greater state oversight saw the development of agencies such as the Insurance Department and the Commissioners of Immigration.¹¹⁷ After Fort Sumter fell, these contradictory trends would reap confusion and conflict on the home front, impeding the war effort.¹¹⁸

It is well known that the struggle and eventual victory of the Civil War tied the United States closer together. Scholars frequently point out that Americans referred to their country in the plural ("the United States are") before the war and in the singular ("the United States is") afterward, a claim borne out in the twenty-first century through digital analysis of period publications.¹¹⁹ But in January 1861 and throughout the sectional crisis, that remained in the future. Economic and social developments had expanded northerners' worldview and prompted

¹¹⁵ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 9, 263-264, 273; Field, *The Politics of Race in New York*, 8; David Maldwyn Ellis, "The Yankee Invasion of New York, 1783-1850," *New York History* 32 (1951), 13.

¹¹⁶ Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 258-259; Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 1-3. For the endurance of localism in 1860s New York, see *ibid.*, 14-15; Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 266-267; Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 13; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 328; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 210. Mary Ryan, however, sees an opposite process at work in Oneida County, especially Utica, where residents "saw political authority pass entirely out of local jurisdiction" and witnessed "the enlargement, remoteness, and increasing formality of the public sphere." Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 149-150.

¹¹⁷ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 270; Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 2.

¹¹⁸ As Gunn asserts: "[T]he long-term implication of these developments was the diffusion of public authority among a number of competing centers of decision making, public and private, in the society." Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 2.

¹¹⁹ Robbie Gonzalez, "When did the United States Become a Singular Noun?" *IO9*, <http://io9.gizmodo.com/when-did-the-united-states-become-a-singular-noun-949771685> (accessed November 2, 2014).

nationalism, but they remained bound by older traditions of localism even as they struggled to save their nation and form of government.¹²⁰

Localism and a related culture of voluntary groups provided mid-nineteenth-century New Yorkers with many of the answers to social, political, and economic needs. The most important voluntary associations in terms of their impact on the war effort were political, ethnic, and working-class in nature and often intertwined. The market revolution had witnessed the growth of a distinct working-class identity, particularly in the cities, prompting mass labor and political activism. Millions of New Yorkers joined labor unions and political factions, especially after the turning point of the 1857 financial panic.¹²¹ The brutal depression that followed saw distressed laborers in New York City calling on local government, not social elites, for “work or bread.” The new species of professional politicians, or “bosses”—most famously Fernando Wood and William M. Tweed—took advantage. They painted themselves as friends of the working man and turned Tammany into a Democratic political machine, one drawing on working-class and immigrant support to help their party dominate city affairs.¹²² After being voted down in his bid to become Tammany’s leader in 1858, Wood formed a rival Democratic faction, Mozart Hall. Drawing now mostly on support from Democratic Germans rather than Irish, Wood was reelected mayor the next year.¹²³ Towns and cities across New York were patchwork quilts of ethnic and social neighborhoods controlled by party bosses dispensing patronage in exchange for votes. Immigrants formed vital voting factions in both major parties. While Irishmen everywhere remained a

¹²⁰ As Daniel Walkowitz argues in his study of Troy and Cohoes, during and after the war “localism, and not the triumphant nation, continued to dominate the day-to-day concerns and behaviors of most Americans. . . . [T]he local community constituted the main arena of intellectual, social, and political life.” Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 13.

¹²¹ Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 103, 116, 122

¹²² *Ibid.*, 11, 123; Jerome Mushkat, *Tammany: The Evolution of a Political Machine, 1789-1865* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 7, 304-305; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 117.

¹²³ Mushkat, *Tammany*, 312, 318; Michael Todd Landis, *Northern Men with Southern Loyalties: The Democratic Party and the Sectional Crisis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 208-209; Nadel, *Little Germany*, 136.

Democratic bloc, the more diverse Germans split in allegiance, though German-American Turner societies provided crucial support to the Republicans in 1860.¹²⁴ When war erupted in the spring of 1861, Tammany and Mozart would each organize volunteer regiments for the cause, and several local politicians would work their connections to gain high rank in the Union Army. Indeed, popular politics would provide a model for wartime mobilization. Parties relied on local leaders, committees, and political clubs for fundraising and marshaling voters. These groups campaigned with pageantry, staging mass rallies and paramilitary parades.¹²⁵

As with other types of public associations—especially volunteer fire and militia companies—political mobilization bore a disturbingly masculine, foreign, and working-class stamp in the eyes of native-born middle and upper-class New Yorkers, who increasingly championed the virtuous refinement provided by home and family life.¹²⁶ But the value of voluntary associations could not be denied in an era of small government and fierce competition for resources. Americans in 1861 lived in a world of churches, clubs, lyceums, aid societies, fraternal orders, labor unions, fire and militia companies, chambers of commerce, and boards of trade, all of which banded like-minded individuals into communities.¹²⁷ Elites took on many prominent roles in this volunteering culture. Some, notably August Belmont and his friends in New York City, were political leaders who attended party meetings and funded campaigns while

¹²⁴ Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 235-237; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 117, 182, 326; Mischa Honeck, "Men of Principle: Gender and the German-American War for the Union," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 5 (2015), 45-46.

¹²⁵ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," v. 1: 35-58.

¹²⁶ Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 146-147; Patricia L. Richard, *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 17-18. For the social world of antebellum volunteer fire companies, see Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 136, Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 229, 231; and especially Amy S. Greenberg, *Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-Century City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). For Nativist concerns over Irish-American militia units, see Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 44-48.

¹²⁷ For the value and appeal of voluntary associations, see Gunn, *The Decline of Authority*, 48; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 98.

leaving the hard work of politics to bosses.¹²⁸ Others, particularly industrialists, adopted the old mantle of paternalism and organized reform societies such as the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor—led by the president and major stockholder of New York City’s Novelty Iron Works—and the Buffalo Association for the Relief of the Poor. Such groups were not purely altruistic but sought to mold working-class people into copies of their social betters. Elite women were elemental in reform groups, just as they would be in wartime aid societies.¹²⁹ Through chambers of commerce and boards of trade, merchants established business standards, policed their class, and provided mutual aid and sociability.¹³⁰ In July 1862, the Buffalo Board of Trade would “adopt” the 100th New York Regiment and help recruit its decimated ranks.¹³¹

As controversies over slavery expanded in the prewar years, New Yorkers and their communities played influential roles. Like much of the North, New York was home to two simultaneous, not necessarily opposing trends: antislavery and white supremacy. All its slaves had been freed decades earlier, but the Empire State in 1861 was hardly a haven of equality. New York’s white majority kept racial oppression alive in law and custom, although the severity of discrimination varied across regions. Anti-black feeling burned hottest in the rural southeast—where many Dutch “Yorkers” had held onto their slaves for as long as possible—and New York City, the scene of intense labor competition and a cotton trade dependent on southern slavery.¹³²

¹²⁸ Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 129-130; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 81.

¹²⁹ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 75-76; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 177-178; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 116-117.

¹³⁰ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 58; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 127-128; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 55-56.

¹³¹ George H. Stowits, *History of the One Hundredth Regiment of New York State Volunteers: Being a Record of its Services from its Muster In to its Muster Out, its Muster In Roll, Roll of Commissions, Recruits Furnished through the Board of Trade of the City of Buffalo, and Short Sketches of Deceased and Surviving Officers* (Buffalo: Matthews & Warren, 1870), 91.

¹³² Field, *The Politics of Race in New York*, 31-34; Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy*, 303-304; Graham Russell Hodges, *Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 232-233; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 85. See also David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991).

By early 1861, blacks in the metropolis experienced an alarming increase in antagonism from their white neighbors. The previous decade had brought on endangerment resulting from the Fugitive Slave Act, growing hostility from the Irish and other Democrats, and merchants doubling down on their commitment to slavery. Illegal slave-trading vessels even reappeared in New York Harbor.¹³³ Perhaps one-quarter of the city's black population left as a result, but discrimination was the rule throughout the state and beyond.¹³⁴ The situation that Frederick Douglass—the most prominent black American of his time—had described in 1848 was largely unchanged thirteen years later: “Slaves to *individuals* at the South, we are little better than slaves to *community* at the North.”¹³⁵

Hope bloomed for blacks and the foes of slavery in Upstate New York. A diverse black and white coalition of reformers, politicians, clergymen, and editors fought the hated Fugitive Slave Act, or “Bloodhound Bill,” by thwarting slave catchers and helping runaways settle or flee farther north.¹³⁶ These efforts grew in scale as the region became a Republican bastion in the mid-to-late 1850s and Senator William H. Seward of Auburn emerged as the party's leading abolitionist. Gerrit Smith, the “Sage of Peterboro,” was a leader in the Underground Railroad and attempted to settle African Americans on land he owned.¹³⁷ From Auburn, Harriet Tubman carried out stunning fugitive rescue missions, as did the black Reverend J. W. Loguen of Syracuse, who conducted as many as 1,500 runaways through the Underground Railroad. Syracuse, indeed, “became known as the most openly abolitionist city in the nation” and the center of what historian

¹³³ Hodges, *Root and Branch*, 227, 229, 232-233, 256, 257, 261; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 40; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 117; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 85; Ernest A. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 13-15.

¹³⁴ Hodges, *Root and Branch*, 262.

¹³⁵ Field, *The Politics of Race in New York*, 33.

¹³⁶ Milton C. Sernett, *North Star Country: Upstate New York and the Crusade for African American Freedom* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 127-128, 141-142, 147-148, 156-161, 162-163.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 154, 171, 198-199, 201-202.

Milton C. Sernett calls North Star Country.¹³⁸ Farther upstate, abolitionist zealot John Brown assisted a small black colony called Timbuctoo and partly planned the Harpers Ferry raid at his farm in North Elba.¹³⁹ Yet Brown's abortive slave uprising in October 1859 heightened many New Yorkers' scorn for abolitionists despite their antislavery feelings, as it did that of whites elsewhere in the country.¹⁴⁰ A few weeks after Governor Morgan addressed the legislators in January 1861, rioters in Syracuse would break up a meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society.¹⁴¹ And no matter their opinions on slavery, most white New Yorkers remained firmly opposed to racial equality. In 1860, under pressure from Douglass and other black activists, Republicans in the state legislature called for repeal of the \$250 property qualification that kept most New York blacks from voting. But Democrats exploited the white electorate's racism, and the measure suffered a heavy defeat at the polls that November even as Republican candidates swept the election.¹⁴² In Morgan's Annual Message, he echoed his party and millions of his fellow northern whites. The governor condemned attempts by slavery's supporters "to extend the institution into the national domain, with a view, as we have seen, to increase the number of the slaveholding States." According to Morgan, however, blame for sectional agitation lay equally with abolitionists, "a few inconsiderate persons of Northern States [who] have made either actual or seeming aggressions upon the rights of the people of the slaveholding States." He also argued for repeal of northern states' personal liberty laws, which had raised southern ire by undercutting the Fugitive Slave

¹³⁸ Ibid., 162-163, 179 (quote), 190-191. For the importance of New York in prewar freedom networks, see also Eric Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2015).

¹³⁹ Sernett, *North Star Country*, 196, 206-207.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 219-220; Russell A. McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War: The Northern Response to Secession* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 27. There was, however, considerable support for Brown in the state, according to ex-Governor Horatio Seymour. Landis, *Northern Men with Southern Loyalties*, 216.

¹⁴¹ Sernett, *North Star Country*, 227.

¹⁴² David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 60; Field, *The Politics of Race in New York*, 81, 110, 116-117, 124-126, 127, 146.

Act.¹⁴³ Despite their antislavery principles and concerns over the malign influence of a southern “Slave Power,” it would take the revolutionary changes of the war years for Morgan and most other Republicans to embrace abolition.

Yet the progression of Morgan’s party over the previous seven years and its victories in November 1860 indicated how deeply antislavery ran among northerners, particularly reformers and farmers, and their determination to halt slavery’s encroachment on free labor.¹⁴⁴ The governor asserted that “existing national difficulties, are not the results of any new and unexpected causes, but are the slow growth of a generation.”¹⁴⁵ In the late Fifties, New York Republicans had viewed with alarm federal enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act and challenges to the state’s personal liberty law, seeing this as evidence of the “slave power conspiracy” in the highest reaches of the national government.¹⁴⁶ Seward’s landmark speech at Rochester in 1858, in which he called the North and South two opposing societies heading toward an “irrepressible conflict,” and Republican rhetoric about the supremacy of northern free labor encouraged northerners to believe their society was superior to that of the South and that coexistence could not last forever. Republicans drew much of their strength from young voters, who had never known a time without sectional discord.¹⁴⁷ Some abolitionists, including Douglass, welcomed the prospect of civil war as an event that would hasten emancipation.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 303-304. See also Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 123-125.

¹⁴⁴ Dean, *An Agrarian Republic*, 3, 12; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 27, 45. See also Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

¹⁴⁵ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 298-299.

¹⁴⁶ McClintock, “Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword?” 69; Leonard L. Richards, *The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination, 1780-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 200-201.

¹⁴⁷ Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan*, 21, 42; McClintock, “Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword?” 36; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 26.

¹⁴⁸ Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 27, 38-39, 61-62.

The election of 1860 was the opening act in the great drama of the Civil War era, and here, as in so many aspects of the period, New Yorkers played pivotal and quintessential roles. Democrats and Republicans nationwide knew the contest would hinge on the Empire State's thirty-five electoral votes, and operatives from New York were influential at the nominating conventions for both major parties.¹⁴⁹ Hard social and economic disparities, the importance of parties in citizens' lives, and the high stakes involved that year made the campaign in New York a markedly divided contest between upstate Republicans and downstate Democrats.¹⁵⁰ The Republicans, however, enjoyed support from influential reformers in New York City, including Horace Greeley and members of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, in addition to their voter strongholds of northern and western New York.¹⁵¹ While Democrats could count on the loyalty of metropolitan workers and merchants sympathetic to the South and fearful of war, they were hampered by national and state divisions and the unpopularity of the Albany Regency, a longstanding Democratic faction centered in the capitol.¹⁵² Nationally, both sides recognized the importance of this election and mobilized huge numbers of supporters for one of the most intense and memorable campaigns in American history. It was, in fact, a foreshadowing of wartime mobilization. Paramilitary political clubs "mustered" around New York and beyond, thrilling onlookers and enlisting voters with their torchlight parades and pledges to protect favored

¹⁴⁹ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," 2: 637, 639; McClintock, "Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword?" 104-105; Sidney David Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War* (New York: Columbia University, 1911), 70; Landis, *Northern Men with Southern Loyalties*, 224, 226-236.

¹⁵⁰ Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," 1: 172; Paula Baker, "The Gilded Age (1860-1914)," 424.

¹⁵¹ Booraem, *The Formation of the Republican Party in New York*, 223-227; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 89; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 185; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 400-405, 407.

¹⁵² Bridges, *A City in the Republic*, 148; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 240; McClintock, "Shall It Be Peace, or a Sword?" 110, 117-118, 124; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 24-26, 74-75; Mushkat, *Tammany*, 324-325; Landis, *Northern Men with Southern Loyalties*, 236.

candidates.¹⁵³ On the night of October 5, Manhattan lawyer George T. Strong viewed a “brilliant and successful” procession of Republican Wide Awakes along Broadway that took two hours to pass him. Eighteen nights later came the turn of Democratic marchers. Strong called their turnout “more numerous than any political demonstration I have ever witnessed,” an endless pageant of “lanterns, Roman candles, red shirts, and ... band after band” that continued past midnight.¹⁵⁴ Candidates and party operatives gave an estimated ten thousand speeches in the state over the course of the campaign. Democrats pumped more money into the contest and southerners threatened to secede should Lincoln win, but Republicans benefited from greater enthusiasm and better campaigning than their rivals—thanks in part to their national chairman and prominent Wide Awake, Governor Morgan.¹⁵⁵ When polls opened on November 6, about ninety-one percent of New York’s eligible voters cast ballots. Morgan was reelected by a wide margin and Lincoln carried the state and the presidency.¹⁵⁶ The party of Lincoln and Morgan also swept the state assembly: when the Eighty-Fourth Session began on January 1, ninety-three Republicans faced

¹⁵³ Albany Wide Awakes boasted of “mustering above two hundred men” at a local ratification meeting in June 1860. Albany Republican Wide-Awake Club, “[Circular regarding uniform and the organization of the club,]” n.d., in Library of Congress, *An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and Other Printed Ephemera*, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/rbpebib:@OR\(@field\(AUTHOR+@od1\(Albany+Republican+wide-awake+club+\)\)+@field\(OTHER+@od1\(Albany+Republican+wide-awake+club+\)\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/rbpebib:@OR(@field(AUTHOR+@od1(Albany+Republican+wide-awake+club+))+@field(OTHER+@od1(Albany+Republican+wide-awake+club+)))) (accessed October 18, 2016). On the Wide Awakes in New York, see Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 88, 94-95; De Alva Stanwood Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, v. 2: 1839-1861 (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1906), 328-329; George Templeton Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, v. 3: *The Civil War 1860-1865*, ed. Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 41. For an account of the Wide Awakes emphasizing their youth and militancy, see Jon Grinspan, “‘Young Men for War’: The Wide Awakes and Lincoln’s 1860 Presidential Campaign,” *Journal of American History* 96 (2009): 357-378. For mass campaign rallies in New York City as a rehearsal for war, see Edward K. Spann, *Gotham at War: New York City, 1860-1865* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002), 3-4. Prominent German-American Carl Schurz demonstrated the connection between political and military organization when he wrote Morgan urging that forces be assembled to protect Lincoln at his inauguration: “It is absolutely necessary that we should have a sufficient force of well armed militia—and wide awake companies on the ground. ... [W]e might direct the attention of the several state [Republican] committees to this matter.” Schurz to Morgan, December 21, 1860, in box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁵⁴ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 43, 52-53.

¹⁵⁵ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 93; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 329, 334; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 116.

¹⁵⁶ Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” 2: 639-640; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 118-119.

thirty-five Democratic assemblymen (in addition to twenty-three Republican and nine Democratic senators elected in 1859). Morgan must have drawn hope from the new lineup in Albany, but soon opposition from Republican radicals would hinder his policies.¹⁵⁷

Despite the governor's belief that sectional animosity was "the slow growth of a generation" rather than the result of recent events, the crisis heated up after Lincoln's election as so-called "fire-eaters" in several southern states organized secession conventions. Weeks before the election, the threat of secession had caused a stock-market dip and an economic panic in cotton-reliant New York City, and this recession deepened and spread from November on. Hundreds of businesses failed and thousands of workers lost their jobs. Anxious citizens constantly asked one another: "Do you think the South will secede?"¹⁵⁸ Yet most New Yorkers and their fellow northerners—unlike Gotham's merchant elites—refused to panic however much they deplored the prospect of disunion. Fire-eaters were bluffing, they believed, and at any rate preserving the Union by force was out of the question. Moderates like Lincoln, Seward, and Morgan dominated the Republican Party, and Greeley, one of the most influential Republicans in New York, argued strongly against coercion on November 9. "If the Cotton States become satisfied they can do better out of the Union than in it," he declared in the *Tribune*, "we insist on letting them go in peace. . . . We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to the residue by bayonets."¹⁵⁹ A growing number of northerners argued for concessions to the South, particularly repeal of personal liberty laws.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 348; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 124, 127.

¹⁵⁸ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 22, 22-23; McClintock, "Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?" 100, 108, 173-174, 212; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 335 (quote).

¹⁵⁹ *New York Daily Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1860.

¹⁶⁰ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 41, 45; McClintock, "Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?" 165-169, 172.

Widespread northern support for coercion would only come in the wake of the attack on Fort Sumter in April, but the seeds of civil war were planted when hesitancy and despair changed to outrage in the Secession Winter of 1860-1861. An alarming rush of events further impressed New Yorkers with the seriousness of the crisis. In late November, Republican editor Thurlow Weed of Albany suggested (with Seward's encouragement) a compromise that would have required the new Republican administration in Washington to drop opposition to slavery in the territories. Support for compromise was high and growing—especially in New York City—but for most Republicans, Weed's proposal betrayed what they stood for and indicated the dangers of concession.¹⁶¹ Disunion became a fact on December 20 as South Carolina formally seceded. This action along with the impending secession of other states put federal installations throughout the South in peril. From U. S. Army headquarters in New York City, General-in-Chief Winfield Scott spoke in favor of holding and reinforcing forts along the southern coast, and Major Robert Anderson, commanding Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, echoed this determination. The resolve of these officers despite conciliation by widely despised President James Buchanan and other Washington officials made them heroes in many northerners' eyes.¹⁶² Simultaneously, popular outrage followed a report that Secretary of War John B. Floyd had ordered the sale and transport of huge stocks of arms held in northern arsenals, including Watervliet Arsenal north of Albany, to

¹⁶¹ McClintock, "Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?" 174-175; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 57-58; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 338; Daniel W. Crofts, "Secession Winter: William Henry Seward and the Decision for War," *New York History* 65 (1984), 238-239. For an interpretation of Seward as anxious and uncertain during this period, see Michael Robinson, "William Henry Seward and the Onset of the Secession Crisis," *Civil War History* 59 (2013): 32-66. On widespread support for compromise in New York, see McClintock, "Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?" 171-175, 195, 213-214, 217; Kirn, "Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876," 2: 675-676; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 94-96; McKelvey, *Rochester*, 61; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 23-26; Crofts, "Secession Winter," 229-256.

¹⁶² Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 347-348; McClintock, "Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?" 236-237, 272-274. Yet Alexander notes: "After Major Anderson, on the night of December 27, had transferred his command from its exposed position at Fort Moultrie to the stronger one at Fort Sumter, it was not uncommon to hear upon the streets [of New York City] disloyal sentiments blended with those of willing sacrifice to maintain the Union." Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 347-348.

a firm in Savannah, Georgia.¹⁶³ Just days before the New Year, rumors of impending southern attacks on Washington and Fort Sumter prompted militancy throughout the North. Scott and President-Elect Lincoln received numerous proposals of armed support from would-be warriors.¹⁶⁴ On December 28, three wealthy New Yorkers addressed confidential letters to Scott through General Charles W. Sandford of the state militia. They proposed to charter a steamer in New York Harbor and fill it with supplies and volunteers, “[t]he funds to be raised by private subscription.” This expedition would reinforce Major Anderson in Charleston. “Such a course taken by a few hundred brave men,” James A. Hamilton wrote, “would rescue the garrison and save the fort; this having been done without the participation of the government could not be considered by S. Carolina as an act offensive to her, which would invite much less justify an assault.”¹⁶⁵ Aside from their hopes of avoiding provocation, the offer by Hamilton and his colleagues was a nascent glimmering of the northern war effort and the natural outgrowth of associational culture: voluntarism on a local level, through leadership and fundraising on the part of social elites, designed to meet national needs beyond the power of federal authorities. Scott declined the proposal despite his concern for the Charleston garrison.¹⁶⁶

As January ushered in the uncertain year of 1861, New Yorkers ranging from William H. Seward to James Gordon Bennett of the *Herald* called for mustering state militias to protect the national capitol while simultaneously working for compromise with the South.¹⁶⁷ Morgan—a rich,

¹⁶³ *New York Herald*, December 29, 1860; *New York Daily Tribune*, December 28, 1860; McClintock, “Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?” 272. Southerners had, in fact, purchased arms in New York since November. Spann, *Gotham at War*, 9.

¹⁶⁴ McClintock, “Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?” 275.

¹⁶⁵ Hamilton to “Lieut Genl Scott,” December 29, 1860 (first quote), and Hamilton to “Dear General [Sandford],” December 28, 1860 (second quote), in Civil War Letters Collection, New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection (accessed online via Ebscohost July 12, 2015). This proposal was to reinforce Fort Moultrie because the New Yorkers were not aware that Anderson had transferred his command to Sumter.

¹⁶⁶ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 22.

¹⁶⁷ McClintock, “Shall It be Peace, or a Sword?” 275; *New York Herald*, January 1, 1861.

conservative New York City merchant who sought peace, but also a leading Republican—embodied the dilemmas faced by his state in the sectional crisis. “Let Governor Morgan, in his Annual Message to our Legislature,” the *Herald* suggested, “put in a strong recommendation for the call of a State Convention to open negotiations with Virginia for the Union ...” Prominent Republicans, on the other hand, urged Morgan to take a stand against compromise in the address.¹⁶⁸ In the end, the governor’s Annual Message on January 2 saw him take a middle path. “The people of the State of New York, in my judgement, are not prepared” to accept southern secession, Morgan told the legislators, and he predicted “they will give the Federal authorities, in the adoption of all wise, just and necessary measures for the enforcement of the laws, their earnest, faithful, and constant support.” But what constituted “wise, just and necessary measures?” The governor assured the legislators—and the hundreds of thousands who would read his words in newspapers—that “the people of this law-abiding State” would never participate in any aggression against slaveholding states, and he advised the Legislature to make a similar promise to protect southern rights. Morgan concluded his long address by calling for New York to work with other states to ensure that “the Constitution shall be honored, and the Union of the States shall be preserved.”¹⁶⁹

New Yorkers were divided over the best strategy for keeping the peace and ending the crisis: should they try to mollify the South, as Democrats believed, or take a hard line against secession and prepare for possible war, the plan supported by most Republicans? Or did the solution lay in a combination of appeasement *and* military readiness? Few among the public or their representatives argued for holding restive states in by force.¹⁷⁰ “Pacification in sentiment and

¹⁶⁸ *New York Herald*, December 26, 1860 (quote); Mary Patricia Hodnett, “Civil War Issues in New York State Politics,” (Ph.D. diss., St. John’s University, 1970), 20-21.

¹⁶⁹ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 300, 304, 305.

¹⁷⁰ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 143-148; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 106.

preparation in act, were the order of the period,” an official later noted of the Republican-dominated state government.¹⁷¹ Morgan had argued for this approach in his Annual Message, and it received further support from other quarters. Vermont Governor Erastus Fairbanks wrote to Morgan urging “unity of action” between their states’ legislatures, including bolstering state militias and repealing personal liberty laws in order to conciliate the South.¹⁷² Morgan, through his adjutant general, had already offered the U.S. Government replacement troops for the forts in New York during the secession crisis, an overture that the army’s adjutant general rejected on January 8 because the “emergency has happily passed.”¹⁷³

Such was hardly the case. Events in Charleston Harbor soon raised the stakes. General Scott, determined to hold federal installations in the South, had ordered supplies and reinforcements sent to Fort Sumter. The ostensibly secret outfitting of this expedition in New York Harbor momentarily rallied both the public and the stock market.¹⁷⁴ On January 9, South Carolina forces fired upon the supply ship *Star of the West* as it approached Fort Sumter. Reaction in the North was swift and resolute. In Albany, Assembly Speaker DeWitt C. Littlejohn opened the January 11 session by noting that South Carolinians had “virtually declared war,” and that given this and the ongoing secession of southern states, New York should offer the president “whatever aid in men and money he may require to enable him to enforce the laws and uphold the authority of the Federal Government. . . .”¹⁷⁵ The Assembly and Senate both passed Littlejohn’s resolutions

¹⁷¹ [Lockwood L. Doty,] “Record: General Summary, January to July, 1861,” in *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 22.

¹⁷² Fairbanks to Morgan, January 8, 1861, (quote), box 17, and same to same, January 7, microfilm reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 32.

¹⁷⁴ Erasmus D. Keyes, *Fifty Years' Observations of Men and Events, Civil and Military* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1884), 372-373; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 30; George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, January 8, box 17, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷⁵ *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York: At their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 76.

by an overwhelming margin and Morgan forwarded them to President Buchanan.¹⁷⁶ Prominent and ordinary New Yorkers largely echoed their leaders' well-publicized stand. The commander of the First Division of the state militia offered regiments for New York Harbor and Washington; meanwhile, the Albany legislators' resolutions inspired a wave of similar pronouncements by state and local bodies across the North.¹⁷⁷ In early February, the New York Senate passed a \$500,000 funding bill for the militia with the support of Governor Morgan and eager young Adjutant General J. Meredith Read, and the two men planned arms purchases; these were the first of many overtures over the next four years meant to generate funds for the state's hugely expensive war effort.¹⁷⁸ On February 11, Secretary of State nominee Seward—who would closely follow military affairs in his home state during the war—told the governor that five thousand to ten thousand men should be readied in secret to reinforce Washington at short notice.¹⁷⁹ “Hoping for peace, but ready for war,” as a Weedsport militiaman described himself, New Yorkers awaited an imminent struggle for the Union.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 76-77; *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 57-58; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 126.

¹⁷⁷ Kirn, “Voters, Parties, and Legislative Politics in New York State, 1846-1876,” 2: 687; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 130-132; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 40; Resolutions of Republican Central Club, January 17, Simeon Draper to Morgan, February 11, and Charles W. Elliott to Morgan, February 6, all in box 4, EDM Papers, NYSL; Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *Thurlow Weed, Wizard of the Lobby* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1947), 269; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1906), 2: 376-377. Three southern states also took notice of New York's actions, criticizing them in resolutions that Morgan transmitted to the Legislature. Morgan to the Legislature, February 1, 1861, in Lincoln, ed., *Messages from the Governors*, 5: 313-315. Morgan's cousin George D. Morgan, a New York City merchant, worried that military preparations in New York were attracting dangerous attention. George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, January 18, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷⁸ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 139; *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 149-150; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 130-131; J. Meredith Read, “Military Affairs of New York State in 1861: Some Personal Experiences and Impressions,” *Magazine of American History with Notes and Queries* 14 (July-December 1885), 43; George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, February 13, and same to same, February 25, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷⁹ William H. Seward to Morgan, February 11, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁸⁰ Solomon Giles to Edwin D. Morgan, January 7, box 22, Franklin B. Hough Papers, NYSL. On the basis of this letter offering Morgan the services of a militia company, Giles later claimed to be the Union's first volunteer. *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 140. On the likelihood of war, see also Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 99.

They had longer to wait, however. Thanks to leading Democrats and Republicans alike, compromise won out over mobilization. From January through April, sympathy for southerners—or at least fear of provoking them—prompted Democrats from Buchanan down to refuse calls for military preparation and boost compromise efforts.¹⁸¹ A pro-compromise convention in Albany included prominent Democrats Daniel E. Sickles, Michael Corcoran, and William D. Kennedy, all three destined to lead New York troops in battle. In Buffalo, a compromise petition gained the signatures of ex-president Millard Fillmore and some three thousand others.¹⁸² Men more supportive of readiness, including Seward and Scott, also rejected military offers as premature and worked to maintain peace.¹⁸³ The New York Senate’s militia appropriation bill failed to pass in the Assembly after Democrats decried it as a dangerous provocation.¹⁸⁴ New York City, meanwhile, remained a fiercely Democratic bastion. Though Mayor Fernando Wood’s notorious secession plan gained no traction, most city residents blamed the crisis on Republicans and bemoaned the possibility of war. Southern secessionists drew strength from manifestations of support like that of Tammany and Mozart Halls, both of which issued calls to let them go in peace.¹⁸⁵ Winter wore on, slave states continued to secede, and northern leaders did little to stop them. The popular belligerence inspired by the *Star of the West* incident ebbed.¹⁸⁶ Albany editor Thurlow Weed, who had sparked Republican outrage with a compromise proposal in November,

¹⁸¹ *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York*, 75-76; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 106; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 355-356; August Belmont to William H. Seward, January 17, in Belmont, *Letters, Speeches, and Addresses of August Belmont*, 46-47.

¹⁸² Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 113-123; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 2: 350.

¹⁸³ E. D. Keyes to Morgan, February 11, box 6, Preston King to Morgan, January 17, and same to same, January 22, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL; OR, ser. 3, vol. 1, 41; Van Deusen, *Thurlow Weed*, 270-271.

¹⁸⁴ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 139; Read, “Military Affairs of New York State in 1861,” 43; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 139-140.

¹⁸⁵ Mushkat, *Tammany*, 326-327; Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 94-96; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 23-26; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 50; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 3-4; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 126-127; Read, “Military Affairs of New York State in 1861,” 44.

¹⁸⁶ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 136.

then beat the drum against secessionists in January, returned to advocating peaceful settlement in March.¹⁸⁷ In Manhattan, a disgusted George T. Strong believed northern passivity stemmed from localism. The United States was not a nation, he wrote, but only “an aggregate of communities, ready to fall apart at the first serious shock and without a centre of vigorous national life to keep us together.”¹⁸⁸ But Thurlow Weed’s change of mood by late winter was common among Republicans in New York and beyond. His outlook, and theirs, would undergo yet another transformation in April.¹⁸⁹ That many of the elites and associations rejecting coercion in early 1861 were destined to lead the mobilization effort testifies to its voluntary nature, the weakness of federal power, and the revolution in sentiment that would come with heightened tensions and war’s outbreak. To a large degree, the same leaders and communities that Strong dismissed in March would shoulder the burden of saving the Union.

Back on January 2, when legislators heard the governor’s words, all of this lay in the future. After the clerks in the Senate and Assembly finished their laborious task of reading the Annual Message, both houses resolved to take further consideration of the governor’s advice on national matters at a later time.¹⁹⁰ But affairs in the Senate took an unexpected turn thanks to resolutions from a seemingly unlikely quarter. Francis B. Spinola, a Democrat representing New York City’s Third District, reminded his fellow senators that one state was currently committing treason and that it was the duty of every state and citizen to make sacrifices for the preservation of the Union. Spinola next offered resolutions that the governor be “directed, in the name of the people of the State of New York, to tender to the president of the United States, the services of the militia of the

¹⁸⁷ Van Deusen, *Thurlow Weed*, 270-272.

¹⁸⁸ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 108-109.

¹⁸⁹ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 133.

¹⁹⁰ *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 34; *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 37.

State, to be used in such manner and at such times as the President may deem best to preserve the union and to enforce the Constitution and laws of the Country.” Furthermore, the Senate’s committee on military affairs should make a report on the condition of these forces and, if needed, “report a bill to raise ten millions of dollars to properly arm the State.”¹⁹¹ Spinola, a tireless legislator who had risen from the jeweler’s trade to a career in politics, was going against his party leadership and most of his constituents in advocating increased military readiness. But senators in both parties (including Spinola) were unprepared for immediate action. They voted unanimously to refer the resolutions to a committee of five rather than consider them in session that day, and then moved on to other business.¹⁹² Military preparedness would have to await another day, and Spinola would play a prominent and notorious part.

In the final paragraph of his Annual Message, Governor Morgan had urged his fellow New Yorkers to show leadership in the crisis tearing the Union apart. “Every State can do something, and ought to do all that it can to avert the threatened danger,” he noted. “Let New York set the example in this respect.”¹⁹³ Morgan called specifically on the state’s congressmen in Washington to lead the way in finding a peaceful and legal solution to the national emergency. His words, however, symbolized the leading and archetypal roles that the Empire State and its citizens had long played and would continue to play in the coming war.

¹⁹¹ *Journal of the Senate of the State of New York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 34.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 34-35; William D. Murphy, *Biographical Sketches of the State Officers and Members of the Legislature of the State of New York, in 1861* (New York: The author, 1861), 118-120.

¹⁹³ Morgan, “Annual Message, January 2,” 305.

CHAPTER TWO

“THE ENTHUSIASTIC UPRISING OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR CAUSE, IS OUR GREAT RELIANCE”: THE RUSH TO ARMS IN 1861

Throughout their acquaintance, the relationship of Edwin D. Morgan and Abraham Lincoln was one of alliance and mutual respect. In May of 1861, however, Morgan expressed deep frustration with Lincoln and his administration over their lack of appreciation for state sovereignty. A semi-official body in New York City, the Union Defense Committee, had bypassed Morgan’s authority and obtained Lincoln’s acceptance of fourteen three-year regiments that the committee had raised in New York. Lincoln had heard of Morgan’s opposition to these regiments, which were not authorized by New York State law, whereupon the president told a UDC member to “cut the knots” and bring on the troops.¹ This was just one of several instances in which Lincoln or Secretary of War Simon Cameron accepted offers of troops without consulting governors of the states involved; sometimes they overrode governors’ opposition to certain regiments, so anxious were they to secure forces to protect the capital and defeat the rebellion. After Morgan complained to Lincoln, the president wrote to him explaining that he had not intended to undermine the governor’s authority, but that support from ordinary New Yorkers and other loyal Americans was crucial in this mobilization. “The enthusiastic uprising of the people in our cause, is our great reliance,” Lincoln wrote, “and we can not [sic] safely give it any

¹ Lincoln to Charles H. Russell, May 16, 1861 (quote), *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History*, https://www.gilderlehrman.org/collections/5f4c5a71-1f3e-4bd8-8e39-285530555632?back=/mweb/search%3Fpage%3D2%2526needle%3Dlincoln%2526fields%3D_t301000285%2526era6%3DCivil%2520War%2520and%2520Reconstruction%252C%25201861-1877%2526sortby%3Ds301001610%2526items_per_page%3D20 (accessed November 12, 2016); Samuel Sloan to Morgan, May 22, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL. All dates in this chapter’s notes refer to 1861 unless otherwise indicated. Period records and references to the Union Defense Committee habitually spell it “defence;” this dissertation uses the modern spelling except in quotations.

check, even though it overflows, and runs in channels not laid down in any chart.”² Members of the committee echoed this argument.³ Morgan pragmatically accepted the president’s decision but continued to resent what he saw as the UDC’s interference.⁴

The issue of the fourteen regiments indicated the decentralized nature of mobilization, especially early on, and the degree to which troop-raising and related war issues saw struggles for authority between levels of government, associations, and individuals. When war broke out in April, New Yorkers and other northerners reacted with awesome patriotic furor. Partisanship subsided as governments, communities, and citizens mobilized to save the Union. Early on, northern war making was guided by national and state policy but relied on northern communities for implementation, and here lay both its strength and weakness. Patriotism and volunteer culture overcame the North’s unpreparedness to an impressive degree and helped the Union survive the first, fearful months of war.

The match that ignited popular war spirit was lit before the fall of Fort Sumter. Lincoln’s newly installed administration occupied the difficult position of holding Forts Sumter and Pickens in the face of Confederate demands that the government abandon them. In early April, rising tensions over the forts sparked fear and frustration in New York and across the Union. Committees and individuals besieged Lincoln, Morgan, and other officials with letters, resolutions, petitions, and editorials, most of them insisting on firmness and preparation in the face of southern aggression.⁵ As historian Russell A. McClintock notes, the formation and behavior of these impromptu bodies indicated the public’s increasing willingness to call for

² Morgan to Lincoln, May 19, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL; Lincoln to Morgan, May 20, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4: 375-376.

³ Sloan to Morgan, May 22, op. cit.

⁴ Letters between Lincoln and Morgan, May 23, May 26, box 7, and letters between Hamilton Fish and Morgan, May 19, May 21, May 22, box 5, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁵ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 142, 226-227, 244-246.

action when it found government lacking in the crisis.⁶ Tentative mobilization got underway in New York. The federal government increased its orders with the Troy and Watervliet arsenals and stepped up regular army recruiting in New York City. Relief expeditions for Pickens and Sumter fitted out in New York Harbor and militiamen around the state met for drill.⁷ Once again, war looked certain. The militia appropriation bill reappeared in the Assembly after Pennsylvania adopted a nearly identical measure, though a version of the New York bill would not become law until after Fort Sumter fell.⁸ The reigning sentiment was not enthusiasm, however, but fear. “The panic here is raging horribly,” Morgan’s cousin wrote him from New York City after urging that the state arm for war, adding that he feared “Washington will soon be invaded, and you may yet have to protect the city of New York.” Weed’s *Albany Evening Journal* supported the Fort Sumter relief mission but dreaded imminent news of hostilities. A Brooklyn Democratic sheet went further, predicting “ruin” and “military despotism” and deploring the arms bill.⁹ Influential Democratic voices around the state continued to blame the nation’s woes on Republicans and abolitionists.¹⁰ Divisions in New York were deep, bitter, and persistent.

Then came the Confederate assault on Fort Sumter, which incited patriotic displays and calls to arms unprecedented in American history. In the rush of events, governments, communities, groups, and individuals acted almost simultaneously, if not always concertedly.

News of the bombardment reached New York City and Brooklyn on the night of April 12, and

⁶ *Ibid.*, 245-246.

⁷ *New York Daily Tribune*, April 12 and April 13; Keyes, *Fifty Years' Observations of Men and Events*, 389; *New York Herald*, April 15; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 12; *Geneva Gazette*, April 12.

⁸ George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, April 9, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 10 and April 15; *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York: At Their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 903, 904, 932-933, 938, 968-969. George D. Morgan and *Albany Evening Journal* editor Thurlow Weed were both advisors to the governor and wrote favorably of the Pennsylvania bill.

⁹ George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, April 11, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 12; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 13.

¹⁰ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 3-4; *Geneva Gazette*, April 12; *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 13.

the extraordinary excitement there was replicated across the state and beyond. The metropolis whose residents had backed the South seemed to make a sudden, 180-degree turn: New Yorkers from Mayor Wood down voiced outrage at the southern attack and support for Lincoln's administration and the Union.¹¹ "The first gun has nearly united the North, and the government will be sustained," a Brooklyn newspaper noted with relief. Ironically, the diverse, polarized citizens of New York State seemed to agree on one thing: the endangered Union must now be preserved.¹²

Fort Sumter fell on April 13, and Morgan met with his staff in Albany early the next morning. Anticipating calls for troops from the Lincoln administration—calls that were sure to draw heavily on New York—Morgan, as commander-in-chief of the state militia, determined to enroll thirty thousand men. Then, at a meeting of executive and legislative leaders that afternoon, Morgan and others present did something natural to their worldview and which would be replicated countless times during the war: they formed a committee. A group made up of two or three executive officials, a Democratic senator, and a Republican assemblyman was enjoined to prepare a militia bill for presentation in the Legislature the next day.¹³ The resulting document stipulated that the state enroll up to thirty thousand men for two years' service and appropriate \$3 million for expenses. The troops were to be specially raised militia drawn from outside of the organized state forces and must be turned over to the president of the United States upon his

¹¹ Mushkat, *Tammany*, 328-329; *New York Herald*, April 15; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 5; Thomas Astley Atkins and John Wise Oliver, *Yonkers in the Rebellion of 1861-1865: Including a History of the Erection of the Monument to Honor the Men of Yonkers who Fought to Save the Union* (Yonkers: Yonkers Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument Association, 1892), 14.

¹² *Brooklyn Evening Star*, April 13; *New York Daily Tribune*, April 13; Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 119.

¹³ Read, "Military Affairs of New York State in 1861," 50; Doty, "Record: General Summary, January to July, 1861," 29; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 15; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 134. Read describes the committee as having four members, while Doty—the governor's secretary—lists five; the *Journal* does not give a number.

request to the governor. They would be subject to federal regulations, but once back in state control could only be discharged in the county where they were organized.¹⁴ Thus did the April 14 bill recognize the sovereignty of the federal, state, and local governments in the national emergency. The proposal also indicated that Morgan's government understood the gravity of the situation. Lincoln's first manpower call must be answered with the state's organized regiments, the so-called "uniformed militia" capable of responding quickly but constrained by ninety-day federal term limits. Should the war last longer than three months, more troops would be needed and for a longer period. The April 14 bill was a wise measure, written by men who were not the overconfident politicians of Civil War lore.¹⁵

This bill, the first official act of mobilization by the most influential state in the Union, set a pattern of conflict and confusion that would mark New York's war effort and that of the nation. Legislative debates over the bill on April 15 indicated that some in the State Capitol believed mobilization was too much responsibility for Morgan alone.¹⁶ The final version of the act, taking effect April 16, created a seven-member group to share joint authority in carrying it out. This body would consist of the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, comptroller, attorney general, state engineer, and state treasurer.¹⁷ Morgan and Adjutant General Read were outraged: committees with limited power were necessary, but the Military Board, as it came to

¹⁴ "Chap. 277: An Act to Authorize the Embodying and Equipment of a Volunteer Militia, and to Provide for the Public Defence," in *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the Eighty-Fourth Session of the Legislature* (Albany: E. Croswell, 1861), 634-636.

¹⁵ For the popular but simplistic notion that "[b]oth sides thought it would be a ninety-day war," see, for example, *The Civil War: Part One—The Cause (1861)*, directed by Ken Burns, aired September 23, 1990 (Hollywood: PBS Home Video, 2011), DVD.

¹⁶ *Albany Evening Journal*, April 16. Years later, Read accused Democrats of taking the bill he had helped craft and modifying it in secret over the night of April 14-15. Read, "Military Affairs of New York State in 1861," 49.

¹⁷ "Chap. 277," 634. For the (thorough) official history of the Military Board, see *Communication from the Governor Transmitting the Report of the Board of State Officers Named in the Act of April 16, 1861, Entitled "An Act to Authorize the Embodying and Equipment of a Voluntary Militia, and to Provide for the Public Defense": Transmitted to the Senate January 9, 1862* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1862).

be known, represented red tape and dilution of central authority at a time when quick, decisive leadership was needed.¹⁸ Necessary as they were in an era of small government, committees by their nature sometimes hindered the war effort. The Military Board, indeed, soon became a byword for inefficiency, with Seward calling it symptomatic of every state's difficulties in mobilization.¹⁹ Thankfully for Morgan and Read—and possibly for the Union cause—the Board's power was largely limited to the troops raised under the April 16 law.²⁰ That act also courted controversy by the number of troops it authorized and their term of service. Thirty thousand was a much higher figure than the War Department requested of New York, but some influential New Yorkers asserted that still more men were needed.²¹ What was more, the two years stipulation was relatively prescient—being far longer than the term Lincoln designated—but would soon lead to mass confusion and dismay over which volunteers were enrolled for three months and which for two years.

The federal call telegraphed to Morgan and the other governors late on April 14 (and publicized the next morning) was an altogether different animal than the New York act. That Lincoln's administration needed troops from the loyal states was painfully clear. Federal authorities had done little to prepare for war. The regular United States forces were tiny, scattered, and depleted even before war began by resignations of southern officers and a large-

¹⁸ Read, "Military Affairs of New York State in 1861," 49-50, 294; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 134-135.

¹⁹ George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, May 6, box 9, Elias W. Leavenworth to Edwin D. Morgan, May 10, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL; (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, June 26; William H. Seward to Union Defence Committee, May 13, Union Defence Committee of the City of New York Records, Correspondence, April, 1861- Dec. 1884, New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection, (accessed online via Ebscohost July 12, 2015) (hereafter UDC Records, Ebscohost). Criticism of the April 15 act and the Military Board continued decades after the war, as seen in the memoirs of Morgan's military aide, Silas W. Burt. S. W. Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1902), 14.

²⁰ Harold Holzer et al, *The Union Preserved: A Guide to Civil War Records in the New York State Archives* (New York: Fordham University Press and New York State Archives Partnership Trust, 1999), 70.

²¹ Telegram of Moses H. Grinnell to Morgan, April 15, box 6, Stephen L. Wade to Morgan, April 22, box 17, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York: At their Eighty-Fourth Session*, 1026.

scale surrender in Texas. The Treasury was inefficient and practically broke. Confederates, meanwhile, had gotten a head start on mobilization, with thousands already enrolled for their defense.²² This was the context in which Lincoln called for troops and the War Department made requisitions on each loyal state. Lincoln's April 15 proclamation drew directly from the language of the 1795 Calling Forth Act, the legal basis for a presidential call-up of state militias to quell rebellions. Noting that "combinations too powerful to be suppressed" through normal legal channels had caused several states to revolt, Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand state militia and asked loyal citizens to support this campaign for the Union. Additionally, he summoned Congress to meet on July 4 to address the situation.²³ Secretary of War Simon Cameron's follow-up letter to Union governors requested a quota of infantry or riflemen from each state (based on its population in the latest census) and listed states' rendezvous points. In a nod to law and tradition, the troops would be commanded by state-appointed generals and their service limited to three months. New York, as the most populous state, had the largest quota: seventeen regiments and 13,280 men. Albany, Elmira, and New York City were the selected rendezvous.²⁴ Though technically a demand by federal authorities upon the states and characterized as such by Morgan and others in passing, the circumstances and procedure of this and subsequent federal calls indicated the voluntary nature of the mobilization.²⁵ Lincoln's administration made clear its reliance on the states. As head of a board tasked with deciding army organization in May, Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase's concern for state loyalties inspired him to recommend

²² Timothy J. Reese, *Sykes' Regular Infantry Division: A History of Regular United States Infantry Operations in the Civil War's Eastern Theater* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 1990), 5-6, 28, 33; Jane Flaherty, "'The Exhausted Condition of the Treasury' on the Eve of the Civil War," *Civil War History* 55 (2009): 244-277; Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 226.

²³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 67-68.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 68-69.

²⁵ Morgan, Message to the Assembly, April 15, 1861, in *Messages from the Governors*, 5: 356-357; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 16.

three-year enlistments instead of the standard federal five-year term, to authorize governors to appoint officers in their state regiments, and to reject an officer's suggestion that volunteer regiments be made part of the regular army.²⁶ States would retain much responsibility for forming and officering regiments throughout the war.

Fully aware of the general government's impotency in the crisis, New Yorkers quickly answered the state and federal manpower calls. On April 15, Morgan asked the Legislature to immediately authorize him "larger discretionary power than is now possessed" to raise, equip, and finance a volunteer force, an early indication of his concern over the red tape already causing rifts in Albany.²⁷ Intensely excited legislators met in the crowded Capitol to decide on the bill for thirty thousand troops and \$3 million. It passed by overwhelming margins in both houses.

Recruiting offices opened in Albany that evening and a procession of militiamen marched to the Executive Chamber to personally offer their services to Morgan, their passage hailed by cheers from observers.²⁸ State authorities also set about meeting the federal requisition for militia. On April 18, Morgan formally acknowledged Lincoln's call and reported it already underway in New York.²⁹ These were among the first of countless scenes over the next three months indicating an extraordinary degree of commitment to the Union cause by New Yorkers of all classes. New York was not the first state to offer troops to the general government, nor were New Yorkers first to leave for the front.³⁰ Yet citizens of the Empire State took pride in offering

²⁶ Clayton R. Newell and Charles R. Shrader, *Of Duty Well and Faithfully Done: A History of the Regular Army in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 203-204; Reese, *Sykes' Regular Infantry Division*, 55.

²⁷ Morgan, Message to the Assembly, April 15, 1861.

²⁸ *New York Herald*, April 16; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 16; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 311.

²⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 72, 85.

³⁰ Governor Alexander Ramsey of Minnesota, visiting Washington when news of Fort Sumter's fall reached the city, promptly went to the War Department and offered troops. Richard Moe, *The Last Full Measure: The Life and Death of the First Minnesota Volunteers* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1993), 7-8. Massachusetts militiamen were the first to leave their home state for Washington. On the efficiency of Massachusetts Governor John A. Andrew and his

large, additional forces and in meeting with bilateral support “the nation’s call with that promptness which comports with her past history, and with her present position in the sisterhood of States,” as Morgan noted.³¹ State pride would loom large over the next four years.

An observer could be forgiven, however, for concluding that little in the history or culture of the state and nation predicted a large, bipartisan military response. Frequent allusions to their patriot forbears obscured the fact that New Yorkers and their fellow Americans had long felt ambivalent toward military service. As Marcus Cunliffe notes, American military practices involved a peculiar combination of devotion and neglect stemming from professional, anti-professional, and “antimilitarist” cultures.³² Conceptions of the military in 1861 were rooted in a centuries-old reliance on short-term militiamen and volunteers and a small, neglected body of regulars. Several historians have explained how these customs developed in the colonies. In the seventeenth century, New Yorkers and other colonists used an Elizabethan model of town-based, compulsory, short-term militias officered by civic leaders.³³ By late in the century, colonial governments no longer relied on militiamen for anything but brief emergencies, preferring to handle major campaigns with specially recruited volunteers called provincials, raised through manpower quotas that colonial governments placed on communities. It was largely provincials—recruited from the itinerant poor and other powerless classes—who fought the “French and

state militia, see Robert F. McGraw, “Minutemen of ’61: The Pre-Civil War Massachusetts Militia,” *Civil War History* 15 (1969): 101-115.

³¹ Morgan, Message to the Assembly, April 15, 1861.

³² Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775-1865* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1968), 19-22, 27.

³³ Lawrence Delbert Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and the Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 4; Michael D. Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard, 1636-2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 8-20; Alan R. Millett, Peter Maslowski, and William B. Feis, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 2012), 1-5; John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 2, 7-8, 10; Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry. *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington: Department of the Army, 1955), 2-4.

Indian Wars” alongside British regulars.³⁴ Inspired by republican and Whig doctrine, which championed the value of a citizen-soldiery and abhorred standing armies, Americans relied on their traditional mobilization practices in the Revolution. They revered the militia ideal and enforced service for brief terms, but legislators had allowed most militias to atrophy into police bodies and social clubs, and men who could afford exemptions or substitutes frequently left militia duty to their poorer neighbors.³⁵ In scenes that would be replicated on a larger scale eighty-six years later, Americans of all backgrounds rushed to arms in 1775, but soon the weakness of militias and plummeting support for the war led the Continental Congress to place greater reliance on a regular force, the Continental Army, recruited mainly from the same classes that filled regular and provincial ranks. George Washington, recognizing the need to appeal to Americans’ self-interest, pushed for pay and bounties as recruitment tools targeting the poor.³⁶ The pressures of war also revealed to many the need for military professionalism.³⁷ Yet the war did not end fears of federal and military threats to republicanism; legislation at the state and national levels kept state assemblies largely in control of defense during the war and afterward, while the Continental Army (which had mostly consisted of state regiments) was disbanded in 1783.³⁸

³⁴ Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, 21; Millett, Maslowski, and Feis, *For the Common Defense*, 7. For the raising and experiences of provincials in the mid-eighteenth century, see Fred Anderson, *A People’s Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years’ War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

³⁵ Robert E. Jackson and Arthur Vollmer, *Backgrounds of Selective Service* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947), 1: 55; Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 6-7, 12, 15, 35.

³⁶ Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 56-59. On patriot governments’ mobilization during the Revolutionary War, see also Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army*, 9-22. For more on the social composition of the Continentals, see Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1996); John A. Ruddiman, *Becoming Men of Some Consequence: Youth and Military Service in the Revolutionary War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014); Sung Bok Kim, “Impact of Class Relations and Warfare in the American Revolution: The New York Experience,” *Journal of American History* 69 (1982): 326-346.

³⁷ Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 53.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 60-63, 66.

The new republic faced a variety of threats and few honed weapons with which to meet them. Thus, the nine decades from the Treaty of Paris to the fall of Fort Sumter were punctuated by debates between proponents of federal versus state control of military readiness—and crises that foregrounded the issue time and again. Congress reinforced states' sovereignty in mobilization with the Uniform Militia Act of 1792. This notoriously toothless law was a monument to republicanism: it established compulsory militia service for citizens in national emergencies, but limited such service to three months in any year, left the responsibility for maintaining forces to the states, and gave them little incentive to do so.³⁹ States passed legislation conforming to the act; together, these federal and state laws allowed for customs that would shape the course of the Civil War, including exemption from duty and substitution. Yet one thing these enactments could not do was ensure a cohesive, dependable federal force in wartime.⁴⁰ Despite immediate and obvious weaknesses in American military policy, a revised 1795 national law known as the Calling Forth Act ceded even more control to the states. The 1792 and 1795 acts—reverence for states' rights and the citizen-soldier ideal enshrined in law—would guide United States mobilization until their replacement by a new militia act over a century later.⁴¹

Despite reform proposals, growing specialization in military science, and the cultivation of a professional ethos in the tiny U. S. Army and Navy, citizens and soldiers alike remained bound to republicanism.⁴² Americans consequently repeated the errors of the Revolutionary War

³⁹ Ibid., 120; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 184; Jackson and Vollmer, *Backgrounds of Selective Service*, 1: 58-59; John K. Mahon, *The American Militia: Decade of Decision, 1789-1800* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1960), 19-21; Russell F. Weigley, *Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 20-21.

⁴⁰ Mahon, *The American Militia*, 22-24.

⁴¹ Ibid., 28; Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, 67-68.

⁴² On the growth of federal military professionalism in the early republic, see William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), and J. P. Clark, *Preparing for War: The Emergence of the Modern U. S. Army, 1815-1917* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

in all their major nineteenth-century conflicts. Prejudice against military professionals and deficiencies in the federal enlistment system prompted reliance on short-term volunteers and militiamen.⁴³ Following a centuries-old tradition, Americans commonly despised the regular army as a mercenary gang of immigrants, criminals, and other misfits.⁴⁴ During the War of 1812, the government's attempt to recruit a substantial regular force at rendezvous around the country fell far short of goals until the introduction of one-year enlistments and large bounties; in a blunder that would be repeated fifty years later, bounties were paid upon enlistment, inspiring widespread desertions.⁴⁵ Inept regular-army recruiting policies continued postwar. The General Recruiting Service, established in 1823 for the peacetime force, proved itself unable to handle increased numbers during the Mexican War, and even in times of peace recruiters might resort to misleading promises.⁴⁶ Manpower issues were not helped by the regulars' class problem; in 1860, an officer noted that enlistment of poor, immoral immigrants discouraged "enterprising [sic] American youth" from serving, and concluded that the "prevailing sentiment seems to be with officers and citizens, that there is something essentially degrading in enlisting into the army."⁴⁷ Amidst the martial fervor of the spring of 1861, potential enlistees in New York City—a major recruiting point for the U. S. Army—favored volunteer over regular regiments because

University Press, 2017). On increasing complexity in military science and efforts to reform the militia system, see Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 163-164, 169. On soldiers' adherence to republicanism and other American values, see Herrera, *For Liberty and the Republic*.

⁴³ Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 172-173.

⁴⁴ Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 102-103, 114-116.

⁴⁵ Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army*, 48-49. On recruiting failures and bounties, see J. C. A. Stagg, "Enlisted Men in the United States Army, 1812-1815: A Preliminary Survey," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 43 (1986): 615-645.

⁴⁶ Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army*, 62; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 266.

⁴⁷ Lieut. O. O. H., U. S. Army, "Military Subordination," *Military Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 9 (May 1, 1860), 138. On regular army recruitment in the immediate antebellum and Civil War years, see Mark W. John, "'Where are the Regulars?' An Analysis of Regular Army Recruiting and Enlistees, 1851-1865" (Ph.D. diss., University at Albany, State University of New York, 2012).

there was “more honor attached to a volunteer.”⁴⁸ In the antebellum era, critics of military professionalism also condemned West Point and the United States Navy as expensive and undemocratic institutions, although both survived thanks to other influential voices.⁴⁹

The Navy enjoyed a reputation for skill and dedication throughout the antebellum years, although it too labored under manning difficulties. The mariner’s life was an infamously hard one, especially under the yoke of military discipline. Reforms introduced in 1839 cut down on notorious enlistment practices such as “crimping” (impressment) and theft of bounties. At naval recruiting rendezvous—the largest of which were in New York City—the practice became to send new sailors aboard receiving ships immediately, before crimps could seize their money.⁵⁰ The Navy attempted to ease its manpower problem by enlisting young boys, locals at overseas stations, and—despite government reluctance—free blacks in limited numbers.⁵¹ Yet only with the introduction of increased wages and reenlistment bounties in the mid-1850’s did the enlistment rate significantly improve. At war’s outbreak in 1861, the Navy’s culture of professionalism helped it absorb thousands of raw recruits more successfully than the regular army.⁵²

When Americans thought about military affairs during the early national and antebellum eras, it was usually not in terms of the U. S. Army or Navy but local militias, the anti-professional element in the country’s military culture. As late as the 1790’s, the standing militia

⁴⁸ *New York Herald*, April 16 (quote), April 18.

⁴⁹ Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 54, 107, 154-155, 277; Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 78. For issues of federal defense funding in the early republic and Civil War eras, see Max M. Edling, *A Hercules in the Cradle: War, Money, and the American State, 1783-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

⁵⁰ Harold Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1967), 75-76, 79, 83-84.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 85, 93-95, 111, 124; Richard M. Reid, *African Canadians in Union Blue: Volunteering for the Cause in the Civil War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 56-58, 62.

⁵² Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy*, 121-122; Dennis J. Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998), 5-6, 9.

with its training days and political influences “touched the lives of more individuals than any other function of government save taxpaying,” according to one historian.⁵³ With the new century, however, came a decline in universal service. The War of 1812 saw federal and state authorities bungle their employment of militias, which in any case were often composed of undisciplined, unenthusiastic amateurs.⁵⁴ The notorious behavior of New York militiamen at the Battle of Queenston Heights—in which they refused to cross into Canada to aid hard-pressed comrades—reinforced widespread beliefs that standing militias had outlived their usefulness.⁵⁵ After 1815, a number of developments sounded the death knell for the institution. Resentment from working-class men obliged to serve, declining interest in military matters, a peace movement, and mockery of politicking Sunday soldiers in the burlesque of the day (these aspects forming the “anti-militarist” part of Cunliffe’s trio) caused state after state to amend its onerous service laws.⁵⁶ In 1846, New York officials replaced compulsory duty with a commutation fee, or “militia fine,” for those unwilling to serve, with the proceeds meant to fund the state’s volunteer regiments. Yet even this small fee brought protest from those who considered it an unequal burden on the poor, and New Yorkers found it easy to avoid paying.⁵⁷ Enrollment for the

⁵³ Mahon, *The American Militia*, iii. See also Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, op. cit., and Mahon, “The Citizen Soldier in National Defense, 1789-1815,” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1950).

⁵⁴ See Robert L. Kerby, “The Militia System and the State Militias in the War of 1812,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 73 (1977): 102-124; C. Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999). John R. Elting summarizes the numerous fiascos caused by inexperience and poor planning during the conflict in Elting, *Amateurs, to Arms! A Military History of the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1991).

⁵⁵ For the Queenston Heights scandal, see John Brannan, *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States, during the War with Great Britain in the Years 1812, 13, 14, & 15: With Some Additional Letters and Documents Elucidating the History of that Period* (Washington: Way & Gideon, 1823), 103-104; Solomon Van Rensselaer, *A Narrative of the Affair at Queenstown in the War of 1812* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1836); Robert Malcolmson, *A Very Brilliant Affair: The Battle of Queenston Heights, 1812* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2003), 71, 165, 166.

⁵⁶ Lewis H. Clark, *Military History of Wayne County, N.Y.: The County in the Civil War* (Sodus, NY: Hulett and Gaylord, 1883), 188; Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 173-174; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 185-187, 190-191, 206, 208, 211; Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 82, 83.

⁵⁷ Lena London, “The Militia Fine, 1830-1860,” *Military Affairs* 15 (1951): 133-144; “New York Militia Laws,” *Military Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 3 (February 1, 1860), 33.

militia, whether resulting in training duty or fee payment, was highly unpopular for citizens and officials alike.⁵⁸

The explosion of voluntary associations in the early to mid-nineteenth century also weakened the standing militia's appeal as they provided New Yorkers with varied opportunities for civic engagement.⁵⁹ One especially colorful form of volunteering involved the service of uniformed militia regiments. By the late 1850's, many volunteer units had emerged out of the wreckage of the standing militia, their membership consisting of men who enjoyed uniforms, drill, and patriotic displays.⁶⁰ This movement, centered in New York City and Boston and once the preserve of social elites, now involved members of every class and ethnicity, who joined companies with their peers.⁶¹ New York City Irishmen formed the Ninth Regiment as an "army of liberation" for their homeland, while the officers of the Washington Riflemen disseminated orders in their native German.⁶² Anti-immigrant nativists organized at least one New York City regiment, the Seventy-First "American Guard," and Know-Nothings were also prominent among Buffalo volunteers.⁶³ Young Saratoga County native Elmer E. Ellsworth formed a drill team in Chicago modeled after French Algerian troops called zouaves. When Ellsworth's Zouave Cadets

⁵⁸ The 1860 state adjutant general's report complained of the "extreme inconvenience and harassment" of the "utterly unavailing" law mandating enrollment of everyone liable to duty in each county. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Made to the Legislature March 12, 1860* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1860), 11 (quotes), 14.

⁵⁹ John F. Kutolowski and Kathleen Smith Kutolowski, "Commissions and Canvasses: The Militia and Politics in Western New York, 1800-1845," *New York History* 63 (1982), 3-38.

⁶⁰ The principle of elite, volunteer militias can be traced back to the trained bands of Elizabethan England. They exerted major influence upon the American militia system by the late eighteenth century. Mahon, *The American Militia*, 10, 56, 59-60.

⁶¹ Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 217, 220, 223; Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 83; Nadel, *Little Germany*, 113; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 38-39.

⁶² George A. Hussey and William Todd, *History of the Ninth Regiment N.Y.S.M., N.G.S.N.Y. (Eighty-Third N.Y. Volunteers) 1845-1888* (New York: J.S. Ogilvie, 1889), 3; Orders of Washington Riflemen, 1859-1865, Regiment Collection, box 1, New-York Historical Society Manuscript Collection (hereafter N-YHS).

⁶³ Augustus T. Francis and George E. Lowen, *History of the 71st Regiment, N.G., N.Y., American Guard* (New York: Veterans Association, 71st Regiment, N.G., N.Y., 1919), 1; Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, 94; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 372. See also Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 228; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 33-34.

toured New York in 1860, their flashy uniforms and acrobatic maneuvers caused a sensation; by July, as the *Military Gazette* reported, zouave companies were “springing up all over the State” and beyond.⁶⁴ The zouave craze inspired many with its potential for athleticism, comradeship, and discipline, and Ellsworth’s New York zouaves would figure prominently in the war fever of 1861.⁶⁵ No volunteer corps, however, rivaled the New York Seventh in prestige. This New York City regiment boasted an exclusive, upper-class membership and had been the first American organization to call itself the “National Guards.”⁶⁶ In the antebellum years, their closely regulated dress and behavior and prominence in riot duty earned the National Guards a superb reputation, and they, too, would be among the first responders at war’s outbreak.⁶⁷ The War Department, recognizing the value of the volunteers, supplied the states with weapons to arm them; the rest of their outfit was usually financed by the men themselves.⁶⁸ Stingy government support and lax militia laws prompted interested people to devote their own resources to volunteer organizations.⁶⁹ The New York State Military Association, founded in 1853, encouraged readiness by awarding prizes to the best-drilled corps and publishing a military

⁶⁴ Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 241-247; *Military Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 14 (July 15, 1860): 210-213, 217 (quote).

⁶⁵ James H. Manning, *Albany Zouave Cadets: Fifty Years Young* (Albany: Weed-Parsons Publishing Co., 1910), 8-9, 10-11, 13-14, 16, 18; Matthew J. Graham, *The Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteers (Hawkins' Zouaves): Being a History of the Regiment and Veteran Association, from 1860 to 1900* (New York: E.P. Coby & Co., 1900), 23-31, quoting Rush C. Hawkins’s Preamble and Code for the New York Zouave Company, July 1860; “11th Infantry Regiment New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veteran’s Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/11thInf/11thInfCWN.htm> (accessed December 6, 2016).

⁶⁶ William Swinton, *History of the Seventh Regiment, National Guard, State of New York, During the War of the Rebellion ...* (New York: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1870), 2-3; Asher Taylor, *Recollections of the Early Days of the National Guard, Comprising the Prominent Events in the History of the Famous Seventh Regiment New York Militia* (New York: J.M. Bradstreet & Son, 1868), 16; Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, 95. See also Emmons Clark, *History of the Seventh Regiment of New York, 1806-1889*, 2 vols. (New York: Seventh Regiment, 1890).

⁶⁷ General Order No. 12, June 25, 1860, 7th Regiment Records, box 4, N-YHS; Swinton, *History of the Seventh Regiment, National Guard, State of New York, During the War of the Rebellion*, 16-17, 20-21.

⁶⁸ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 83-84; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Made to the Legislature January 8, 1861* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1861), 6-7; Francis and Lowen, *History of the 71st Regiment*, 30, 79.

⁶⁹ William Lounsbury, “The Ulster Regiment in the ‘Great Rebellion,’” *Collections of the Ulster Historical Society* 1 (1860/62), 211.

science journal.⁷⁰ Much like volunteer fire companies and other associations, the uniformed militia bound its members in like-minded communities and informed their social outlook and behavior. The volunteer movement crossed the Atlantic in the late 1850's as Britons, inspired by American militiamen, formed their own corps.⁷¹

State volunteers made their shambling entrance as a major wartime institution in 1846. In gathering forces for the Mexican War, the general government requested regiments from the states to avoid the expense of recruiting more regulars.⁷² New York was to supply seven regiments, and recruiting began with a war meeting in New York City that May.⁷³ Recruitment for this war added little luster to the Empire State. Officers for the regiments—largely Democratic political appointees—relied on party bosses to fill their ranks from Gotham's desperate poor (though upstate volunteers also supplied some companies).⁷⁴ The result was corruption on an alarming scale as recruiters broke laws, made vague promises, enlisted unfit men, and coerced many into serving in the two regiments eventually formed. Staffs at volunteer depots, set up by the War Department to secure replacements, employed similar methods with increasing severity as the war went on.⁷⁵ The effects of state control and prioritizing politics and troop-raising over military efficiency were evident in Mexico. Undisciplined New Yorkers and

⁷⁰ See *Proceedings of the Military Association of the State of New York*, published annually from 1854.

⁷¹ Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 215-216, 230-231, 234. For the British movement, see I. F. W. Beckett, *Riflemen Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement, 1859-1908* (Aldershot: Ogilvy Trusts, 1982).

⁷² Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, 98.

⁷³ *Report of the Select Committee on the Subject of the New York Volunteers: New York State Assembly Document No. 163*, http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/Mex-Am_1846/Mex-Am_index.htm (accessed July 7, 2015); *Annual Report of the Adjutant General*, Assembly Doc. No. 39, January 19, 1847, 4, 15-16, 25; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General*, Assembly Doc. No. 88, February 6, 1849, 13-15; Paul Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair: Soldiers and Social Conflict during the Mexican-American War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 71, 74.

⁷⁴ Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair*, 42, 61-62, 71-72, 156; H. P. Judson, *A History of the Troy Citizens Corps, Troy, N.Y.* (Troy: Troy Times Printing House, 1884), 30.

⁷⁵ Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair*, 61, 75-76, 78, 79, 80, 87; Albert Lombard, *The "High Private," with a Full and Exciting History of the New York Volunteers, Illustrated with Facts, Incidents, Anecdotes, Engravings, &c., &c., including the Mysteries and Miseries of the Mexican War* (New York: Printed for the publishers, 1848), 7-10, 16-17, 19, 22-23, 25.

other state troops sometimes fought bravely but indulged in scandalous behavior that caused headaches for the high command.⁷⁶ Unfortunately for the Union, too few Americans remembered the corruption of the Mexican War when mobilizing for a vaster conflict thirteen years later. The War of 1812 and the Mexican War revealed that harmful mobilization practices and conflicts of authority between the federal government and the states, born in the eighteenth century, were alive and well. Yet localism prompted many Americans to draw inaccurate lessons from their wars with Britain and Mexico: glossing over fiascos caused by bad policy, poor leadership, and unreliable state troops, they viewed these short-term volunteers as the heroes of both conflicts and downplayed the need for real military readiness.⁷⁷

Other simplistic notions persisted as well. For a century after the Civil War, historians carried the same assumption as many Americans before and during the conflict, that a “cavalier” or “militant” South enjoyed a distinct advantage over the North thanks to southerners’ greater expertise in warlike activities.⁷⁸ But the condition of prewar New York and Massachusetts volunteers partially supports counterarguments made by scholars since the 1960’s.⁷⁹ On the eve

⁷⁶ See Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair*, and Richard Bruce Winders, *Mr. Polk’s Army: The American Military Experience in the Mexican War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), esp. 66-87. For a more favorable depiction of New York volunteers and their recruitment, see Francis D. Clark, *The First Regiment of New York Volunteers, Commanded by Col. Jonathan D. Stevenson, in the Mexican War* (New York: Geo. S. Evans & Co., 1882), esp. 13, 43, 45, 87.

⁷⁷ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Policy and Strategy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 55; J. G. Dyckman, *The American Militia Officer’s Manual: Being a Plain and Concise System of Instruction for Infantry, Field and Horse Artillery, Cavalry and Riflemen*, 2nd ed. (New York: N. B. Holmes, 1825), 10-11; Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 17-18; Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 94; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 52-53, 203; Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair*, 33.

⁷⁸ For an example of a northerner assuming southern military superiority, see Thomas T. Ellis, *Leaves from the Diary of an Army Surgeon: Or, Incidents of Field, Camp, and Hospital Life* (New York: John Bradburn, 1863), 10. Michael C. C. Adams discusses this attitude and its harmful effects on the Union war effort in Adams, *Our Masters the Rebels: A Speculation on Union Military Failure in the East, 1861-1865* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978). For the “Militant South” thesis, see John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1956).

⁷⁹ For refutations of the “Militant South” thesis, see, for example, Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 350-364; Russell F. Weigley, *A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History, 1861-1865* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 26; Ethan S. Rafuse, *A Single Grand Victory: The First Campaign and Battle of Manassas* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002), 6-10; David C. Turpie, “A Voluntary War: The Spanish-American

of the Civil War, New York's uniformed state militia was the largest in the nation—larger even than the U. S. Army—and rivaled only by that of the Bay State in proficiency. The past year had seen expansion as volunteers responded to darkening war clouds by forming new companies.⁸⁰ Militia commanders, eager to serve the state and Union, pushed for greater preparation and offered their forces to meet any needs of Morgan and Lincoln's governments.⁸¹ But these calls were largely unheeded. State Senator Francis B. Spinola's proposal on January 2, 1861, that New York appropriate ten million dollars to arm the militia and offer it to the general government exemplified common sentiment regarding military readiness—and so did the Senate's unanimous vote to put the proposal off for another day. For every voice praising the militia and calling for readiness, there were several voices scoffing at their need. In 1860, the *Military Gazette* had declared that the state militia was in "its darkest hour" due to declining legislative support and funding. That December, the state adjutant general noted that "whatever of assistance has been derived from the State, has been wrung from it like agony, and when yielded, it has come almost with derision." Considering "the present questionable status of the Union," he added, "parsimony like this appears to have been singularly *mal-opportune*." Modern weaponry was lacking and many militiamen failed to appear for training.⁸² New Yorkers often dismissed military service as

War, White Southern Manhood, and the Struggle to Recruit Volunteers in the South," *Journal of Southern History* 80 (2014): 859-892.

⁸⁰ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Made to the Legislature January 8, 1861*, 6; Henry and James Hall, *Cayuga in the Field: A Record of the 19th New York Volunteers, all the Batteries of the 3^d New York Artillery, and 75th New York Volunteers* (Auburn, NY: n. p., 1873), 18, 19-20, 22; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 235, 252. For the formation of new companies, see also the issues of the *Military Gazette*, vol. 3 (1860). On the Massachusetts militia, see McGraw, "Minutemen of '61," op. cit.

⁸¹ Hiram B. Duryea to Morgan, December 29, 1860, and January 23, 1861, box 4, Elmer E. Ellsworth to Frederick Townsend, January 6, and Winfield Scott to Morgan, January 17, both reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; OR, ser. 3, vol. 1, 40-41; Swinton, *History of the Seventh Regiment, National Guard, State of New York, During the War of the Rebellion*, 23.

⁸² "New York Militia," *Military Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 9 (May 1, 1860): 1; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Made to the Legislature January 8, 1861*, 8-9 (quotes), 81, 82-83. On lack of government support for calls to prepare the militia, see also G. W. Palmer to Morgan, December 24, 1860, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; Frank Allaben, *John Watts de Peyster* (New York: Frank Allaben Genealogical Co., 1908), 2: 17.

a needless expense, a patronage plum for corrupt politicians, and an overall joke—an attitude that in some cases would survive into the post-Fort Sumter mobilization.⁸³ Glittering volunteer corps belied the fact that most people were not interested in military matters and that state and nation were manifestly unprepared for war.⁸⁴ (That New York’s uniformed militia was considered one of the best state forces in the nation is instructive in this regard.) These attitudes foreshadowed how New Yorkers would feel during the conflict—in most cases, they held great interest in events and supported the war, but saw mobilization as a voluntary process, one in which they would only participate on their terms.

Lincoln and his fellow loyal citizens hoped to restore the Union quickly despite their unpreparedness. The president’s April 15 proclamation established Union war aims: to retake government property in the South, crush the illegal, immoral rebellion, and restore federal law. In refusing to recognize the Confederacy and calling on Americans to defeat this corrupt insurrection, as Russell A. McClintock explains, Lincoln meant to “tap into the sense of outrage that he hoped would well up throughout the loyal states following the attack on Fort Sumter.”⁸⁵ Widespread, enthusiastic public support was critical to a successful war effort and might hasten victory. Indeed, many scholars and popular writers have interpreted behavior by Americans north and south at war’s beginning as evidence of a foolish assumption that their side would win quickly, and probably in a single battle.⁸⁶ Northerners certainly displayed naiveté early on as they struggled to handle this war of unprecedented size. For instance, citizens who offered

⁸³ Morris Francis Dowley, *History and Honorary Roll of the Twelfth Regiment Infantry, N.G.S.N.Y., Containing a Full and Accurate Account of the Various Changes through which the Organization Has Passed since the Date of its Formation (1847) to the Present* (New York: T. Farrell & Son, 1869), vii-viii; Henry and James Hall, *Cayuga in the Field*, 18; “The Recruiting Office,” *Vanity Fair*, July 20, 1861: 33.

⁸⁴ For the lack of strong military traditions and culture in nineteenth-century New York, see Fred L. Israel, “New York’s Citizen Soldiers: The Militia and Their Armories,” *New York History* 42 (1961), 148, 153.

⁸⁵ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 250-251.

⁸⁶ Rafuse, *A Single Grand Victory*, 3-18, summarizes and supports this interpretation.

cavalry forces were initially turned away by federal and state officials, who considered horsemen a needless expense and only saw the error of this assumption months later.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the language and actions of authorities indicated desire for haste. United States officers stood by ready to muster in volunteers at Albany and other rendezvous within days of Lincoln's proclamation, and Cameron repeatedly thanked Morgan for his "alacrity and promptness" in meeting calls for troops.⁸⁸

Some historians have pointed out, however, that despite Union officials' hopes, they knew better than to count on a quick or easy victory.⁸⁹ Lincoln waited only for confirmation that loyal Americans would support mobilization, then expanded upon his April 15 call.⁹⁰ On April 19, the president proclaimed a naval blockade of the rebellious states; one week later, he approved an expansion of the regular army and navy and opted to allow most of the seventy-five thousand militia to enroll for three years' service.⁹¹ Lincoln authorized a modified version of these proposals on May 3 when he called for forty-two thousand infantry and cavalry volunteers enlisted for three years (now in *addition* to the three-month militia) along with increases to federal forces. Soon Cameron's department enlarged the size of regiments to over one thousand men and asked governors to muster all volunteers still at home for three years rather than three

⁸⁷ Sketch of A. P. Green, dated May 1, 1861 [sic], Civil War Letters Collection, N-YHS (accessed online via Ebscohost July 15, 2015); *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 17; "1st Regiment Cavalry, NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/cavalry/1stCav/1stCavCWN.htm> (accessed January 20, 2016); Abraham Lincoln to Simon Cameron, June 13, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4: 406. Rejection of cavalry was also likely motivated by the great expense of horses and equipment. On the subject of inexperience leading to mistakes by Morgan's military staff, see George Bliss, Jr., "Autobiography of George Bliss," 1: 144, George Bliss Papers, N-YHS.

⁸⁸ Frank Wheaton to Morgan, two letters dated April 18, reel 30, Cameron to Morgan, April 20, April 26, and April 29, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁸⁹ As Russell F. Weigley explains, "the call was for three months service, not because Lincoln expected armed conflict to be brief, but because federal authority to call the militia into service" was based on the limited provisions of the 1792 and 1795 acts. Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 24. See also McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 333.

⁹⁰ Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 56.

⁹¹ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 4, 156-157; *ibid.*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 116, 132; *New York Daily Tribune*, April 30.

months.⁹² (After Fort Sumter, Cameron and another cabinet member had proposed a call-up of five hundred thousand men, which Lincoln rejected in favor of Seward's less radical suggestion of seventy-five thousand.)⁹³ General Scott advised Morgan to place the majority of the two-years' men in training camps in order to use the time wisely, since "most of these regiments are not likely to take the field much before frost," and Morgan predicted that artillery would soon be needed in addition to infantry.⁹⁴ All of these actions indicated that officials planned for a potentially long conflict. In the fraught atmosphere of the spring of 1861, Lincoln, Cameron, and Morgan had to work within the system available to them while devising creative improvements for tomorrow. By calling for ninety-day state militiamen, the Lincoln administration indicated no assurance that victory would be quick and easy, but rather recognition that mobilization was ultimately voluntary. Cameron's April 15 requisition was not an overconfident or even a confident document but a desperate one. Northerners did indeed respond to Fort Sumter with the outraged patriotism Lincoln desired, but his and others' fears that the war would not be ended quickly also proved sadly correct. Fortunately for the Union, the governor of the wealthiest and most populous state was an energetic war supporter.

Yet relations between state and federal officials led New Yorkers to wonder if bureaucratic inefficiency would leave their ardor wasted. Cameron quickly showed himself to be an incompetent War Department chief.⁹⁵ After discouraging dealings with Cameron, New York's governor privately remarked that the "Govt at Washington seems less warlike than here or in any

⁹² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 145-146, 151-152, 161.

⁹³ Erwin S. Bradley, *Simon Cameron, Lincoln's Secretary of War: A Political Biography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966), 183.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 216; Morgan to C. H. Farrell, May 8, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁹⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 172, 203, 239-240, 241; telegram of Charles H. Haswell to Simeon Draper, May 3, J. B. Sanderson to Abraham Van Vechten, May 15, reel 31, and Morgan to Cameron, May 15, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL; Bradley, *Simon Cameron*, 176-177, 184, 186.

part of the North,” a frustration others shared.⁹⁶ Disputes with national officials over state sovereignty marked New York’s war effort throughout 1861 and beyond, but especially in the three months after Fort Sumter fell. Morgan’s stoic dedication and administrative skill were constantly tested by power struggles between him, Washington, the Military Board, and the private associations and individuals that took on much of the job of raising and equipping troops in the absence of suitable government infrastructure. These tensions caused maddening delays at a time when most people sought haste.⁹⁷

Decades-old questions of state versus federal authority in troop-raising—along with bureaucratic inexperience and ineptitude—prompted uncertainty over whether certain New York regiments were state militia or volunteers, which quota they should count toward, and whether they should be mustered in for three months, two years, or three years. More than once, Morgan explained to Cameron that the militia called out under Lincoln’s April 15 call “are not considered in the thirty thousand[,] they being minute men sent forward on the spur of the occasion, to be replaced as soon as the volunteers could be raised,” as he noted in one message.⁹⁸ Morgan had obtained special permission from Cameron to have his thirty thousand volunteers federally mustered for two years (as promulgated in New York’s April 16 act) after arguing that changing plans would be disastrous, but the question surfaced repeatedly and soon caused dissatisfaction among the soldiers.⁹⁹ Compounding the confusion were fourteen regiments of

⁹⁶ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 142; *Ithaca Journal*, June 19; Marsena R. Patrick to Morgan, August 14, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL. For a postwar instance of this attitude, see Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 26-27.

⁹⁷ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 133-152, esp. 139; Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 27-28; James W. Beekman to Morgan, April 19, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁹⁸ Morgan to Cameron, May 31, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL (quote); *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 108, 211.

⁹⁹ J. H. Martindale to Morgan, June 26, reel 31, and Morgan to Cameron, May 15, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Communication from the Governor Transmitting the Report of the Board of State Officers Named in the Act of April 16, 1861*, 7-8.

three-years' men raised by the Union Defense Committee, which were finally added to the state's quota in May after a byzantine, three-way dispute between Morgan, the Lincoln Administration, and the committee.¹⁰⁰ At this early stage of the war, Lincoln's government was almost entirely reliant on state troop-raising efforts; in their zeal and confusion, however, the president and secretary of war granted authorizations to raise units to groups and private individuals, an imposition that led to the appointment of novice political officers and which Morgan and his fellow governors decried.¹⁰¹ One of the worst outcomes of this disregard for state sovereignty involved one Frederick George D'Utassy, a Hungarian who claimed military expertise, accepted more than sixty thousand dollars in private and association funds to raise a regiment called the "Garibaldi Guard" or "First Foreign Rifles," and eventually was imprisoned for massive fraud against the government.¹⁰² Daniel E. Sickles, an infamous Tammany politico who had gone over Morgan's head for permission to form a brigade, then caused additional trouble by filling it with men from other states, exhorted the governor to accept his unauthorized command so that it could leave for the front:

It is too bad to send away two thousand good and brave men for a mere question of Bureau Etiquette. Can you imagine that [Confederate President] Jef. Davis or Governor Letcher [of Virginia] would hesitate in such a moment? Please take 'the

¹⁰⁰ Morgan to Cameron, May 15, and same to same May 31, box 3, William Henry Anthon to Morgan, May 17, and same to same, May 21, box 2, Hamilton Fish to Morgan, May 19, Morgan to Fish, May 21, Fish to Morgan, May 22, box 5, letters between Morgan and Lincoln, May 19, 20, 23, and 26, box 7, James S. Wadsworth to Morgan, May 20, box 13, Winfield Scott to Morgan, May 16, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 229.

¹⁰¹ Bradley, *Simon Cameron*, 185; Bliss, "Autobiography of George Bliss," 1: 146; Morgan to Cameron, May 15, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁰² "39th Regiment, NY Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veteran's Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/39thInf/39thInfCWN.htm> (accessed December 13, 2016); "Inventory of clothing, supplies and food provided by the Quartermaster Department and Subsistence Department for the Garibaldi Guard," Vouchers & Inventories, UDC Records, Ebscohost. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Frederick George D'Utassy Papers housed at the New-York Historical Society's library contain few allusions to his crimes. For the social dynamics of D'Utassy's regiment, see Catherine Catalfamo, "The Thorny Rose: The Americanization of an Urban, Immigrant, Working Class Regiment in the Civil War: A Social History of the Garibaldi Guard, 1861-1864" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1989).

responsibility’—we need this in our Governor. The city of New York will furnish all our uniforms, Equipment and Arms if need be ... only give us the word—only say—and *your* allowance is sufficient—that we are accepted in the service of the State.¹⁰³

Sickles and his Excelsior Brigade soon received orders for Virginia.¹⁰⁴ The larger issue was momentarily resolved by September, when Lincoln referred the author of an outlandish troop-raising plan to the governors, who “say they cannot and will not continue the effort with this individual competition constantly thwarting them.”¹⁰⁵ On September 16, the Adjutant General’s Office finally placed recruiters in the loyal states, acting on War Department authority, under the control of their governors.¹⁰⁶

In an era of small government and considerable state pride, Morgan personally took on more responsibility in the Union war effort than Sickles appreciated. The Treasury Department appointed Morgan an agent to handle government funds for transporting troops and supplies, and Cameron accepted his advice on mobilization.¹⁰⁷ Raising enough troops was the paramount war concern for Morgan, followed closely by the desperate need for sufficient arms and equipment and improving defenses in New York Harbor and along the Canadian border. Thanks to his ally and fellow New Yorker Secretary Seward, Morgan managed to get all regiments raised in the state counted toward its quota despite other cabinet members’ fears that it would cause jealousy

¹⁰³ Sickles to Morgan, n.d. (summer or fall 1861), reel 30, *ibid* (quote); Sickles to “My Dear Seymour,” July 2, Letters from Sickles, box 1, folder 12, Daniel Edgar Sickles Papers, New York Public Library; Joseph Hopkins Twitchell to father, May 15, in Joseph Hopkins Twitchell, *The Civil War Letters of Joseph Hopkins Twitchell: A Chaplain’s Story*, ed. Peter Messent and Steve Courtney (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 25-26.

¹⁰⁴ Frederick Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*, 3rd ed. (Albany: J.B. Lyon Co., 1912), 1: 725-726.

¹⁰⁵ Lincoln to Joshua Harrison, September 16, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁰⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 518.

¹⁰⁷ Salmon P. Chase to Morgan, April 30, and Cameron to Morgan, April 26, April 29, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL.

in other states.¹⁰⁸ New York affairs did influence mobilization in other states: The governor of Ohio, for instance, cited New York's extra troops in petitioning Cameron to accept forty additional companies of Ohio men.¹⁰⁹ One of the best-known sovereignty battles involved Morgan's insistence that his state have authority to appoint generals for its troops, a common plea among governors. In an argument echoed by other New Yorkers, Morgan told Cameron that this was only just given the Empire State's contributions, but Cameron replied that suspending the president's exclusive privilege of appointing generals for one state would mean having to suspend it for all.¹¹⁰ Citing federal incompetence, New Yorkers indignantly pressed Morgan for greater state control of troop-raising throughout the first year of the war.¹¹¹ Given other factors inhibiting mobilization in New York, especially lack of funds, equipment, and experienced officers to run federally authorized rendezvous, it was no contradiction that they also urged the War Department to muster New York regiments into federal service as soon as possible in order to lessen burdens upon the state.¹¹²

Americans of the era and historians since recognized that "marshalling the resources necessary [for mobilization] required an extraordinary coordination between the federal government and the states," especially between Lincoln and the governors, as Stephen D. Engle asserts.¹¹³ New York's government received early and fierce criticism from opponents and allies alike for delays that were not always the fault of Albany officials. Émigré and activist Carl

¹⁰⁸ Anthon to Morgan, May 17, and same to same, May 21, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁰⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 212.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 233-234, 235, 239-240, 241, 247, 252-254; Anthon to Morgan, May 21, box 2, Morgan to Cameron, May 31, John J. Peck to H. H. Van Dyck, May 27, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹¹¹ Charles W. Yates to Morgan, August 30, reel 31, Marsena R. Patrick to Morgan, August 14, and same to same, October 19, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1862), 471.

¹¹² Morgan to Cameron, May 31, box 3, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 37-38.

¹¹³ Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation*, 1.

Schurz, after convincing Lincoln to appoint him the commander of a German-American New York brigade, claimed that “something must be done to overcome the red-tape in this state, which rests like an incubus on our whole military business.”¹¹⁴ Several historians have similarly given Morgan and his fellow governors low marks in mobilization, noting the poor job of their states in recruiting and their jealous guarding of states’ rights, which put the Union at a disadvantage in the first half of the war.¹¹⁵ Morgan’s one biographer, James A. Rawley, better appreciates how Morgan bent his considerable energy and talents toward a daunting task, using them in attempting to overcome red tape and his own lack of military expertise.¹¹⁶ In this Morgan was aided by a military staff that included several skilled men—such as young lawyer George Bliss, Jr., and future president Chester A. Arthur, both of whom worked tirelessly and efficiently despite their lack of experience—as well as a few duds who mostly owed their positions to political connections. Adjutant General Read, formerly a leading Wide Awake, was keen but unsuited to his crucial position and soon replaced by the more capable Thomas Hillhouse.¹¹⁷ In recognition of Morgan’s services, the War Department appointed him a major general in late 1861. The state judge-advocate-general urged Morgan to appoint only New Yorkers to his general staff, for such men knew the ins and outs of the New York volunteer system better than did U. S. officers.¹¹⁸

Lincoln had hoped to rely on popular enthusiasm in calling for troops, but the public reaction to Fort Sumter and troop calls struck observers as unprecedented and even unbelievable

¹¹⁴ Schurz to Lincoln, May 19, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, [https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mal:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(d4197400\)\)](https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mal:@field(DOCID+@lit(d4197400))) (accessed February 1, 2016); Lincoln to Schurz, n.d., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4: 368.

¹¹⁵ Hesselstine, *Lincoln and the War Governors*, 147-154; Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 272, 275.

¹¹⁶ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, esp. 133-152.

¹¹⁷ Bliss, “Autobiography of George Bliss,” 1: 143-145; Read to Morgan, December 25, 1860, box 10, and Anthony Lamb to Morgan, April 22, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 16.

¹¹⁸ Anthon to Morgan, October 5, box 1, EDM Papers, NYSL.

in its intensity.¹¹⁹ The telegraph and daily papers sped the news across New York and the nation, and loyal citizens were immediately consumed by a martial furor that had been building since April 12 and was unsurpassed by anything seen in America before or since.¹²⁰ Echoing Lincoln's language to Morgan, a New York official later described the actions of Yates County residents as "literally an uprising of the people," a description that fit behavior across New York and the North.¹²¹ Despite their localism and deep social and political divisions, New Yorkers were united in wanting to preserve what they saw as the best government in the world, and they demanded that Washington be protected and the Union restored. As the New York *Evening Post* explained, both the authorities and the people had duties to perform:

To-day the nation looks to the government to put down treason for ever. It will not grudge the men or the money which are needed. We have enjoyed for eighty years the blessings of liberty and constitutional government. It is a small sacrifice we are now to lay upon the altar. ... Let but the government prove itself equal to the great occasion, and the people will not fail it.¹²²

Other influential voices also alluded to every citizen's "duty" to demonstrate patriotic support and fight if needed.¹²³ Confederates had revealed their dangerous aggression by firing first, and even Democrats bitterly opposed to Lincoln's administration and any plans to invade the South called for saving the national capital from rebel attack.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 256-257; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 23; OR, ser. 3, vol. 1, 97-98.

¹²⁰ The *Herald* on April 17 attributed quick response to Lincoln's April 15 call to the "telegraph and the independent press."

¹²¹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 356.

¹²² Quoted in the *Ithaca Journal*, April 17.

¹²³ Atkins and Oliver, *Yonkers in the Rebellion of 1861-1865*, 16; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 17; *Geneva Courier*, April 24.

¹²⁴ *Geneva Gazette*, April 19; *Ogdensburgh Advance*, April 19; *New York Sunday Mercury*, April 21, in William B. Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War: Soldier Correspondence to the New York Sunday Mercury* (Kearny,

Whatever their motives, most New Yorkers met war's outbreak with even more fervent dedication than they did political campaigns. A wave of "Union" or "war meetings" in the coming weeks demonstrated the commitment of communities across the state and all classes of people, who understood that action must be wedded to rhetoric.¹²⁵ On the morning of April 15—even before people knew precisely what would be expected of them—Buffalo newspapers carried notices for a meeting to be held for creating "a force of minute men, who will hold themselves in readiness to proceed to serve in defence of the State or National Government forthwith." The turnout for the gathering was so large it grew nearly unmanageable, but many volunteers were secured.¹²⁶ Two days later, journeymen printers in Brooklyn held a meeting, adopting resolutions that deplored war's effects on business but "affirmed their devotion to the Government and their readiness to fight in its defense." The printers organized themselves into a company and pledged their services "wherever and whenever required."¹²⁷ A Union meeting in Ithaca was typical of such public gatherings. Responding to a printed notice and, undoubtedly, word of mouth, a large crowd filled the town hall on the evening of April 24. After a rendition of "Yankee Doodle" by Whitlock's Brass Band, the appointed chairman, Judge H. S. Walbridge, got the meeting underway. A militia colonel then gave a speech on "the necessity of sustaining and supporting the Government; that no other course, except to retain the National Capitol and guard public property, was left, and urged upon all the patriotic position of upholding the Stars and Stripes." The colonel followed his speech by moving that a committee of five be formed to draw up resolutions. Chairman Walbridge appointed the committee members, who retired to

NJ: Belle Grove Publishing Co., 2000), 15. On the significance of rebels firing the first shots, see for instance *Brooklyn Evening Star*, April 12; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 15.

¹²⁵ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 33-34.

¹²⁶ Quoted in J. Harrison Mills, *Chronicles of the Twenty-First Regiment, New York State Volunteers, Embracing a Full History of the Regiment, from the Enrolling of the First Volunteer in Buffalo, April 15, 1861, to the Final Mustering Out, May 18, 1863* (Buffalo: John M. Layton, 1887), 11-12.

¹²⁷ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 19.

deliberate. After the crowd listened to another patriotic address, the committee returned with resolutions calling for all citizens to support the government in the war and rejecting Confederate actions as traitorous and illegal. Those assembled adopted the resolutions without dissent and then called for several more speakers, who proposed subscriptions to meet volunteers' travel expenses and provide support for their families. This was met with a resolution that the village trustees be asked to appropriate up to \$2,000 for family relief. The meeting finally adjourned after "six cheers for our flag and our country."¹²⁸ Many meetings followed this basic pattern, often with the addition of enlistments of local men into the militia or volunteers. Hundreds of such public gatherings across the state and nation established the primary roles of communities in mobilization: leadership by local elites, expressions of patriotic support, and raising of troops and funds for their families.

The uniformed state forces, meanwhile, answered Lincoln's April 15 militia call. On April 17, Albany authorities detailed New York City's First Division—the best-prepared men in the state—for immediate service, and the Seventh Regiment received orders to leave first.¹²⁹ Even the elite Seventh suffered from equipment shortages, however—shortages that were partly filled thanks to prosperous patriots, including showman P. T. Barnum, who subscribed thousands of dollars for the regiment.¹³⁰ Manhattanites cheered on April 19 as they watched the National Guards depart for the endangered national capital, with new recruits in civilian clothing marching alongside guardsmen in their famous gray uniforms.¹³¹ By May, eleven militia

¹²⁸ *Ithaca Journal*, May 1.

¹²⁹ *New York Times*, April 19.

¹³⁰ John Austin Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York: Minutes, Reports, and Correspondence, With an Historical Introduction* (New York: Union Defence Committee, 1885), 2; Ledger of money received by 7th from Edward Minturn, who collected it from various people on April 18 and 19, box 36, 7th Regiment Records, N-YHS; *New York Times*, April 19.

¹³¹ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 126; General Order No. 5, April 18, box 4, 7th Regiment Records, N-YHS.

regiments in total would leave the state for three months' service, while four others would volunteer for three years, exceeding the state's militia quota by several hundred.¹³² Even before the state militia marched off for Washington, New Yorkers had thrown themselves into raising the two-year, thirty-thousand-strong volunteer force authorized under the April 16 law. Newspapers reported an avalanche of exciting developments: Morgan received some fifty offers of volunteers per day, Ellsworth was recruiting a force of zouaves from New York City firemen amid a host of other new regiments, and three companies had already filled in Albany. By April 23, the state had 114 companies enrolled.¹³³

The contrast between prewar and early wartime feeling was especially striking in New York City. Mayor Fernando Wood, Archbishop John Hughes, and others who had very recently sided with the South now used their positions to proclaim support for the Union cause.¹³⁴ George T. Strong was relieved, proud, and awestruck by the "national movement here in New York and through all the Free States," which he found "magnificent." The metropolis so recently home to widespread southern sympathies now saw Union-loving mobs intimidate offices of the *Herald* and other Democratic newspapers into displaying the Stars and Stripes. Indeed, the American flag took on new importance and ubiquity, appearing on buildings and lampposts everywhere.¹³⁵ "Recruiting, enrolling, organizing and drilling seem indeed the order of the day," with

¹³² *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 286; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 69. For an excellent firsthand account of enlistment and departure with a New York City militia regiment, see Josiah M. Favill, *The Diary of a Young Officer Serving with the Armies of the United States During the War of the Rebellion* (Chicago: R. R. Donnelly and Sons, 1909), 11-16.

¹³³ Thurlow Weed to Morgan, April 15, Copies of Correspondence Forwarded from the Governor's Office, box 1, Inspector General's Office Records, New York State Archives (hereafter NYSA); *New York Herald*, April 18, April 19; *New York Sun*, April 18; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 17; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 24.

¹³⁴ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 58-60.

¹³⁵ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 123; *New York Herald*, April 16; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 18; "JSW to a Friend in Paris," May 10, in *Letters of a Family During the War for the Union, 1861-1865*, ed. Georgeanna Woolsey Bacon and Eliza Woolsey Howland (New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor, 1899), 1: 67-68. On the new importance of the flag, see also McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 259-260.

volunteering “almost universal,” the *Herald* observed.¹³⁶ The public’s volunteer spirit seemed only to grow as days passed; in New York City, the first of the state’s new volunteer regiments filled its 780-man complement by noon on April 19. Other city regiments, many of them recruiting in separate wards and bearing colorful names like the National Minute Men and the Scott Life Guard, were not far behind.¹³⁷ Residents of Gotham provided perhaps the most stunning display of patriotism in American history on April 20. Five days before, a committee of top merchants and other city leaders had begun planning a public Union meeting, and the Chamber of Commerce then mailed notices to various city elites informing them of their selection as vice-presidents for the meeting, taking pains to include prominent Democrats.¹³⁸ The resulting rally in Manhattan’s Union Square was a magnificent spectacle. Twenty speakers harangued an enthusiastic crowd of at least one hundred thousand, who were also gratified by the presence of Fort Sumter’s returned defenders and their battered garrison flag. Leading New Yorkers at the meeting founded the Union Defense Committee, charged with securing money for the war effort.¹³⁹ Like countless smaller meetings before and after, the Union Square rally—possibly the largest public gathering seen in the Western Hemisphere up to that time—demonstrated how the nation’s war effort from its beginning relied on the more-or-less voluntary leadership of community elites and the popular support of the masses.

Several historians such as James M. McPherson and David J. Eicher share an assumption that Americans in the war’s first few months arrogantly expected a quick and easy triumph over their enemies, only adopting more realistic views after the shocking events of the Battle of Bull

¹³⁶ April 18.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, April 18, April 19; *New York Sun*, April 18; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 19 and 20.

¹³⁸ *New York Herald*, April 16; Le Grand B. Cannon, *Personal Reminiscences of the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865* (New York: Burr Printing House, 1895), 16-17; “Printed leaflet signed by R. H. McCurdy, April 18, 1861,” Civil War Letters Collection, N-YHS (accessed online via Ebscohost July 15, 2015).

¹³⁹ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 62-63.

Run.¹⁴⁰ But evidence indicates that New Yorkers, at least, anticipated a costly struggle. “The last fond hope of a peaceful adjustment seems blighted,” a St. Lawrence County editor noted on April 19, “and *civil war*, with all its horrors, rises dark and foreboding before us.” A colleague in Clinton County blamed the war on southerners and Republicans alike and predicted it soon would “desolate many a fair portion of our glorious Union.” Bennett’s *Herald* interpreted public concern with events as an “intelligent appreciation of the misfortunes that are impending over us. The history of the world does not record any event so pregnant with calamity to the whole human race as the inauguration of civil war in this once happy and prosperous country.” Influential Democrats such as these had pushed for compromise and continued to anticipate disastrous consequences of war even as they mostly agreed on the necessity of mobilization.¹⁴¹ Democrats and Republicans alike evinced a healthy respect for their southern foes, whom they believed were gifted soldiers and currently raising a strong force that threatened the national capital.¹⁴²

What, then, explains the intense popular enthusiasm that greeted calls for troops? Some northerners rejected gloom and welcomed war as an economic boon, a chance for glory, or a purifying force that would end slavery or encourage public-spirited sacrifice.¹⁴³ The stereotype of a naïve soldiery held true for some volunteers; as the New York Seventh steamed south to war, a member noted that “a large number of the men, especially the younger ones, seem to look

¹⁴⁰ James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 180; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 332, 333; David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 58, 99; Millett, Maslowski, and Feis, *For the Common Defense*, 142.

¹⁴¹ *Ogdensburgh Advance*, April 19 (emphasis in the original); *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 20; *New York Herald*, April 15. See also *New York Herald*, April 17; *Geneva Gazette*, April 19.

¹⁴² *New York Sunday Mercury*, April 21, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 15; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 23; *Herkimer Democrat*, May 1; James W. Beekman to Morgan, April 19, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁴³ *Westfield Republican*, May 1; “A New Volume,” *Water-Cure Journal*, vol. 31, no. 6 (June 1861), 81; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 16; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, April 20, April 27; Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 77-81, 98; *New York Herald*, April 19.

upon the whole affair as a gigantic spree, and to form no true conception of the serious character of the undertaking.”¹⁴⁴ Days earlier, however, a potential Seventh recruit had maintained: “I am not excited over this at all, but look at it seriously and as a matter of duty, for us all to help sustain the honor of our government when it is in danger.”¹⁴⁵ Citizens often recognized that while it was the government’s responsibility to defeat the rebellion, victory would depend on a united effort by all loyal citizens. New Yorkers of both major parties expressed relief at the newfound unity of the North and commonly agreed that the Union could only be saved through a sustained, all-out war to crush secessionism for good. “The war must be pushed until the traitors are annihilated or lashed into allegiance,” Thurlow Weed’s *Albany Evening Journal* declared. “A million of freemen are ready to respond to the call of their country. Let those who have drawn the sword perish by the sword.”¹⁴⁶ The *New York Sunday Mercury*—no friend to Lincoln’s administration—predicted that the North would wage this great conflict “with a vigor, an enthusiasm, and an intensity never equaled since the days of the Crusades,” and in July, New York City residents petitioned the president to punish southern “traitors” severely.¹⁴⁷ The Democratic *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, noting that passions were aroused on both sides and that the war would be bitter and costly, argued:

The free states must send forth the flower of their population; must drain their pockets deep, and be prepared for an effort that will call for their whole strength and all their available resources. To enter upon the contest in any other spirit and

¹⁴⁴ William Wheeler to “Dearest Mother,” May 11, in Wheeler, *Letters of William Wheeler of the Class of 1855*, Y.C. (Cambridge, MA: H. O. Houghton & Co., 1875), 283-284.

¹⁴⁵ Henry S. Murray to “Dear Hal,” April 22, H. S. Murray Collection, N-YHS.

¹⁴⁶ April 15.

¹⁴⁷ *New York Sunday Mercury*, April 21, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 15; New York City residents to Lincoln, July 15, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/P?mal:1:/temp/~ammem_3gl3: (accessed February 1, 2016). See also *New York Herald*, April 19; *Medina Tribune*, May 2.

with limited forces would be to invite inglorious disaster. ... There are stern times ahead.¹⁴⁸

Citizens who called for large-scale mobilization evoked, without necessarily knowing it, the famous *Levée en Masse* issued by the French government in 1793, a groundbreaking decree that established the principle of a nation's power to compel all citizens to devote their energies to the war effort.¹⁴⁹ Americans had rejected federal proposals for conscription since the nation's founding, but the spring of 1861 saw calls for something approaching a *levée en masse* and total war.¹⁵⁰ Influential citizens such as newspaper editors were calling on the government to assume large powers in the interests of victory, presaging a military draft and the great conflicts of the next century.

They were in for a tough fight, New Yorkers realized, but many drew confidence from their larger population and resources compared to those of the Confederacy. If employed properly, these advantages could help secure a speedy victory with light casualties. With the Confederacy posing "such an enemy to the liberties of man," a Watertown paper asserted, "there is no peace policy for freemen, but by deciding at once and forever our military superiority. The quicker and more decisively this is done, the sooner will peace be restored" with minimal loss of life.¹⁵¹ Officers of the elite Fifth New York Zouaves asked the Union Defense Committee to

¹⁴⁸ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 17, April 20 (quote).

¹⁴⁹ On the significance of the *Levée en Masse*, see Alan Forrest, "*La patrie en danger*: The French Government and the First *Levée en Masse*," in *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution*, ed. Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8; Harold D. Blanton, "Conscription in France during the Era of Napoleon," in *Conscription in the Napoleonic Era: A Revolution in Military Affairs?* ed. Donald Stoker, Frederick C. Schneid, and Harold D. Blanton (London: Routledge, 2009), 8-9.

¹⁵⁰ On Americans' opposition to the principles embodied in the French *Levée en Masse* during the Early Republic era, see John Whiteclay Chambers II, "American Views of Conscription and the German Nation in Arms in the Franco-Prussian War," in *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution*, ed. Moran and Waldron, 76-77.

¹⁵¹ (*Watertown*) *New York Daily Reformer*, April 24 (quote); *New York Sunday Mercury*, April 21, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 15; *Huntington Long Islander*, April 26; *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 27.

supply them with the best rifle-muskets available. “It is important,” they explained, “that those who are first in the field and first in conflict should be well armed; for if they are so it may save millions of money and rivers of blood.”¹⁵²

Speed and overwhelming force were key. In contrast to later complaints of high quotas, many New Yorkers in the war’s early weeks—motivated by state pride and the exigencies of the hour—believed their state and nation were not martialing sufficient forces and called for larger appropriations of funds and troops.¹⁵³ A blistering editorial in the normally pro-administration New York *Times* accused the president’s cabinet of a cowardice and insufficient vigor that threatened to kill the “ardor of youth” on which the Union cause relied. Morgan and his government received similar angry complaints from New Yorkers who were not accustomed to the Empire State taking a back seat to others in the Union and expected New York to have a leading role. (Such complaints showed little appreciation for the numerous legal and logistical stumbling-blocks hindering the war effort.)¹⁵⁴ New Yorkers responded to Lincoln’s May 3 authorization of an increase in forces and switch to three-year enlistments with excited approval.¹⁵⁵ They also closely followed attitudes and war preparations in other states.¹⁵⁶ A Syracuse resident expressed humiliation at the energetic efforts of Massachusetts in comparison

¹⁵² Officers of 5th New York to UDC, May 21, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁵³ Telegram of Moses H. Grinnell to Morgan, April 15, box 5, and Stephen L. Wade to Morgan, April 22, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 15; *New York Herald*, April 17; *New York Times*, May 1. General Hiram Walbridge spent May and June urging Lincoln and the governors to recruit six hundred thousand men. See Hiram Walbridge, *Correspondence between His Excellency President Abraham Lincoln, The Hon Simon Cameron, Secretary of War ... with General Hiram Walbridge, of New York, In 1861* (New York: John F. Trow, 1865).

¹⁵⁴ *New York Times*, April 22, April 25 (quote); James W. Beekman to Morgan, April 23, box 2, and John H. Browning to Morgan, April 25, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; Isaac Sherman to Morgan, April 19, George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, two letters April 20, and Thurlow Weed to Morgan, April 20, all in Copies of Correspondence Forwarded from the Governor’s Office, box 1, Inspector General’s Office Records, NYSA; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 143.

¹⁵⁵ Thurlow Weed informed Lincoln that New Yorkers enthusiastically supported the call for more and longer-service troops. Weed to Lincoln, May 4, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/P?mal:5::/temp/~ammem_rjL5:: (accessed February 1, 2016).

¹⁵⁶ *New York Daily Tribune*, April 13; *New York Herald*, April 16; *Geneva Courier*, April 24; *Ithaca Journal*, May 8.

with New York and informed Morgan that many Syracuseans believe their state was “*ingloriously* inactive in the present emergency of our country.”¹⁵⁷ The Plattsburgh *Republican*, a Democratic paper, had responded to war preparations by declaring that “*the enemies of compromise are the enemies of the Union.*” By early May, however, the *Republican* acknowledged: “This section of the State is a great military hive, filled with vigorous, patriotic fighting men,” and deplored a “Disheartening Rumor” that the Military Board might get the state’s quota reduced back to seventeen thousand.¹⁵⁸ Speed and acceptance of all offered troops would maintain the popular support that was so vital, war supporters believed, while hesitation over red tape would be fatal. “The enthusiasm here is rising every hour,” Thurlow Weed wrote Morgan from New York City on April 23. “It is fearfully high! Everything must be done to foster it. Accept, I pray you, all the troops you can from the city. *A two-fold good is accomplished by it. A recoil would be destructive.*”¹⁵⁹

To an extent these assumptions were accurate, as volunteers expressed discouragement at delays.¹⁶⁰ But other New Yorkers counseled patience and exhorted loyal citizens to stay in the fight until victory was won. “Let us hope that it may be a brief war—measured by months and not by years,” a Long Island editor noted in a common sentiment, “but whether short or long, let treason and traitors be punished as they deserve.”¹⁶¹ In July, a Delaware County paper, citing New York’s dismal record in the War of 1812, speculated that if the current war proved a long

¹⁵⁷ Theo. J. Davis to Morgan, April 20, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL (emphasis in the original). See also Anthony Lamb to Morgan, April 22, in *ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ April 13 (emphasis in the original), May 4. See also *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 143.

¹⁵⁹ Weed to Morgan, April 23, box 13, EDM Papers, NYSL (emphasis in the original). See also Horace Greeley to Lincoln, May 19, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/P?mal:13:/temp/~ammem_mFNv:: (accessed February 1, 2016).

¹⁶⁰ George B. Tompkins to Morgan, May 12, and John B. Copinger to Prosper M. Wetmore, May 24, UDC Records, Ebscohost; Greeley to Lincoln, May 19, *op. cit.*

¹⁶¹ *Huntington Long Islander*, April 26 (quote); *Geneva Courier*, April 17, May 1; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 20, April 22; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 23; *Medina Tribune*, May 2, May 23.

one the state would likely need to draft men to fill its quotas.¹⁶² New York officials would plan for a state draft the following year but never implement it, unlike several other states. The Union's war, while revolutionary in many ways, never involved a *levée en masse*.

Limits in mobilization stemmed from social as well as legal considerations. Despite their acute understanding of the need for steady reinforcement, white New Yorkers overwhelmingly opposed opening the ranks to African Americans. When the war began, New York's white majority found rare common ground in judging the significance of slavery to events and the role that African Americans should play in the Union cause. While southerners had embarked on what the *Tribune* called a "Pro-Slavery Rebellion" (which many New Yorkers believed was also caused by meddling abolitionists), northerners should fight to put down that rebellion and not to free slaves. Several conservative papers attacked Greeley and the *Tribune* for promoting a war of abolition, and a Plattsburgh sheet noted increased appreciation for liberty among northerners but pointed out the lack of legal authority to interfere with slavery.¹⁶³ A war to defeat the "Slave Power" need not require abolishing the asset that gave the rebels their power.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, and despite the well-known service of black New Yorkers in the Revolution, whites in 1861 tended to oppose any black participation in this new conflict.¹⁶⁵

Members of that abused race had a different perspective on events. J. Matthew Gallman identifies a shared consciousness among northern blacks in wartime: the "conversation in the black community" about the war, he writes, "was consistently about collective obligations and

¹⁶² (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, July 17.

¹⁶³ *New York Daily Tribune*, April 13 (quote); *Geneva Gazette*, April 12 and April 19; *Geneva Courier*, April 24; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 27; *Herkimer Democrat*, April 17, May 1, June 26; *Medina Tribune*, May 2; *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 20, May 4; all 1861.

¹⁶⁴ The *Huntington Long Islander* on April 26 urged quick and concerted effort by a united North to end the dangers posed by the "Slave Power."

¹⁶⁵ The 1865 state census noted: "During the Revolution, a law was passed by which slaves enlisting in the army, with the consent of their owners, should become free." Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, iii-iv.

aspirations, whereas much of the popular prescription in white obligations concerned the personal decisions of individuals.”¹⁶⁶ This is seen in black New Yorkers’ response to war’s outbreak and mobilization. From Frederick Douglass down, the state’s African Americans commonly opposed secession and often expressed willingness to enlist, but insisted they would fight only for emancipation, not a union of states that had long denied them human rights.¹⁶⁷ In April 1861, the New York *Anglo-African* criticized whites for not making abolition a war aim and laid out blacks’ conditions should they be called to service: “To let the Government take care of itself, and give our labors for the slave, and the slave alone.”¹⁶⁸ *Frederick Douglass’ Monthly* similarly called for abolition as a war measure and asserted that a Union victory would hinge on black freedom and service.¹⁶⁹ More than once in the war’s first months, black men in New York City held patriotic meetings and marches that were violently broken up by whites—sometimes led by police—who declared in one incident that “niggers could not be allowed to carry that [American] flag.”¹⁷⁰ Black efforts to raise companies farther upstate also met with defeat.¹⁷¹ The dominant white attitude toward black service was reinforced in July 1861 when the U. S. Congress resolved that the war was being waged for the Constitution and the Union, not emancipation.¹⁷² White northern opposition to black service remained the leading attitude until much later in the war, when the pressing need for manpower began to vie with racist

¹⁶⁶ Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 225.

¹⁶⁷ Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 71-72; 148-149; Edythe Ann Quinn, *Freedom Journey: Black Civil War Soldiers and the Hills Community, Westchester County, New York* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 22-23.

¹⁶⁸ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, April 27, 1861.

¹⁶⁹ Frederick Douglass, “How to End the War,” *Frederick Douglass’ Monthly*, May 1861: 1-2; Douglass, “Notes on the War,” in *ibid.*, July 1861: 1.

¹⁷⁰ Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 22-23; William Seraile, “The Struggle to Raise Black Regiments in New York State, 1861-1864,” *New York Historical Society Quarterly* 58 (1974), 216; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 27, *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, April 27, May 4 (quote), all 1861.

¹⁷¹ Sernett, *North Star Country*, 238.

¹⁷² Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (New York: Longman, Greene and Co., 1956), 1-12; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 312.

sensibilities.¹⁷³ The Navy had long accepted free black recruits, if tepidly, and continued the policy when war began.¹⁷⁴ Despite discouragement, blacks and their allies continued to offer their services to the government, and the insightful *Anglo-African* predicted that the illegal slave trade would soon end and northern blacks be enrolled in a fight for freedom.¹⁷⁵

Confronted with the greatest threat to the nation since the Revolution and inadequate state and federal resources to meet it, New Yorkers fell back upon their various leaders and communities to channel popular zeal into action. Relying upon this enthusiasm and associational culture, elites in all fields and their institutions promoted military and monetary volunteering. Local pride played a key part as citizens connected the raising and support of forces with the honor of their counties, towns, and villages. Under the headline “COPENHAGEN AHEAD!” a newspaper of that Lewis County village reported that the local company would be “the first company from this county. The merchants and clerks in New York [City], formerly from this county, have offered a prize of \$500 to the first company organized in this county.”¹⁷⁶ Referring to troops recruited around Corning, a paper of that town called it “gratifying that the Regiment is made up of Companies raised in this vicinity. There will naturally be more regard for the sick and wounded, and the band of friendship already existing, must become stronger as common dangers and suffering tend to bring them closer fellowship.”¹⁷⁷ The Fort Edward *Ledger* proudly reported: “Men and money in proportion to our population will be ready at the call of duty,” and

¹⁷³ John David Smith, “Let Us All Be Grateful That We Have Colored Troops That Will Fight,” in *Black Soldiers in Blue*, 9-10.

¹⁷⁴ Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy*, 11-12; Reid, *African Canadians in Union Blue*, 56-58, 62.

¹⁷⁵ Ira Berlin, ed., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867*, ser. II: *The Black Military Experience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 74; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 77-78, 524; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, April 27, August 10, August 24, September 28, October 12, November 23, all 1861.

¹⁷⁶ “35th Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/35thInf/35thInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹⁷⁷ Corning newspaper of May 23, quoted in Newton T. Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby*, *New York Infantry*, ed. William E. Hughes (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2003), 14.

invoked the town's rich Revolutionary War heritage.¹⁷⁸ Such mobilization of community was localism at its finest.

Within municipalities, associations took on much of the labor of raising troops through inspiration and financial support.¹⁷⁹ New York City's Chamber of Commerce responded to Lincoln's first call by holding a meeting in which members immediately subscribed \$21,000 in aid for volunteers and their families.¹⁸⁰ The Albany Common Council pledged five thousand dollars for soldiers' families, the first of six installments made in the first months of war. Businesses in the city promised to keep paying their employees who volunteered, and artists contributed works to the local volunteer fund, raising one thousand dollars for soldiers' families.¹⁸¹ Banks in Ulster County contributed four thousand dollars to feed and equip the Twentieth Militia, known as the Ulster Guard, while the county bible society presented each departing militiaman with a copy of the New Testament. Prominent Kingston banker Henry H. Reynolds guided efforts by local women to supply members of the Twentieth with clothing during their service, and the men named their camp in his honor.¹⁸² Congressman Joseph W. Corning recruited volunteers from his law office in Palmyra, Wayne County; his fellow Palmyra residents raised over \$3,300 for the war on April 24 alone. When local volunteers prepared to leave, a minister addressed them with the promise that "we who stay at home will remember you when you are away. We will remember your families, and assure you that they shall be cared for." Three Wayne County doctors offered to treat volunteers' families for free during their service; meanwhile, veterans of the War of 1812 and men exempt from militia duty organized

¹⁷⁸ April 26.

¹⁷⁹ Paludan, *A People's Contest*, 19-21.

¹⁸⁰ Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York*, 5.

¹⁸¹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 312.

¹⁸² Lounsbury, "The Ulster Regiment in the 'Great Rebellion,'" 215-216, 227.

themselves into home guard companies.¹⁸³ The events noted here were repeated throughout the state, for New Yorkers recognized the need for financial and other forms of support in mobilization and readily accepted its burdens. Early on, many believed that all should contribute to the cause, if not with their bodies then with their money or other assets—a tradition extending back to the revolutionary era.¹⁸⁴ The local family support committee in Ithaca urged that more people contribute by pointing out that the fund was pro-rata: as more subscribed, less money would be taken from each, and taking the full amount pledged by the many contributors who had limited means would be a “heavy burden” to them.¹⁸⁵ But the notion of universal duty to the cause was subject to modifications and exceptions that became increasingly obvious as northern unity fell apart. Financial contribution remained a viable and important method of supporting the Union among all classes, however.¹⁸⁶ The trend of associational support for recruitment continued past 1861 around the country, as seen in the raising of the Pennsylvania Corn Exchange Regiment and the Chicago Board of Trade and Mercantile Batteries, along with the Buffalo Board of Trade’s support for the 100th New York Infantry, all of which began in the summer of 1862.

Established societies joined forces—and sometimes clashed—with newer ones. The organizers of Albany’s volunteer fund were hardly the only association specially formed for the war effort. In the frenetic atmosphere of the war’s first year, one group loomed as the most

¹⁸³ David W. Judd, *The Story of the Thirty-Third N.Y.S. Vols.; Or, Two Years Campaigning in Virginia and Maryland* (Rochester: Benton & Andrews, 1864), 16; Clark, *Military History of Wayne County, N.Y.*, 314, 319-320, 330-331, 332, 340-341. Doctors in Delhi also offered free care to volunteers’ families during their service. (*Delhi Delaware Gazette*, May 8.

¹⁸⁴ “The Liberty Song (1768),” *Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections*, <http://archives.dickinson.edu/sundries/liberty-song-1768> (accessed January 21, 2017). On the importance of contributing money if unable to fight during the Civil War, see, for example, *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 27.

¹⁸⁵ *Ithaca Journal*, May 8.

¹⁸⁶ David K. Thomson, ““Like a Cord through the Whole Country”: Union Bonds and Financial Mobilization for Victory,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 6 (2016): 347-375.

consequential and controversial: the Union Defense Committee of the City of New York. Formed at the Union Square rally, officially named on April 23, and boasting a roster that included Mayor Wood and thirty-one other city elites, the committee contributed mightily to the Union cause even as it provoked the ire of Morgan and others for being presumptuous and inefficient.¹⁸⁷ Initially presided over by politician and general John A. Dix, then ex-governor and senator Hamilton Fish, the UDC had an Executive Committee, eight sub-committees, and offices on Pine Street where members met daily. Members were entrusted with large responsibility and funds. In addition to money the committee received from the Chamber of Commerce and individual subscriptions, the Board of Councilmen authorized a one-million-dollar appropriation (which the city comptroller raised through Union Defence Fund Bonds) to the UDC for equipping troops, and the Board of Aldermen gave it half a million to support soldiers' families.¹⁸⁸ Executive Committee members identified their duties in language that summarized the mission of the entire UDC: "to accelerate and facilitate the organization of forces, the transportation of troops and provisions, and the cooperation of popular action in all loyal parts of the country."¹⁸⁹ The committee arranged for reduced shipping costs on the Hudson River Railroad, sent men to reopen and maintain the lines at Annapolis, and chartered vessels for transporting troops and supplies. It monitored private communications for espionage and worked with officials to control movement into Washington. Committee members followed affairs in the border states, sent arms to Union loyalists around the country, and gathered information on

¹⁸⁷ The list of thirty-two members in 1861 is given in the frontispiece of Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York*.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12, 16-17, 31; Robert T. Haws to Hamilton Fish, May 18, and ordinances of New York City Common Council in "Minutes" book, vol. 2, UDC Records, Ebscohost. Eight sub-committees are listed in "Circular of the Union Defence Committee of the City of New York" dated April 25, in UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁸⁹ "Minutes" book, vol. 2, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

numbers and conditions of troops raised throughout the Union for the War Department.¹⁹⁰ The Ladies' Association of the Union Defense Committee vowed to "prepare *lint and Bandages* for the wounded in the coming war."¹⁹¹ The Committee for Aid to Regiments—a sub-committee of the UDC that included Mayor Wood and the president of the Board of Aldermen—supplied units with everything from flannel drawers, to mountain howitzers, to money for officers' expenses.¹⁹² In just an eighteen-day period in May, the UDC received nearly \$177,000 in private subscriptions.¹⁹³ With private aid for individual regiments pouring into the committee's accounts and officers pressing for funds to raise and complete their commands, the organization spent large amounts on city forces. Recipients, however, included D'Utassy's problematic Garibaldi Guard and the Mozart Regiment, a command ostensibly raised by Mozart Hall but which received over \$87,000 from the UDC and had to be completed with six companies from other states.¹⁹⁴ The UDC was far from perfect, but it filled crucial gaps in the war effort. "I want all the money I can get to put my men in condition to be of service to the Country," ran a typical missive from a colonel to a UDC member. "The state is doing nothing."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ Samuel Sloan to Morgan, May 3, May 18, box 12, EDM Papers, NYSL; Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York*, 17-19, 22-25; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 148; Simeon Draper to L. A. Kennedy, May 2, and May 2 telegrams in Dispatch Book; Isaac Sherman to Fish, May 13; Committee of Merchants to Major General Robert Patterson, April 23; George W. Rogers to UDC, May 1; John A. Dix to Seward, May 7, Letterbook; telegram of John M. Hathaway to Simeon Draper, May 23; Oliver P. Morton to Simeon Draper, May 3, and May 2 telegrams in Telegram Book, April 21-December 16, 1861, all UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁹¹ "Pledge from the Ladies' Association of the Union Defence Committee of the City of New York," April 23, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁹² "Arrangement of Sub-Committees" in "Minutes, Executive Committee of the Union Defence Committee of the City of New York and of its Citizens 1861;" "Comptroller Warrants, May 1 to June 30, 1861, Union Defence Funds;" "Minutes of the Committee for Aid to Regiments," May 4, all *ibid*.

¹⁹³ Subscription book, May 9, 1861-September 2, 1862, *ibid*.

¹⁹⁴ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 38-39, 51; Fred. C. Floyd, *History of the Fortieth (Mozart) Regiment, New York Volunteers, which was Composed of Four Companies from New York, Four Companies from Massachusetts and Two Companies from Pennsylvania* (Boston: F. H. Gilson Co., 1909), 1-19.

¹⁹⁵ "Short List of Subscribers of the regiments of New York," n.d.; Thomas McElrath to William E. Dodge, April 23, containing note from Colonel Rush C. Hawkins (quote), both UDC Records, Ebscohost. See also J. Lafayette Riker to UDC Executive Committee, April 26, John Lafayette Riker Papers, New York Public Library (hereafter NYPL); Roderick Matheson to Simeon Draper, May 22, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

Albany officials, of course, had a far different perspective. The zeal and heavy responsibilities of the UDC—which sometimes caused delays and wastage—led to numerous accusations of fecklessness.¹⁹⁶ By the time another sub-committee of the UDC formed to meet with Lincoln on May 17 and address the fourteen regiments dispute, the committee had already expended nearly half of its one-million-dollar city appropriation (including \$280,000 on troops forming in New York City), and the prospect of some of these funds going to waste provided impetus for overriding Morgan.¹⁹⁷ This quarrel was by no means the extent of friction over authority between the state and the committee, despite committee members' attempts to cooperate with officials and maintain the government's term of service and inspection standards for the volunteers the UDC helped raise.¹⁹⁸ Hamilton Fish protested to an angry Morgan that UDC members had not sought their "arduous" duties; the people had given them to Fish and his associates.¹⁹⁹ By early June, state inspections were still revealing equipment shortages among troops being prepared under the committee's wing, but relations between its members and the governor had eased. On June 21, the committee reported that the city's one-million-dollar appropriation was almost all spent, and its work and influence subsequently dropped off until further moneys were received in the fall; after another dormant period, the committee briefly revived with a new troop-raising campaign in the summer of 1862.²⁰⁰ The efforts of the famous

¹⁹⁶ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 158; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 26; *New York Sun*, June 3.

¹⁹⁷ Robert T. Hawes to Hamilton Fish, May 18, UDC Records, Ebscohost; Robert W. McCurdy to Morgan, May 20, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁹⁸ "Committee on Aid to Regiments," May 6, and Andrew S. Warner to A. G. Richards, May 7, Andrew S. Warner Papers, N-YHS; Lockwood L. Doty to Edward Walker, May 20, Walker to Simeon Draper, n.d., UDC conditions for accepting regiments, May 18, and "Special Instructions for Inspections of Regiments," May 24, all UDC Records, Ebscohost; Hamilton Fish et al. to Morgan, May 28, and J. J. Astor, Jr. to Morgan, two letters dated May 28, box 1, William Henry Anthon to Morgan, May 26, box 2, all EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁹⁹ Fish to Morgan, May 22, box 5, EDM Papers, NYSL.

²⁰⁰ E. D. Keyes to Morgan, June 2, Civil War Letters Collection, N-YHS (accessed online via Ebscohost July 15, 2015); Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York*, 34-35; Cash Book "B," UDC Records, Ebscohost; Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration* (New York: F. Ungar Pub. Co., 1957), 1: 82-83.

UDC were replicated elsewhere on a smaller scale; Yates County, for example, had a Union Vigilance Committee, with sub-committees in each town, which had a ten-thousand-dollar fundraising goal and secured one company of volunteers by May 2.²⁰¹ For all its controversy, the Union Defense Committee provided services—particularly in funding volunteers—without which the North would have been even harder pressed in 1861. Allegations of meddling were inevitable given the competition for resources and the working at cross purposes that occurred among the various government levels and groups involved in the war effort. The UDC laid the groundwork for committees later in the war, such as the Loyal Leagues, that also provided a moral and financial bulwark to the Union.

Such was the state and nation's unpreparedness in 1861 that not only associations but individuals of all stripes exerted more influence than in any American war since the Revolution or afterward. Just as they did in poor relief and other areas neglected by legislation, political, military, religious, and economic leaders filled voids in recruitment and fundraising, with governmental encouragement but decidedly mixed results. Dan Sickles—who showed little regard for his governor or state regulations, yet formed a brigade that went on to fight gallantly in many battles—was an extreme example of a trend that caused innumerable headaches for officials but also vitally strengthened the northern war effort. Recruitment by social elites occurred across the Union, but was especially prevalent in the New York metropolitan area, with its huge population and numerous classes and associations. This practice laid bare a major weakness in nineteenth-century volunteer recruitment: the task largely fell to prospective commanders of companies and regiments, whose positions depended on their ability to field the requisite number of troops, not command experience. At its best, the trend produced regiments

²⁰¹ John Wilkinson to Hamilton Fish, May 2, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

like the Anderson Zouaves (later titled the Sixty-Second New York Infantry), which exemplified the power of inspiring personalities in raising troops. Soon after the war began, Manhattan attorney John Lafayette Riker called a group of gentlemen to a meeting at the Metropolitan Hotel and proposed forming a zouave regiment to be named after the hero of Fort Sumter, Robert Anderson, should he give his permission. Obtaining the major's approval, Riker formed a committee to raise funds, which subscribers should deliver to Major Anderson himself, the president of the Mechanics' Bank, and other worthies.²⁰² Riker also gained support from the Union Defense Committee and a local minister who asked his congregation to contribute, but much of the credit for his success belonged to the major's wife, Eliza Bayard Anderson, who formed a committee of her own with two other ladies and petitioned Lincoln to ensure the regiment was recognized.²⁰³ Riker secured all of the considerable funds needed to raise and outfit his regiment through associations and private subscriptions, though the War Department reimbursed some costs. The 950 men of the Anderson Zouaves marched to war that August under Colonel Riker, who would fall in battle the next year.²⁰⁴ Calvin E. Pratt, Henry Ruggles, and William H. Brown had a harder experience in recruiting their regiment: with no aid forthcoming from the UDC, the three men spent thousands of their own dollars until they got the unit accepted by the state and themselves commissioned to lead it.²⁰⁵ A diverse array of

²⁰² Report of April 24 meeting, dated April 26; clipping dated May 1861, both Riker Papers, NYPL; Account of raising of Riker's regiment, box 2, Regiments Collection, N-YHS.

²⁰³ Riker to Rev. Dr. Cheever, May 3, in *ibid.*; Hamilton Fish to Simon Cameron, May 9, UDC Records, Ebscohost; *Fifth Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Military Statistics, with Appendices: Transmitted to the Legislature April 3, 1868* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen & Sons, 1868), 115; Lincoln to Cameron, two letters dated June 13, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4: 406; George A. Harrison, "War Record of Anderson Zouaves, U. S. Vols. later 62d N. Y. Vols later 62d Regt N. Y. Vet. Vol.," box 2, Civil War Collection, New York State Historical Association.

²⁰⁴ *Fifth Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Military Statistics*, 115-116.

²⁰⁵ "Historical Inquiries in Regard to Regiments, Batteries and Companies, Organized in, or from the County of Kings, State of New York;" "Judge Pratt;" "Birth and Parentage, &c;" all Brooklyn, N.Y. Civil War History Collection, Brooklyn Historical Society (hereafter CW-BHS); *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 220.

figures—some with military experience, but many without—tried their hand at forming organizations, with widely varying levels of success. Inspiring leadership was just as indispensable in mobilization as it was in associational and reform culture.

Elmer Ellsworth recruited troops through his celebrity and became the Union's first martyr. Having determined to form a regiment from New York City's famously tough volunteer firemen, Ellsworth accomplished his goal in under two weeks.²⁰⁶ The popular Ellsworth and his backers performed this feat with the help of funds supplied by the Union Defense Committee, the state government, and a subscription of over \$30,000. In a situation repeated with many regiments formed of working-class men, the public both admired and feared the rowdy Fire Zouaves, who fought with immigrants while quartered at Castle Garden. The regiment departed New York for Washington on April 29 in a grand parade that included civilians of the regimental funding committee marching in front. Ellsworth's men thus became the first volunteer regiment to leave its home state for the war—before the Military Board in Albany could accept and number the organization or federal officers could muster the men into service.²⁰⁷ “The whole country are watching the Regiment of New York Firemen,” a newspaper noted, but the command's subsequent service indicated the dangers of haste in dispatching men to war. Poorly disciplined and demoralized by Ellsworth's death at the hands of a Virginia secessionist, the vaunted Fire Zouaves became intractable and were finally discharged a full year early in May 1862.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ “11th Infantry Regiment New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings.”

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 105-106. On May 7, the Military Board authorized Ellsworth's regiment, which had already left New York, “in consideration of the peculiar circumstances” of its formation that the state government did not fully understand. Minutes of May 7 meeting, “Minutes of Meetings for Raising & Equipping Volunteers April, May, June & July 1861,” folder 1, Military Board Records, NYSA.

²⁰⁸ “11th Infantry Regiment New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings.”

While his regiment ultimately failed, young Ellsworth contributed to the Union cause with the formation of another, more reliable organization. Soon after the lamented colonel's death, Albany citizens formed the Ellsworth Association of the State of New York. This body set out to organize a three-year regiment composed of one man from each town and ward in the state, carefully selected and funded by his fellow residents. Recruits had to meet a long list of qualifications that included being unmarried, of good morals, at least five feet eight inches tall, not older than thirty, and able to contribute twenty dollars toward the project.²⁰⁹ Some towns took to the Ellsworth Association campaign with vigor, selecting representative volunteers and raising subscriptions to pay for their equipment and entrance fees. Other New Yorkers scoffed at the project, however, and the regiment was finally completed by abandoning the original plan and accepting companies recruited with the normal standards. Still, the Forty-Fourth New York Volunteer Infantry—known as the Ellsworth Avengers or People's Ellsworth Regiment—went on to fight with renown on numerous battlefields.²¹⁰ With countless northerners aiming to take a hand in the cause and government oversight often at a minimum, the experiences of the many regiments recruited by associations and individuals in 1861 ranged from inspiring to ridiculous.²¹¹ A federal inspector summarized the situation on May 27 after determining that one

²⁰⁹ "44th Infantry Regiment New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/44thInf/44thInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016); Eugene Arus Nash, *A History of the Forty-Fourth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry, in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 1911), 7-8.

²¹⁰ *Honor to Col. Ellsworth*, box 3, folder 10, Civil War Collection, Buffalo History Museum; (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, July 3; *Geneva Gazette*, July 19; *Herkimer Democrat*, June 12, July 17; Nash, *A History of the Forty-Fourth Regiment*, passim.

²¹¹ For more examples of the formation and difficulties of these units, see Brian C. Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell: A History of the 5th New York Volunteer Infantry, Duryée's Zouaves (1861-1863)* (Lynchburg, VA: Schroeder Publications, 2012); Abram Duryée to "Dear General," n.d., Thomas Atkins to Col. Jones of British Volunteers, n.d., Charles Sumner to Edward D. Baker, April 24, R. D. Goodwin to UDC, May 20 and May 22, Officers of Imperial Zouaves to Simeon Draper, June 1, L. C. Lockwood to UDC, June 1, all UDC Records, Ebscohost; George D. Morgan to Edwin D. Morgan, June 4, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Huntington Long Islander*, May 3; *New York Sun*, June 3; Eugene A. Kozlay, *Regimental Journal of Colonel Eugene A. Kozlay, Commanding 54th Regt. New York Volunteers From June 30th 1861 to April 23rd 1866: Part One: 1861—1862*, ed. Janet Kozlay, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/54thInf/54thInfKozlayJournal1.htm> (accessed November 4, 2015).

eighth of the men in ten regiments being raised by the Union Defense Committee were physically unfit for service. Pointing to “much confusion and clashing caused by the adverse opinions and interests of those engaged in raising and equipping these regiments,” he suggested the War Department send an energetic, experienced, high-ranking officer, regular or volunteer, to sort it all out.²¹² But with too few such officers to go around and support from Democrats essential, the federal and state governments turned to Sickles, the Union Defense Committee, and other groups and individuals. The Union would have been in dire straits without their zealous but sometimes inefficient and self-serving leadership.

In the first fourteen weeks of the Civil War, New Yorkers accomplished something like a miracle. A society marked by bitter divisions over how to deal with the breakup of the Union and unprepared for war was partly revolutionized by the attack of Fort Sumter and subsequent mobilization. Led by a governor who strove to do more than his part and other leaders of various backgrounds, citizens of the Empire State gladly assumed considerable sacrifices to their families and coffers, contributing tens of thousands of soldiers, millions of dollars, and immeasurable inspiration to their fellow Americans. A rollicking song composed anonymously in these first days of war included the chorus: “’Tis my delight, to march and fight / Like a New York Volunteer,” with verses praising the heroism of New York City and Massachusetts regiments alike as all marched south to save the capital from “traitors.”²¹³ Clearly, localism did not prohibit New Yorkers from embracing a cause much larger than themselves or their own villages or city wards. The initial period of the war revealed the power of mass enthusiasm to partially overcome lack of government infrastructure when channeled through the close-knit

²¹² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 237.

²¹³ “The New York Volunteer” (1861), in Irwin Silber, *Songs of the Civil War* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 168, 187-188 (quote).

communities, voluntary institutions, and elite leadership that marked mid-nineteenth-century American life.

CHAPTER THREE

“WE WERE FOR GOING TO THE WAR IN OUR OWN WAY”:

NEW YORKERS BATTLE FOR THEIR RIGHTS

On the sweltering afternoon of July 21, 1861, a Union army of militiamen and volunteers fled in demoralization from the battlefield of Bull Run. This major defeat fewer than thirty miles from the national capital sent shockwaves through the northern states. Lincoln had urged on his apprehensive army commander by noting that his troops and the rebels were “all green alike.”¹ Two days after the battle, a newspaper on Long Island printed reports of a great victory at Bull Run, then acknowledged defeat farther down in the same column.² More prominent New Yorkers likewise admitted that Bull Run was a stunning blow but urged state and national leaders to call up greater forces and reverse the tide. The general government, indeed, promptly authorized enrollment of half a million volunteers.³ Authorities finally seemed willing to organize the huge national army that many war supporters viewed as key for victory. Yet the skilled and irascible Inspector General of New York, Marsena R. Patrick, asked Morgan to relieve him from having to handle the state’s new levy. The first months of mobilization after Fort Sumter had revealed New York’s military departments capable of “neither order, system, efficiency, economy nor comfort for the troops,” Patrick wrote, but instead “results at once expensive to the State, subversive to good order, and at variance with all military discipline.”⁴ Greenness and obtuseness at the federal and state levels prompted many volunteers to demand

¹ Quoted in McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 336. See also remarks by Harry Smeltzer in “Historians’ Forum: The First Battle of Bull Run,” *Civil War History* 57 (2011), 111.

² *Long Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*, July 23, 1861.

³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 342; Elias W. Leavenworth to Morgan, July 29, 1861, box 7, David Dudley Field to Morgan, July 30, 1861, box 5, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁴ Patrick to Morgan, July 29, 1861, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL.

greater attention to their rights as citizens and soldiers. New Yorkers and other northern volunteers had chosen to participate in the war and continued to exercise autonomy over how their service would proceed, leading to clashes with military and government authorities in the chaotic first twelve months of the war.

In the patriotic euphoria that followed Fort Sumter and the calls for troops, northerners took heart as Democrats and Republicans dropped their differences and united for the Union cause. But political enmities were quite resilient and immediately colored mobilization. Under state party chairman Dean Richmond, New York “War Democrats” supported the Union cause but in many cases remained steadfastly opposed to Republican principles. “There never was greater use for party than now,” Richmond’s *Albany Atlas and Argus* declared in response to calls for bipartisanship. “It is in moments of civil commotion like these, that the vigilance of party is needed to protect the liberties of the people.” Democrats were “the only party that can carry on a successful war, or command an honorable and enduring peace.”⁵ An assemblyman from Queens County voted in favor of the bill for thirty thousand troops but blamed the “vile doctrines” of Republicans for secession and war. Likewise, the powerful Tammany faction sponsored a regiment while also criticizing the Union Defense Committee for its bipartisanship, and Democrats consistently claimed that members of their party enlisted in greater numbers than Republicans did.⁶ A smaller group of Democrats refused to go along with mobilization, calling for compromise and questioning Lincoln’s authority to order state militias into other states. These seeds of opposition laid early in the war would grow into heavy and sustained criticism of

⁵ McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 254-255; Mushkat, *Tammany*, 25-26; Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 29-30; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 149, 151; *Albany Atlas & Argus* quoted in *Herkimer Democrat*, May 8, 1861.

⁶ *Long Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*, April 23, 1861 (quote); Mushkat, *Tammany*, 329; *Herkimer Democrat*, May 8, 1861; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 20, 1861.

Republican policies, especially emancipation and conscription, under Horatio Seymour.⁷ Republicans, for their part, were hardly immune to factionalism.⁸ A young lawyer and abolitionist explained that he had joined the Seventh Regiment partly out of party and class pride. “Shall the Democratic rag-tag and bob-tail go out to war and strike good blows for the right,” he asked, “while we Republicans sit safely at home[?] ... [S]hall culture and education deafen us to the call of honor and patriotism?”⁹ Partisanship colored mobilization as it did many aspects of New Yorkers’ public lives.

Questions regarding which groups would serve shaped the course of mobilization in the war’s first year. Officials and recruiters were supposed to base their actions on federal and state laws. At the beginning of mobilization, the U. S. Army relied on regulations dating from 1857, during peacetime. State troops had their own regulations but came under United States orders when they mustered into federal service.¹⁰ In New York, the Military Board adopted federal regulations in cases where they did not conflict with state law.¹¹ Until a new system took over in 1863, field officers appointed by the Adjutant General supervised the army’s recruiting service from three headquarters, including Fort Columbus in New York Harbor.¹² Many problems in mobilization stemmed from the longstanding custom of making officers responsible for recruiting their own units, especially in cases where state quotas and officers’ commissions

⁷ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 148, 149, 152; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 18, April 19, 1861; (*Watertown*) *Northern New York Journal*, April 30, 1861; (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, July 3, 1861; Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln’s Opponents in the North* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 15-64.

⁸ Mushkat, *Tammany*, 26; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 20, 1861.

⁹ William Wheeler to “Dear Boy,” May 5, 1861, in Wheeler, *Letters of William Wheeler of the Class of 1855, Y.C.*, 282.

¹⁰ *Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1857* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1857); *General Regulations for the Military Forces of the State of New-York: 1858* (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1858); Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 15.

¹¹ Minutes of May 1 meeting, “Minutes of Meetings for Raising & Equipping Volunteers April, May, June & July 1861,” folder 1, Military Board Records, NYSA.

¹² *Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1857*, 421; (*New York*) *Spirit of the Times*, March 30, 1861.

depended on securing sufficient numbers of men. This often led to fraudulent enlistments that little helped the war effort and even hampered it.

On paper, army customs were exacting and conscientious. Recruiting parties were to consist of a junior officer, a non-commissioned officer, a drummer, and a fifer. Regulations specified that recruiters “will not allow any man to be deceived or inveigled into the service by false representations, but will in person explain the nature of the service, the length of the term, the pay, clothing, rations, and other allowances to which a soldier is entitled by law, to every man before he signs the enlistment.” Enlistment was open to “[a]ny free white male person above the age of eighteen and under thirty-five years, being at least five feet four and a half inches high, effective, able-bodied, sober, free from disease, of good character and habits, and with a competent knowledge of the English language,” though exceptions for height and age were made for minors joining as musicians. Those under the age of twenty-one needed written permission from a parent or guardian. Once a recruit fully understood what he was undertaking, he signed a declaration to enlist and took an oath of enlistment. Each man must be examined for his fitness by a specially appointed physician; if passed, he was mustered into federal service. Recruiting parties’ progress and expenses were to be carefully accounted for.¹³

Two days after New York enacted its April 16, 1861, call for volunteers, the state adjutant general began issuing general orders for the force, with special attention paid to requiring that companies and regiments reach a minimum strength of thirty-two men before electing officers and seventy-seven men in order to be accepted, as well as parental permission for minors.¹⁴ In obedience to American tradition, enlisted men through at least the first half of

¹³ *Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1857*, 421-424.

¹⁴ Adjutant General Orders No. 13, April 18, and No. 17, April 25, 1861, box 16, Hough Papers, NYSL; Military Board Minutes, E. D. Morgan Papers, N-YHS.

the war elected their lieutenants and captains, a custom that hardly encouraged discipline and alarmed professionally minded officers on both sides. Only governors, however, held the power to commission officers into their state regiments, which often made elections all but symbolic but did not ensure military efficiency.¹⁵ The Military Board voted on whether to accept offered companies, officially banded companies together in regiments—something regimental commanders had frequently already begun—and numbered regiments. Companies usually consisted of men from one locality, especially early in the war, and the Board took account of local pride by forming companies from the same county into regiments when possible; whole regiments were formed in the large cities of New York, Brooklyn, Albany, Buffalo, and Rochester. Once the adjutant general received a regiment’s report of mustering into state service and election of officers, the unit was accepted into the state service and could prepare for federal acceptance.¹⁶

These regulations underwent modifications soon after mobilization began. The height standard was set at five feet three inches, for instance, and by June, officers sought to fill companies to a standard of one hundred men.¹⁷ The army published updated regulations in August and raised infantry regiment strength to one thousand, setting a need for regimental

¹⁵ Andrew S. Bledsoe, Andrew S. *Citizen-Officers: The Union and Confederate Volunteer Junior Officer Corps in the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), 27-45; Timothy J. Orr, “‘All Manner of Schemes and Rascalities’: The Politics of Promotion in the Union Army,” in *This Distracted and Anarchical People: New Answers to Old Questions about the Civil War-Era North*, ed. Andrew L. Slap and Michael Thomas Smith (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 84.

¹⁶ “Minutes of Meetings for Raising & Equipping Volunteers April, May, June & July 1861,” Military Board Records, NYSA; Special Order No. 88, April 25, 1861, G. K. Warren Collection, NYSL. The ten-company infantry regiment was the regular army standard at the war’s beginning and based on British organization. Reese, *Sykes’ Regular Infantry Division*, 52. Cavalry and artillery regiments used a twelve-company structure.

¹⁷ Reese, *Sykes’ Regular Infantry Division*, 55; G. W. Currier to Hiram A. Blodgett, June 12, 1861, Hiram A. Blodgett Correspondence, NYSL; L. W. Blanchard to R. M. Goldwaite, August 7, 1861, in Marti Skipper and Jane Taylor, eds., *A Handful of Providence: The Civil War Letters of Lt. Richard Goldwaite, New York Volunteers, and Ellen Goldwaite* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2004), 232.

recruiting parties that could return home and secure more men.¹⁸ In many cases, however, untutored or unscrupulous recruiters broke laws as they strove to fill their commands, ignoring age, height, health, and language restrictions. The wide dispersal of recruiting parties did little to ensure strict adherence to standards. Historians often assume that regiments were composed of neighbors, but this was more often the case at the company level, as most regiments were not formed of men from a single city or county.¹⁹ As we have seen, Sickles and other commanders courted trouble by pulling in recruits from other states, giving New York credit for other states' soldiers. By late 1861, several new regiments, including the Calcium Light Sharpshooters and the Ira Harris Guard, had recruiters scattered across New York, and this became increasingly common as officers competed for a shrinking pool of prospective volunteers.²⁰

Old tensions regarding class and military service asserted themselves in 1861 and never disappeared during the war. Eyewitnesses in the war's early months often praised volunteers as the best and brightest of northern society. "The volunteer forces at Elmira are composed of strong, hardy appearing men," an officer wrote from that rendezvous in May. "In intelligence, size, health, energy, power of endurance, in everything which goes to make up the material of an army, they well represent the best fighting population of the States."²¹ Nearly two years later, a member of an artillery battery formed under the auspices of the YMCA pointed to the diverse but

¹⁸ *Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861: With a Full Index* (Philadelphia: J. G. L. Brown, 1861); *Watertown Daily Reformer*, August 30, 1861.

¹⁹ For the greater importance of companies over regiments in recruitment and soldiers' loyalties, see William Garrett Piston and Richard W. Hatcher, *Wilson's Creek: The Second Battle of the Civil War and the Men Who Fought It* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xv.

²⁰ "Lists Showing Stations of Officers of Various Organizations," n.d. (late 1861), entry no. 1440, Record Group 110, National Archives, New York City (hereafter NARA-NY).

²¹ E. J. Marsh to "Editor News," (*Adams*) *Jefferson County News*, May 27, 1861. See also *Ithaca Journal*, April 24; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, April 25; *Westfield Republican*, May 1; (*Adams*) *Jefferson County News*, May 30; (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, June 19; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 30, all 1861; Atkins and Oliver, *Yonkers in the Rebellion of 1861-1865*, 19.

excellent composition of the Union forces as proof of their patriotic devotion.²² But others expressed alarm at the rough and physically unfit character of several regiments, particularly those formed in large cities.²³ Onlookers were by turns inspired and appalled by the men forming Ellsworth's Fire Zouaves, "Billy" Wilson's similar zouave regiment, and Sickles's Excelsior Brigade, all mainly recruited from the polyglot population of New York City.²⁴ A prominent abolitionist claimed that Wilson recruited his ferocious-looking men based on their brawling ability and desire to be killed in battle. "It is my impression," he added, "that no such band of fiends in mortal shape was ever sent out from any planet in our system."²⁵ New Yorkers urged that Ellsworth and Wilson's rowdy men be moved out of the city for the safety of its residents.²⁶ New York's first volunteer regiment, another Gotham organization, symbolized class and leadership issues in mobilization. In April 1861, the *Times* noted the "splendid appearance" and youth of the men in Colonel William H. Allen's First, which included several veterans of the renowned Seventh among its officers. But an upper-class officer who later took command called

²² "11th Independent Battery, NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings Transcribed by Brendan Murphy," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/11thIndBat/11thIndBatCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

²³ James W. Beekman to Morgan, April 23, 1861, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL; Max E. Sand to "Dear Henry," April 30, 1861, in Henry Augustus Sand, *Crossing Antietam: The Civil War Letters of Captain Henry Augustus Sand, Company A, 103rd New York Volunteers*, ed. Peter H. Sand and John F. McLaughlin (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2016), 12; Alex. Hamilton, Jr., to UDC, May 11, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost; Chandler B. Gillam to "Dear Sarah," June 7, 1861, in Ellen C. Collier, ed., *Letters of a Civil War Soldier: Chandler B. Gillam, 28th New York Volunteers, with Diary of W. L. Hicks* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corp., 2005), 19.

²⁴ Max E. Sand to "Dear Henry," April 30, 1861, in Sand, *Crossing Antietam*, 11-12; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 1, 1861; Joseph Hopkins Twitchell to father, April 22, 1861, in Twitchell, *The Civil War Letters of Joseph Hopkins Twitchell*, 16-18; "6th Regiment of Infantry New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/6thInf/6th_InfCWN.htm (accessed January 9, 2016); Arthur McKinstry to "Dear Uncles," June 19, 1861, in Merwin Ansley Garland, ed., *Civil War Letters, 1861-1865, Copied from the Fredonia Censor* (microfiche; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), 5; John A. Smith to the editors of the *New York Sunday Mercury*, n.d., and "Company C, Ellsworth's Fire Zouaves," to same, May 8, 1861, in Stuple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 18-19; (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, June 19, 1861.

²⁵ James Sloan Gibbons to William Lloyd Garrison, April 25, 1861, Boston Public Library, *Anti-Slavery (Collection of Distinction)*, <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:dv143m710> (accessed April 29, 2017).

²⁶ Thurlow Weed to Morgan, April 25, 1861, box 13, and Charles Yates to same, April 28, 1861, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL; John B. Hall to Simeon Draper, May 6, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

it a drunken mob of “580 of the hardest characters New York City could produce,” adding: “As the sapling is bent, the tree is inclined, and a Regiment commenced under such a man as is Allen, with such material as the first is made of *can never* be a good one.”²⁷ The typical regiment probably resembled Buffalo’s Twenty-First, which a journalist described as a mixture of the “very best” men and “some of ruder and rougher character.”²⁸

Evidence suggests that by the fall of 1861, recruiters had settled on targeting the poor and working classes, men and boys who were often well-educated but lacked employment—a demographic especially large during the lean months between the harvest and spring planting.²⁹ In September, Morgan sought orders from the War Department to raise twenty-five thousand more troops, noting that with the navigation season almost over, boatmen would be out of work and unruly, making them prime candidates for the army.³⁰ The Union Defense Committee forwarded to Morgan a lieutenant’s request “to pardon some 150 persons now confined in the Penitentiary for Assault and Battery” so they could be enlisted under his command.³¹ The mix of patriotic and prosaic impulses that brought in volunteers was aptly summarized on a recruiting poster printed in the village of Malone: it laid out army pay for one year (something hardly appealing to a prosperous civilian) and predicted the war would be over by the end of that period. “For such a noble Cause, and with such liberal pay,” the broadside added, “who can falter or

²⁷ *New York Times*, April 19, 1861; “New York Infantry Regiment, 1st Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/_1stInf/1stInfCWN.htm (accessed January 9, 2016); J. Fred. Pierson to “Dear Father,” August 25, 1862, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL (quote). See also Elliott F. Shepard to Morgan, July 23, 1861, box 11, *ibid.* For a similar description of a Syracuse company enlisted in 1861, see F. Colburn Adams, *The Story of a Trooper: With Much of Interest Concerning the Campaign on the Peninsula, Not before Written* (Washington: McGill & Witherow, 1864), 87-88.

²⁸ Quoted in Mills, *Chronicles of the Twenty-First Regiment, New York State Volunteers*, 28-29.

²⁹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 323; *Fredonia Censor*, September 25, 1861, in Garland, *Civil War Letters, 1861-1865, Copied from the Fredonia Censor*, 112; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 128; *Sigourney’s Rifle Regiment*, recruiting poster, n.d. (late 1861), Recruiting Broadside, New York State Military Museum.

³⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 540.

³¹ J. W. Wadsworth to Morgan, September 28, 1861, EDM Papers, NYSL.

resist the temptation to serve so Glorious and Liberal a Government.”³² This strategy probably did not help combat traditional beliefs regarding class and service that persisted in 1861, as one middle-class Auburn volunteer found in September when his family called his enlistment a “preposterous idea” because “there were enough ruffians to go.”³³ An army surgeon lent support to this old (and often true) stereotype when he noted that while numerous men volunteered out of patriotism, the ranks were also filled with those needing work thanks to the early-war economic slump, and others were attracted to the army’s reputation for “idleness or dishonesty;” he went on to attribute many of the North’s military disasters to its acceptance of officers from the latter class.³⁴

Many a colonel, determined to make his regiment the best in the service, insisted on standards of character, fitness, and military experience that exceeded army regulations.³⁵ Yet even when officers strove to select men with great care, as in the case of Colonel Abram Duryée and his elite Fifth New York Zouaves—sometimes called the best volunteer regiment in the army—unsuitable recruits still slipped through.³⁶ Lax medical inspections and disorder at recruit depots were part of the problem, despite state and federal attempts to enforce regulations.³⁷ New

³² G. W. Lewis, *Rally for the Union*, October 25, 1861, Recruiting Broadside, New York State Military Museum.

³³ John Newton Chamberlin, *Captaining the Corps d’Afrique: The Civil War Diaries and Letters of John Newton Chamberlin*, ed. John Bisbee (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2016), 7.

³⁴ Ellis, *Leaves from the Diary of an Army Surgeon*, 7-8.

³⁵ “29th New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/29thInf/29thInfCWN.htm>; “40th Infantry Regiment, New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/40thInf/40thInfCWN.htm>; “42nd Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/42ndInf/42ndInfCWN.htm>; all *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center* (accessed January 9, 2016); *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 10, 1861; Charles W. Hamlin to “Dear Mother,” October 5, 1861, Charles W. Hamlin Letters, NYSL. The colonel of the 41st New York Infantry even discharged “about seventy-five men who have families to provide for, in whose places the Colonel recruited single men ...” See “41st Regiment, New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/41stInf/41stInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

³⁶ Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 5-6.

³⁷ “Special Instructions for Inspections of Regiments,” May 24, 1861; M. H. Grinnell to D’Utassy, May 29, 1861; Charles Yates, inspection regulations for Department of Volunteers, City of New York, n.d.; all D’Utassy Papers, N-YHS.

York's highly capable Surgeon General, Samuel O. Vanderpoel, tried to maintain exacting examination and sanitary standards at the three state rendezvous points, but these soon expanded into twenty-three branch depots where oversight was sometimes minimal.³⁸ (In any event, federal regulations issued in April suggested that entire companies could be medically examined in only half an hour.)³⁹ The Elmira rendezvous initially enjoyed the best management thanks to strict orders on cleanliness, discipline, and barracks layout issued by its commandant, Robert B. Van Valkenburgh. This orderly management disappeared after his election to Congress.⁴⁰ The members of the Second New York Infantry, formed in Troy, did not undergo a medical inspection until two months after enlistment, having already been mustered into service and fought their first battle. A medical board gave many of the men the option of leaving or staying; 118 were discharged, though most reenlisted.⁴¹ This was an uncommon case, but not by much; by the summer of 1862, New York gained a dubious distinction among the northern states for lax examinations of recruits.⁴²

In addition to the physically unfit, underage boys found their way into uniform. The Army, Navy, and Marine Corps all had regulations allowing for the service of boys as young as eleven or twelve with guardians' permission. This custom—a relic of earlier eras before the development of modern conceptions of childhood—disturbed some observers by the mid-nineteenth century. The Army Adjutant General had identified underage recruitment as a

³⁸ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 158; Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 37.

³⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 962-963.

⁴⁰ General Orders No. 4, Headquarters Elmira Depot, New York Volunteers, May 25, 1861, box 16, Hough Papers, NYSL; Elliott F. Shepard to Morgan, June 19, July 2, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁴¹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 54-55.

⁴² George Worthington Adams, *Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War* (reprint; Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 48; *American Medical Times*, August 30, 1862.

problem in 1860, and reforms were underway to end enlistment of minors.⁴³ After mobilization began in the spring of 1861, the federal and New York State governments made conscientious efforts to forbid underage enlistment without parental or guardian authorization.⁴⁴ Officials fought a losing battle, however, against the *rage militaire* engulfing American society, which swept people of all backgrounds into service with encouragement from their families and neighbors. Northerners thrilled to the story of twelve-year-old Brooklynite Clarence D. McKenzie, a drummer in the Thirteenth New York State Militia who became his city's first war death and an early Union martyr.⁴⁵ Within a year, the War Department (with Congressional sanction) dropped efforts to enforce a law mandating that minors enlisted without permission be discharged.⁴⁶ This only exacerbated the problem another Brooklyn resident had noted in April 1861, that "many of too tender years and feet have joined."⁴⁷ Thanks to irresponsible recruiters and examiners and the many thousands of eligible men unwilling to fill the ranks, enlistment of the unfit only increased as the war went on and became something of a national scandal.⁴⁸

Excluded from military service, women—white women at least—nevertheless held important duties from the beginning of mobilization. Northern women came together in their own and larger communities to fight for the Union in any way they could. The reform spirit inspired and shaped the actions of middle-class women in particular, who quickly carved out

⁴³ David M. Rosen, *Child Soldiers in the Western Imagination: From Patriots to Victims* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015), 31, 40, 50; Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy*, 111, 124; Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln's Navy*, 40; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 21.

⁴⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 454, 962-963; Adjutant General Order No. 17, April 25, 1861, box 16, Hough Papers, NYSL; Minutes of May 8 meeting, "Minutes of Meetings for Raising & Equipping Volunteers April, May, June & July 1861," folder 1, Military Board Records, NYSA.

⁴⁵ Rosen, *Child Soldiers in the Western Imagination*, 23; Luther G. Bingham, *The Little Drummer Boy: Clarence D. McKenzie, the Child of the Thirteenth Regiment, N.Y.S.M., and the Child of the Mission Sunday School* (New York: Board of Publication of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, 1861).

⁴⁶ Rosen, *Child Soldiers in the Western Imagination*, 51; Robin W. Winks, *The Civil War Years: Canada and the United States* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 186.

⁴⁷ Max E. Sand to "Dear Henry," April 30, 1861, in Sand, *Crossing Antietam*, 12.

⁴⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 912.

spaces in the war effort. Elizabeth Blackwell brought together two thousand New York City women to found a medical organization, the Women's Central Association of Relief, in April, 1861, being followed soon afterward by larger groups, the United States Sanitary and Christian Commissions, with male leadership and largely female rank and file.⁴⁹ More than two years later, feminist icons Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the Women's National Loyal League, an abolitionist society with the allied goal of staking a claim for women in politics.⁵⁰ Middle-class females also asserted influence as the authors and subjects of a vast body of wartime literature on the nature of duty and sacrifice. Fanny Fern and other female authors encouraged their readers to remain true to the cause despite setbacks. Throughout the war, Fern used the pages of the New York *Ledger* to praise men who enlisted and shame those who avoided service by hiring substitutes.⁵¹ Female approval, in fact, figured greatly in wartime writings. Songs, short stories, and novels abounded with scenes of men whose decision to serve or not depended on what a mother, wife, or sweetheart said; "perhaps the most important role for the patriotic woman" in such literature, J. Matthew Gallman believes, "was to encourage men to enlist."⁵² The conclusion that northerners connected duty to manliness is inescapable, but female participation in recruitment was more nuanced and evolved as the war continued. While some popular songs, for example, humorously or touchingly depicted women as patriotic recruiters, others acknowledged the alarm and despair of wives and mothers who gave their men to the cause.⁵³

⁴⁹ Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood*, 32-34; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 73.

⁵⁰ Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, 64; Lyde Cullen Sizer, *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850-1872* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 81-82.

⁵¹ Sizer, *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850-1872*, 134.

⁵² Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 136-137; 202 (quote), 203-210, 217. See for example Harriet N. Babb, "Jennie Jewett: The Young Recruiting Officer," *The Ladies' Repository*, vol. 23, no. 4 (April 1863): 241-244.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 203-204; Manning, *What This Cruel War was Over*, 181; Charles C. Sawyer, "Weeping Sad and Lonely (When This Cruel War is Over)," 124-126, and Henry C. Work, "Grafted into the Army," 311-313, in Silber, *Songs of the Civil War*.

From the war's very beginning, males and females alike expected women to perform crucial work for the cause, and the language they used early on often cast volunteers of both genders as warriors. Newspapers appealed to females to serve as nurses and supply troops with clothing, bandages, relief money, and encouragement.⁵⁴ "Now is the time for action not for words in support of that flag the boast of the world," wrote a Brooklyn woman who offered her services as a nurse to the Union Defense Committee. "No man's 'Heir or Slave' I abandon Father family and all in its protection."⁵⁵ A leading New Yorker wrote to the UDC that his son had left with the Seventh Regiment and that his daughter similarly desired to be "on the march" to Washington as a nurse.⁵⁶ The War Department paid nurses of the Women's Central Association of Relief the same wage as army privates, and girls did their best to fool the association's recruiters into thinking they met the age requirement much as did boys seeking to enlist.⁵⁷ Occasionally, female militarization went further. The Garibaldi Guards left for the front accompanied by *vivandières*, women in modified military dress who were married to soldiers and meant to carry water and run camp stores. (One young female married a soldier she had just met in order to serve as a *vivandière*.)⁵⁸ As the wild enthusiasm of the spring of 1861 dissipated later that year, female militarization rhetoric appears to have gone out of fashion, though women's crucial participation in the war continued. Many more women, in common with men, contributed to volunteer and family relief subscriptions.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 23, 1861; *Herkimer Democrat*, June 12, 1861.

⁵⁵ Ellen Mary Agnes Shea to Fernando Wood, April 23, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

⁵⁶ James W. Hale to Charles H. Marshall, April 25, 1861, in *ibid*. See also Wilson G. Hunt to Royal Phelps, April 24, 1861, and Maria L. Andrews to "Executive of the Union Defence Committee," April 26, 1861, in *ibid*; *Long Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*, April 23, 1861; *Ithaca Journal*, April 23, 1861.

⁵⁷ Bacon and Howland, *Letters of a Family during the War for the Union, 1861-1865*, 1: 69, 78.

⁵⁸ "39th Regiment, NY Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings."

⁵⁹ See, for instance, August and September 1862 account book, Third Ward Enlistment Committee Records, BHS.

Women and girls, like their local editors, politicians, and other community leaders, often took it upon themselves to inspire their male kin and acquaintances into enlisting. Where inspiration failed, shaming might take its place. Cartoons showing women impugning the manliness of men who did not enlist or extend their enlistments appeared in *Vanity Fair* and *Harper's Weekly* during critical periods of the war.⁶⁰ In October 1861, young ladies in the Green Point neighborhood of Brooklyn passed resolutions vowing to ignore young men who failed to volunteer or avoided danger by joining the home guards.⁶¹ Early in the war, a Syracuse newspaper commended wives who encouraged their husbands to enlist.⁶² Not everyone appreciated female pressure, however. Decades after the war, an Oneida County veteran recalled the “cruel patriotism” of “the ultra patriotic girls of the neighborhood,” who sometimes forced enlistment on men whose poor families could ill afford their absence.⁶³ The actual extent of female shaming during the war is difficult to determine. It appeared in newspapers, literature and political cartoons, but the fact that the majority of eligible northern men did not volunteer leaves the commonality and effectiveness of such shaming open to question, particularly after the martial euphoria of 1861 dissipated.⁶⁴ Gallman’s work indicates that northerners’ wartime attitudes shifted from an emphasis on individual duty to community obligation.⁶⁵ In fact, instances are often found of women who actively discouraged enlistment of family members and others in their communities. An Albany County wife wrote to her soldier husband in September

⁶⁰ *Vanity Fair*, May 18, 1861; *Harper's Weekly*, August 10, August 31, 1861, August 30, 1862.

⁶¹ Resolutions of October 26, 1861, in clipping from *Brooklyn Daily Times*, November 16, 1861, CW-BHS. The resolutions appear to have been copied from those passed by young ladies in Logansport, Indiana, the month before. See Frank Moore, ed., *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc.* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1862), 3: 26.

⁶² *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, May 1, 1861.

⁶³ Robert McLean Memoir, 6-7, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park.

⁶⁴ In 1863 a Rochester newspaper published a letter from a woman lamenting the fact that so few local civilians were encouraging men to enlist or reenlist, especially women, and characterized such coercion as a woman’s duty in the war effort. *Rochester Daily Democrat and American*, June 30, 1863.

⁶⁵ Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, passim.

1861 noting that her young brother “is crazy to be in the 3rd Regiment with you” and implored him to “write something awful bad to discourage our Tomey from wanting to go to war.”⁶⁶

Shame could also be directed at females, as a Herkimer newspaper indicated when it censured local women for failing to fill the gap when the state neglected to provide clothing for the town’s volunteers.⁶⁷ More common and positive examples of female inspiration were seen in the behavior of the Ladies’ Patriotic Association of Trinity Parish, who gave a pipe and tobacco to each of the roughhewn men forming Wilson’s Zouaves, and Mrs. George T. Strong, who presented the regiment with a flag before it left for war.⁶⁸ Women’s roles in mobilization mirrored the variation in attitudes and behaviors in northern society as a whole.

In addition to recruitment, female influence factored in the widespread movements to raise relief funds for soldiers’ families. Participants in war meetings commonly combined military and monetary volunteering, calling for both enlistments and funds through subscriptions and taxes to pay for uniforms, equipment, and family relief while breadwinners went off to war. Women headed and staffed many of the societies formed for these purposes.⁶⁹ One week after

⁶⁶ Geary, *We Need Men*, 76, 114; Ellie Goldwaite to “My Dear Husband,” September 29, 1861, in Skipper and Taylor, eds., *A Handful of Providence*, 52 (quote); *Lowville Journal and Republican* December 2, 1863. Such discouragement was not always effective. A young Delaware County recruit who enlisted in October 1861 recorded that his sister “advises me not to go to the war, but my mind is made up.” Harvey Henderson, “Transcription of the Civil War Diary Notebook of Harvey Henderson,” 1, box 2, Civil War Collection, New York State Historical Association.

⁶⁷ *Herkimer Democrat*, June 19, 1861.

⁶⁸ “6th Regiment of Infantry New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings;” Gouveneur Morris, *The History of a Volunteer Regiment: Being a Succinct Account of the Organization, Services and Adventures of the Sixth Regiment, New York Volunteers, Infantry, Known as Wilson Zouaves—Where they Went, What they Did, and What they Saw in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1865* (New York: Veteran Volunteer Pub. Co., 1891), 28-29.

⁶⁹ See for instance May 9, 1861, newspaper notice of a volunteer fund in Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby*, 13; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, April 25, 1861; (*Watertown*) *New York Daily Reformer*, April 26, 1861; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 324; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, March 19, November 5, 1864. The extent of women’s participation in reliefs groups is seen in “List of Aid Societies of Various Kinds, with References,” Franklin B. Hough Papers, NYSL; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 24, 1861; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 338.

the attack on Fort Sumter, a Brooklyn newspaper summarized the vitality of family aid to the national cause:

We can conceive of no more timely act than the organization of Societies to look after the interests of the soldier and his family. There are thousands of patriotic citizens so situated as to render it impossible for them to enter the field, who can, and are willing to discharge an equally important duty at home. ... There is scarcely a young man in the community who would not freely volunteer, if assured that those dependent upon his labor for the comforts of life, would be properly cared for.

The paper called on “leading citizens” to take up the movement immediately and noted that many businesses in the New York City area were promising to continue employees’ salaries if they volunteered.⁷⁰ Tiffany and Company established a weekly subscription for that purpose; meanwhile, William Steinway—a member of the piano-manufacturing family—declined to enlist with his brothers but helped manage a fund for the German-American Fifth Militia, handling equipment orders and requests for relief from volunteers’ wives.⁷¹ One of the principle duties of the Union Defense Committee was to provide family aid from the appropriations and subscriptions it received, and requests for such relief from officers and individual soldiers poured into the committee’s offices.⁷² A captain in a three-month militia regiment informed the committee that 150 of the men in the unit would reenlist for the length of the war, but their families needed aid; on another occasion, the UDC registered a claim for \$1,300 in relief for 240

⁷⁰ *Brooklyn Evening Star*, April 19, 1861.

⁷¹ *New York Herald*, April 19, 1861; *The William Steinway Diary, 1861-1865*, http://americanhistory.si.edu/steinwaydiary/diary/?view=transcription&show_anno=true&page=2#dl (accessed October 14, 2015).

⁷² Stevens, *The Union Defence Committee of the City of New York*, 19; Executive Committee report, June 1861, 11-12, in Correspondence, UDC Records, Ebscohost; James S. Butler to William C. Noyes, April 25, J. B. Bidwell to UDC, April 26, David E. Wheeler to John A. Dix, April 26, Charles G. Stone to Chairman UDC, April 27, James B. Grant to UDC, May 2, William C. Noyes to Prosper M. Wetmore, June 3, all 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

recruits of the Eighth New York, “for want of which these men would disband and be lost.”⁷³ In an early case of recruiting fraud, at least one opportunistic officer working in the UDC’s name promised prospective volunteers specific dollar amounts for wives and children that had no basis in regulations.⁷⁴ The UDC formed a sub-committee of its members and councilmen from each ward to review applications for relief and dole it out to those meeting the criteria. Tensions soon developed between city and committee over disbursements. By June, the UDC reported that its funds were nearly “exhausted,” that the responsibility for family relief properly belonged to the state and federal authorities, and that committee members expected reimbursement of funds the UDC had advanced.⁷⁵

The post-secession economic malaise still gripping New York City caused hardship for families of workers and soldiers alike, and in July volunteers’ wives staged a demonstration at City Hall, declaring their intention to discourage enlistments if support was not more forthcoming.⁷⁶ The Common Council publicly criticized the UDC for inefficiency and set up the Volunteer Family Aid Fund of the City of New York, a half-million dollars controlled by the city comptroller rather than the UDC. A system of district assistant treasurers and ward committees was established to investigate applicants and distribute a limit of five dollars per week to each family. Further appropriations followed that December and in June 1862. By the end of the war, the city had spent roughly six million dollars on family relief.⁷⁷

As one historian notes: “Measures for the relief of soldiers’ families similar to those taken in New York City were adopted in other communities throughout the state,” including

⁷³ Henry B. Davis to UDC, n.d. [1861], Joseph C. Pinckney to Robert T. Haws, May 25, 1861, and June 10, 1861 entry in claims book (quote), UDC Records, Ebscohost.

⁷⁴ Harmanus M. Welch to UDC, June 13, 1861, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Prosper M. Wetmore to Morgan Jones, May 4, “Minutes, Executive Committee,” April 23, and Executive Committee report, June, all 1861, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Baker, “The Gilded Age (1860-1914),” 428.

⁷⁷ Schneider, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State, 1609-1866*, 282-283.

Brooklyn, Albany, and Rochester. In fact, virtually every locality larger than a hamlet had its family relief society, and residents and officials proudly took on the responsibility of putting their own funds toward the worthy cause.⁷⁸ Newspapers carried the names of local subscribers and the amounts they pledged almost as often as the names of volunteers.⁷⁹ To family men serving in the war, promises of support from hometown societies represented a necessity, an obligation, and a contract made with those at home similar to the articles of enlistment between the soldier and his government. Soldiers expressed dissatisfaction in the pages of their local newspapers when their families did not receive expected aid.⁸⁰ Rochester residents began a relief subscription fund at an April 18, 1861, war meeting, and weekly payments of four dollars to soldiers' spouses soon took such a heavy toll that "the recruiting of heads of families was temporarily discouraged," according to a local chronicler. In another sign of depleting enthusiasm, most subscribers failed to deliver the amounts promised, and the city took over the fund. As the number of local enlistments and qualified families increased throughout the war, the individual payments were gradually halved to two dollars per week.⁸¹

New York failed to take the lead in adopting a statewide plan of family relief despite Morgan's research into other states' support systems.⁸² In May 1863, the state legislature finally passed an act establishing boards of relief to handle aid disbursement in each locality. Family

⁷⁸ Ibid, 283, (quote), 284; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 20, May 6, 1861; "17th Ward Brooklyn, Green Point," and "To the Residents and Property Owners of Green Point," n.d., CW-BHS. On the significance of family relief societies, see Richard, *Busy Hands*, 176-221.

⁷⁹ For example, see *Geneva Courier*, April 24, 1861; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, August 14, 1862.

⁸⁰ See for instance O. F. H., Captain, 2nd New York Artillery, to "Editor of the Utica Morning Herald," December 26, 1862, in "2nd Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/2ndArtHvy/2ndArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed December 12, 2015); *Ogdensburgh Advance*, July 5, 1861.

⁸¹ McKelvey, *Rochester*, 66 (quote), 78.

⁸² Fred A. Shannon, "The Mercenary Factor in the Creation of the Union Army," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 12 (1926), 524; Charles Olden to Morgan, August 14, November 2, 1861, reel 31, and William Buckingham to Morgan, December 23, 1861, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL.

relief eventually cost the state more than seven million dollars.⁸³ Much like the closely related matter of enlistment bounties, relief programs faced complications from fraud and class concerns—the latter demonstrated by the Ladies’ Home Samaritan Association, who in May 1861 offered to take on the responsibility of the UDC’s aid money and purchase articles needed by the poor, instead of trusting recipients with the funds.⁸⁴ Such behavior grew out of upper-class women’s desires to control and reform society, especially their less fortunate neighbors, an impulse stemming from the Second Great Awakening.⁸⁵ The state relief agencies that evolved in New York and elsewhere were an unprecedented development in American mobilization. But non-governmental bodies such as the United States Christian and Sanitary Commissions and a host of local groups remained prominent players in relief throughout the war, and the aid such societies handled was not limited to money. Early in the war, for instance, Eliza Bayard Anderson led New York City women in organizing the “Union Home and School, for the Education and Maintenance of the Children of our Volunteers, who will be left unprovided for,” and the president of the city’s Free Academy supervised a meeting to address the issue of soldiers’ needy offspring.⁸⁶ For many of the Americans who fought and endured for the Union, voluntary and governmental family support was a crucial motivator and an absolute necessity.⁸⁷

New Yorkers supported and sacrificed for the war effort in numerous ways, but even from the beginning, their commitment to this great struggle was neither universal nor total. In the first frenzied months of mobilization, writers and speakers often espoused all-hands-on-deck

⁸³ Schneider, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State, 1609-1866*, 285-286.

⁸⁴ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 27, 1861; Abby M. Burton to Simeon Draper, May 2, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost. In April 1861, one David J. Levy offered to supply the UDC with Eureka sewing machines at cost (\$25), suggesting that the instruments be distributed to the families of volunteers in order to “afford them an opportunity of earning an honest livelihood.” Levy to William E. Dodge, April 25, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

⁸⁵ Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis*, 75.

⁸⁶ Constitution of the school, May 22, 1861, D’Utassy Papers, N-YHS (quote); *New York Times*, June 10, 1861.

⁸⁷ James M. McPherson recognizes family relief systems as “implicit bounties.” McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 605. See also Spann, *Gotham at War*, 58-59.

rhetoric, and it seemed to some observers—especially those witnessing the great war meetings and parades in the New York metropolitan area—that every man really was going to the war and every woman helping him prepare.⁸⁸ It quickly became evident that the reality was far different. The United States resembled Revolutionary and Napoleonic France in the degree to which calls for something like a *levée en masse*, and later conscription, stalled in the face of logistical, political, and social complications.⁸⁹ Many northerners (perhaps a majority) supported the war but did not make major sacrifices. New Yorkers and other Union loyalists made large allowance for the many who were unable or unwilling to enlist. Sentiments expressed in a Plattsburgh newspaper were typical: “Every man whose business affairs will permit, should rally to the defense of his country,” and those who do not go must contribute all the funds necessary to provide for soldiers’ families.⁹⁰ His neighbors were watching, but the man himself reserved the right to decide whether his “affairs” allowed him to serve. Constraints on idealism and war support such as this impacted mobilization in other northern states as well.⁹¹

The absence of strong governmental or public coercion even affected the volunteer militia, not all of whom rushed to the colors. As Lincoln and Morgan issued their troop calls in April 1861, the *Herald* noted that a “volunteer spirit” had taken hold “amongst the people, if not amongst the regularly organized militia,” and praised the “becoming dignity” of militiamen who waited to be called up rather than volunteer.⁹² Such stoicism had a strong basis in American military tradition and would mark mobilization in later American conflicts as well. Some militia

⁸⁸ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 22, 1861; Max E. Sand to “Dear Henry,” April 30, 1861, in Sand, *Crossing Antietam*, 12; “JSW to a Friend in Paris,” May 10, 1861, in *Letters of a Family During the War for the Union, 1861-1865*, 1: 68-69.

⁸⁹ For a work challenging myths of mass mobilization in France, see Alan I. Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters: The Army and French Society During the Revolution and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁹⁰ *Plattsburgh Republican*, April 27, 1861. See also *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 20, 1861.

⁹¹ For instance, see Robert M. Sandow, “The Limits of Northern Patriotism: Early Civil War Mobilization in Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania History* 70 (2003): 175-203.

⁹² *New York Herald*, April 16, 1861.

regiments expressed eagerness to enter the fray on any terms, while others were more circumspect. In May, the colonel of the German-American Eleventh New York State Militia (the Washington Rifles) assembled his men and asked for their response to the government's request that they volunteer for the term of three years or the length of the war. The majority declined because "they are principally men of family and could not forsake their various business pursuits on account of the same," but voiced their willingness to go for six months.⁹³ As the vaunted Seventh Regiment prepared to return from its brief, bloodless tour of duty, a member noted that "most of the men, I am afraid, will be glad to get home again ..." A Brooklyn paper warned that the men risked "ridicule" if they came back in such a short time and without having fought, but in fact New Yorkers greeted the returning guardsmen as heroes.⁹⁴ (Some New Yorkers, however, reacted with frustration when the reluctance of local militia or the state's failure to call them up seemed to threaten community honor.)⁹⁵

The movement to join militia and volunteer regiments organizing for the field was matched by a parallel impulse to form home-guard forces with little intention of fighting.⁹⁶ Students at Hamilton College in Oneida County banded together in a company "not as volunteers exactly, but as reserves, to take the field when absolutely necessary," and a similar company formed at New York City's Free Academy. Prominent businessmen in the city spoke of enrolling a Metropolitan Home Guard, twenty thousand strong, with half of them to be equipped with the

⁹³ Joichim Maidhoff to Simeon Draper, May 22, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

⁹⁴ Henry A. Sand to "Dear Ma," May 23, 1861, in Sand, *Crossing Antietam*, 24 (first quote); *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 10, 1861 (second quote); *New York Sun*, June 3, 1861; Henry Hubbell to "My Dear Mother," May 15, 1861, Henry Hubbell Collection, N-YHS.

⁹⁵ *Long Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*, April 30, June 4, June 11, 1861; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 8, 1861.

⁹⁶ According to Thomas Bahde, "Home Guard companies tied private safety interests inseparably to the public interests of the state." See Bahde, "'Our Cause Is a Common One': Home Guards, Union Leagues, and Republican Citizenship in Illinois, 1861–1863," *Civil War History* 56 (2010), 67.

latest rifles—this at a time when frontline troops were sorely pressed for arms.⁹⁷ Elsewhere in the city, the bankers, insurers, and other prosperous men forming the Union Grays drew up a constitution that stipulated regular drilling but barred the unit from volunteering for non-home-guard duty; individual members could do so with the commander’s consent.⁹⁸ Interest in field service varied considerably among militiamen throughout the war, particularly since those willing to fight had many chances to join the volunteers. Despite public scorn occasionally directed at the “Stay-at-Home Brigade,” as a Brooklyn newspaper called a local home-guard command, such groups flourished.⁹⁹ Condemnation of militia commands that did not deploy was not really fair, as arguably the State Militia’s most valuable service after July 1861 lay not in deploying as units but in providing thousands of officers for the volunteers.¹⁰⁰

The war effort in New York was marked by self-interest as well as patriotic sacrifice. The state’s independent-minded residents supported mobilization on their own terms. As one officer noted of the countless New Yorkers offering to raise their own commands, “the soldier fever was on us all, but we were for going to the war in our own way.”¹⁰¹ This outlook inspired nearly everyone who enlisted over the course of the war. Finding the right company or regiment with the desired duty and length of service, plus the best officers, uniforms, weapons, pay, and living

⁹⁷ *Westfield Republican*, May 8, 1861 (quote); *New York Times*, April 28, 1861.

⁹⁸ Union Grays Constitution and Muster Roll, n.d. (ca. 1861), New York State Military Museum. See also Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 147-148, for a similar attitude in the unit Strong helped form. Once the Union Grays formally joined the state militia and became the Twenty-Second Regiment, their rule against field service was null and void, and they were activated twice during the war. See George Wood Wingate, *History of the Twenty-Second Regiment of the National Guard of the State of New York, from its Organization to 1895* (New York: E. W. Dayton, 1895); George Wood Wingate and Andrew Dickson White, *The Last Campaign of the Twenty-Second Regiment, N.G., S.N.Y. June and July, 1863* (New York: C. S. Westcott & Co., 1864).

⁹⁹ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 9, 1861 (quote); “City Home Guards,” box 17, folder 8, Franklin B. Hough Papers, NYSL.

¹⁰⁰ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1865), 1: 176-201; James De Mandeville, *History of the 13th Regiment, N. G., S. N. Y.: Containing over Forty Illustrations and Many Biographical Sketches* (New York: George W. Rogers, 1894), 31; “Albany Zouave Cadets,” newspaper clipping, n.d., in “Notices” scrapbook, box 4, Albany Zouave Cadets Collection, NYSL.

¹⁰¹ Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 5.

conditions, was paramount.¹⁰² Men and boys with education and breeding, or their friends and relations, often expected appointments for them as officers, and under such pressure many of them declined to enlist (if they believed they should serve at all).¹⁰³ Some college administrators, notably President Martin Anderson of Rochester University, encouraged their students to volunteer, but many others saw no need for young scholars to give up their studies for the battlefield.¹⁰⁴ Even amid the war fever of mid-1861, civilians and soldiers alike recognized the importance of joining the right unit, and committees sometimes advised potential volunteers not to enlist otherwise.¹⁰⁵ Differences between recruiters' promises and the realities of military life in an unprepared nation caused widespread discontent and harmed mobilization.

The two most troublesome issues in this regard involved logistics and terms of service. Troop raising required immense funds for renting space, advertising, food, and transportation, not to mention the even larger sums needed to supply their material needs.¹⁰⁶ United States authorities leaned on the states especially heavily in the first year, and Morgan's government was responsible for supplying nearly all the wants of New York troops until their muster into federal service. Despite appropriations, loans, and subscriptions from non-governmental groups, the

¹⁰² See for example M. Brandegee to "Dear Charlie," December 24, 1861, in Charles Brandegee Livingstone, ed., *Charlie's Civil War: A Private's Trial by Fire in the 5th New York Volunteers—Duryée Zouaves and 146th New York Volunteer Infantry* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1997), 3.

¹⁰³ Russell M. Tuttle, *The Civil War Journal of Lt. Russell M. Tuttle, New York Volunteer Infantry*, ed. George Tappan (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2007), 7-12; "Uncle Edward" to "My dear Joe," May 13, 1861, in *Letters of a Family During the War for the Union, 1861-1865*, 1: 72-73; Seymour Dexter to "My Dear Friend," October 26, 1861, in Dexter, *Seymour Dexter, Union Army: Journal and Letters of Civil War Service in Company K, 23rd New York Volunteer Regiment of Elmira, with Illustrations*, ed. Carl A. Morrell (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1996), 54-55.

¹⁰⁴ McKelvey, *Rochester*, 64; Julie Mujic, "Save a School to Save a Nation: Faculty Responses to the Civil War at Midwestern Universities," in *So Conceived and So Dedicated: Intellectual Life in the Civil War-Era North*, ed. Lorien Foote and Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 113.

¹⁰⁵ *Ithaca Journal*, July 3, 1861; *Westfield Republican*, July 10, 1861.

¹⁰⁶ For regimental recruiters' logistical headaches, see Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 51-74. At the Elmira recruit rendezvous, requesting and disbursing funds and accounting for expenses took much up much of the commander's time. See entry no. 2064, Letters Sent by Maj. A. T. Lee, Disbursing Officer at Elmira Depot, N. Y., Commanding the Recruiting Service, September 1861-July 1863, RG 110, NARA-NY.

state fell short of money for sufficient pay, housing, clothing, food, equipment, and arms for the early militia and volunteers. The official report of the Military Board answered accusations of slowness by arguing that the thirty thousand two-year volunteers “would have been put on foot in one-half the time could supplies have been obtained” and federal support been more forthcoming.¹⁰⁷ This, of course, echoed complaints that the Union Defense Committee made about Morgan’s administration. After the colonel of New York City’s Second Militia made public his outrage at supply shortages, Simeon Draper of the UDC met with him and then wrote the governor: “950 men passed the night on the Battery in a rainstorm without boards, mattresses, sufficient clothing or food—No lights—They are citizen soldiers of New York—Have you any orders to give in relation to this case[?]”¹⁰⁸ Leaders from Secretary of War Cameron down sometimes hastily awarded contracts to firms that perpetrated fraud or gross irresponsibility.¹⁰⁹ In one infamous scandal, New York awarded a uniform contract to four New York City businessmen—among them future mayor George Opdyke—who in turn contracted with Brooks Brothers to supply the outfits. When the uniforms were issued to four regiments, they proved so shoddy that a member of Onondaga County’s Twelfth Volunteers called them “a shame to the State of New York,” and all parties involved in the contract became embroiled in a very public, months-long dispute.¹¹⁰

Almost as soon as the first troops signed on, letters warning of dissatisfaction among them poured into the offices of the state government and the UDC. As 180 discharged members

¹⁰⁷ *Communication from the Governor Transmitting the Report of the Board of State Officers Named in the Act of April 16, 1861*, 7.

¹⁰⁸ Simeon Draper to Morgan, May 4, 1861, Dispatch Book, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁰⁹ Bradley, *Lincoln’s Secretary of War*, 196-199; Wilson, *The Business of Civil War*, 19-21.

¹¹⁰ *New York Times*, September 5, 1861; B. Gilbert to “Dear Brother,” June 12, 1861, in R. L. Murray, *Letters from the Front: Onondaga County Troops in the Civil War* (Wolcott, NY: Benedum Books, 2002), 4-5 (quote); T. M. Pomeroy to Morgan, June 5, 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL; “What is Shoddy?” in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 51; *Buffalo Evening Post*, June 5, 1861.

of an ill-fated force called the Naval Brigade explained in a June 4 statement, the men were willing to do their duty if treated right.¹¹¹ Following the tradition of their colonial forebears, soldiers regarded enlistment as a contract with the government, and many deserted or mutinied when they believed authorities failed to uphold their end of the agreement.¹¹² Some eager recruits whose regiments awaited mustering-in left to join organizations about to ship out, while others faltered and decided not to muster in, and some, disgusted, switched regiments when their recruiters' promises went unfulfilled. Still others rioted or deserted because they were suffering for want of clothing, pay, and food or out of anger at not receiving the best rifles.¹¹³ Troops at the Albany rendezvous refused to drill until uniforms arrived to replace their ragged civilian clothing; in another Albany case, thirty members of one company "stood shoulder to shoulder, ready for an instantaneous march for home, should they longer be fed like swine."¹¹⁴ The army's Quartermaster General told Cameron: "The want of clothing more than the want of money discourages enlistments."¹¹⁵ Militia commands sometimes declined volunteering when offered only infantry duty, and the Ninth New York Cavalry verged on mutiny in May 1862 when a

¹¹¹ Statement by members of Naval Brigade, June 4, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹¹² For the tradition of enlistment as a contracted obligation, see Millett, Maslowski, and Feis, *For the Common Defense*, 8-9.

¹¹³ Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 86, 88; Ellis, *Leaves from the Diary of an Army Surgeon*, 13-15; Patrick Farrington to "My Dear Parents," July 5, 1861, in Farrington, *The Civil War Letters of Patrick Farrington: First Sergeant, Company G, Second New York State Militia Regiment (82nd New York Infantry), 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Corps, Army of the Potomac*, ed. Elsie E. Reynolds (St. Petersburg, FL: E. E. Reynolds, 2003), n.p.; William Wilson to Morgan, June 9, 1861, John H. McCunn to Morgan, July 15, 1861, reel 31, and Elliott F. Shepard to Morgan, June 19, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL; Regimental Notes, Hough Papers, NYSL; A. Kemp and G. W. Day to Moses H. Grinnell, May 13, Alexander Ming to Simeon Draper, May 28, Samuel M. Elliott to UDC, May 18, Corwin Watson to Prosper M. Wetmore, June 7, all 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost. For more examples of tensions between troops and their officers over these issues in the war's first year, see transcriptions of newspaper clippings about New York regiments, available for each unit's page from "New York Civil War Units," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/> (accessed January 2016).

¹¹⁴ Chandler B. Gillam to "Dear Sarah," June 7, 1861, in Ellen C. Collier, ed., *Letters of a Civil War Soldier: Chandler B. Gillam, 28th New York Volunteers, with Diary of W. L. Hicks* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corp., 2005), 18-19; *Ogdensburgh Advance*, May 23, 1861 (quote).

¹¹⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 583.

horse shortage compelled the men to serve on foot.¹¹⁶ Soldiers' hometown communities often supported such expressions of agency. Men from Glens Falls deserted after concluding "that there was nothing really binding in the articles of enlistment." When their commanders caught the deserters and drummed them out of camp, the local press reacted with "indignation."¹¹⁷

The question of term lengths hampered mobilization nearly or quite as much as logistics did, and New Yorkers felt its impact most of all. In April 1861, Morgan's government showed foresight in authorizing a force of two-year volunteers to complement the ninety-day militia muster. But the plethora of voices calling for troops, from the Secretary of War down to recruiters on village street corners, often confused New York's largely unique volunteer term with the federally limited militia term.¹¹⁸ At the first war meeting in Buffalo, a militia officer assured citizens gathered to form a unit of "minute men" that the "term for enlistment would not exceed three months," a promise entirely in keeping with American customs but mistaken in this case.¹¹⁹ Hattaway and Jones rightfully characterize short terms of service as a major weakness in Union efforts during the war, and Marcus Cunliffe in an earlier work cites such limited service to argue that Americans were merely "gesturing at war" in 1861.¹²⁰ As we have seen, however, New Yorkers argued for speed as a military necessity. A volunteer languishing at the Albany rendezvous maintained: "A short but thorough campaign would, I think, but suit the spirit of our

¹¹⁶ Ruth Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," in *The Rochester Historical Society Publications*, vol. 22 (Rochester: Rochester Historical Society, 1944), 30; Gray Nelson Taylor, ed., *Saddle and Saber: The Letters of Civil War Cavalryman Corporal Nelson Taylor* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1993), 36-42.

¹¹⁷ "22nd Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/22ndInf/22ndInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹¹⁸ Aside from New York, Maine appears to have been the only state to enlist men for two years, forming them into two regiments in 1861. "Maine Civil War Units," *Maine State Archives*, <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/research/cwunits.html> (accessed February 27, 2017).

¹¹⁹ *Buffalo Morning Express* quoted in Mills, *Chronicles of the Twenty-First Regiment*, 13.

¹²⁰ Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 275; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 7-8.

men and the needs of the times.”¹²¹ In early May came the Lincoln administration’s switch to long-service volunteers, then on July 30 a request from the president that Morgan have some three-month troops mustered in for two years. Finally, on August 3, Congress sanctioned Lincoln’s May 3 call, which opened the door to converting three-month service into three years.¹²² Imprecision and policy changes in communicating term lengths had calamitous results for many men, who enlisted in volunteer regiments on the understanding that they would be discharged after three months, only to find that the U. S. government would muster and retain them for two or three years.¹²³

These well-publicized supply, pay, and term problems created scandals that hampered recruitment and thus the Union war effort. The Empire State gained an unenviable reputation for poorly supplying its volunteers.¹²⁴ This was especially problematic because commanders relied on efficient logistics to attract and hold onto recruits. In May 1861, a colonel informed Simeon Draper that he could increase his regiment from 650 to one thousand men provided the UDC sent funds.¹²⁵ Difficulties over pay, supplies, and length of service hurt recruiting into the summer and beyond.¹²⁶ Some recruiters used the state’s logistical quandaries to their advantage. Colonel John Cochrane, a War Democrat not inclined to speak favorably of Morgan’s administration, made it known that his Sixty-Fifth New York Regiment, or First United States Chasseurs, was

¹²¹ “14th Regiment, NY Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/14thInf/14thInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹²² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 368; Geary, *We Need Men*, 6.

¹²³ See, for instance, the confusion and anger that marked the service of the Twelfth New York Volunteers thanks to this issue. “12th Infantry Regiment New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/12thInf/12thInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹²⁴ Benjamin F. Butler to Morgan, July 3, 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹²⁵ Roderick Matheson to Draper, May 22, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹²⁶ J. Taylor to Morgan, July 26, H. M. Graham to Morgan, July 31, Edward W. Serrell to Morgan, August 10, George W. Patterson to Morgan, October 10, all 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL; *New York Daily Tribune*, September 21, 1861.

organized and supplied under the auspices of federal authorities, “advantages which recommend the regiment to all who desire immediate employment, equipments, arms and uniforms.”¹²⁷

Probably because it mobilized more troops than any other state, New York was badly beset by logistical issues but certainly not alone; Pennsylvanians, for instance, rioted over lack of pay in July 1861.¹²⁸ James W. Geary identifies low, erratic pay as the federal policy that most adversely affected recruitment of married men in particular, and the problem was never resolved during the war.¹²⁹ Youngsters living in rural, mountainous Essex County proved susceptible to the seven dollars extra per month that Vermont offered its recruits, prompting many to cross the border and enlist in organizations that did not help meet New York quotas or burnish local pride.¹³⁰

Term-length controversies had a similarly malign effect on New York’s mobilization. Militiamen and volunteers imbued with republican and citizen-soldier traditions expected to serve the term promised them and not a day longer. In early May, the commander of Ulster County’s Twentieth Militia refused to even ask his men if they would enlist as two-year volunteers.¹³¹ Later, Varian’s Battery, an artillery unit connected with New York City’s prestigious Washington Grays, gained notoriety when its men completed their three months and marched for home on the very day of the Battle of Bull Run.¹³² Far greater consternation came from enlistment of volunteers who believed themselves entitled to short service, as seen in the case of the hapless Second Militia. This largely Irish-American command was initially included in the April 1861 call for militia and prepared to deploy after New York City residents raised

¹²⁷ *New York Herald*, June 15, 1861.

¹²⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 359.

¹²⁹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 9.

¹³⁰ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 324-325.

¹³¹ James Wadsworth to R. McCurdy, May 6, 1861, box 13, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹³² McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 89.

some \$20,000 to uniform and equip its members.¹³³ Then came an order to stand down, and the disappointed men began suffering from logistical shortages as they awaited further instructions. After several weeks, they were enlisted into the state's two-year volunteers. Colonel George B. Tompkins informed Governor Morgan that his regiment was "willing to go for the war," meaning for three years. "We are fully armed and equipped," he added, "and can march in a few hours [sic] notice. The men are getting dissatisfied because they are kept back. They are in a very good state of discipline and will do credit to the state."¹³⁴ But Tompkins had misjudged the situation. After the Second finally departed New York and joined the Washington defenses, the men were taken aback when federal officers attempted to muster them in for three years. The event "terminated in a scene of mutiny and confusion," a New York official noted, "the men breaking ranks and utterly refusing to take the oath." Another effort to muster them resulted in four hundred acceding to it and nearly as many declining to serve longer than ninety days. These holdouts waited anxiously in camp until the regiment paid their three-thousand-dollar fare for the trip back home to New York City, where residents treated them contemptuously. Tompkins assured Simeon Draper and the people of the city that his recruiters would take pains to refill the Second's ranks with more reliable men.¹³⁵

A wave of similar imbroglios hit the Union Army that summer as New York soldiers demanded discharges. Members of two-year regiments circulated a rumor that they could not lawfully be forced to serve beyond three months; these men—encouraged in a few cases by

¹³³ Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 1: 529; Charles W. Sandford to Morgan, April 28, 1861, reel 30, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹³⁴ Tompkins to Morgan, May 12, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹³⁵ Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 1: 529; William Henry Anthon to Morgan, May 28, 1861, box 1, Military Officers' Correspondence, Adjutant General's Office, NYSA (quote); "82nd Regiment Infantry New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/82ndInf/82ndInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016); Tompkins to Draper, June 3, 1861, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

officers with legal backgrounds—claimed poor and dishonest usage at the hands of the authorities, argued that their rights entitled them to be mustered out, and called the two-year contract a “swindle.”¹³⁶ The same situation occurred among men in militia regiments—including Tompkins’s Second—that had enlisted for three years. Members of the Seventy-Ninth New York Highland Guard, buffeted by contradictory orders and bad living conditions, wanted no more of their three-year enlistment and perpetrated a mutiny that “chilled the patriotic blood of the country,” a newspaper observed.¹³⁷ Experienced New York officers and members of the Military Board charged Lincoln’s administration with inciting dissent through incompetent and confusing orders that mitigated the advantages of New York’s special two-year term. The state inspector general sympathized with the soldiers but predicted that discharges would cause a “general and resistless stampede of the New York Troops,” discourage enlistments, and spell disaster for the Union.¹³⁸ Before such could happen, Union generals in Virginia largely tamped down the disorder through a combination of severe punishments and promises to ease logistical problems; at that point, most of the men involved dropped their activism and accepted mustering in for longer terms.¹³⁹ However, controversies over service agreements and resulting recruitment difficulties would dog New York and the rest of the North for the remainder of the war.

¹³⁶ Collier, ed., *Letters of a Civil War Soldier*, 50; Marsh, “A History of Rochester’s Part in the Civil War,” 26-27; “A Volunteer” to Morgan, August 10, 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL (quote).

¹³⁷ Alexander Campbell to “Dear Jane,” June 4, 1861, in Terry A. Johnston, Jr., ed., *“Him on the One Side and Me on the Other”*: *The Civil War Letters of Alexander Campbell, 79th New York Infantry Regiment, and James Campbell, 1st South Carolina Battalion* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 13-14; *Watertown Daily Reformer*, August 24, 1861 (quote); William Todd to “Dear Parents,” August 16, 1861, William Todd Collection, N-YHS. For a summary of the Seventy-Ninth’s mutiny, see Johnston, ed., *“Him on the One Side and Me on the Other,”* 36-38.

¹³⁸ J. H. Martindale to Morgan, June 26, 1861, reel 31, Marsena R. Patrick to Morgan, August 14, 1861, box 10 (quote), EDM Papers, NYSL; *Communication from the Governor Transmitting the Report of the Board of State Officers Named in the Act of April 16, 1861*, 7-8.

¹³⁹ Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 41-42; Alexander Campbell to “Dear Jane,” September 21, 1861, in Johnston, ed., *“Him on the One Side and Me on the Other,”* 44-47; Chandler B. Gillam to “Dear Wife,” September 1, 1861, in Collier, ed., *Letters of a Civil War Soldier*, 71; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 391.

Morgan seldom relaxed his vigilance as a war governor, and the eleven months following the completion of the two-year regiments became a transition period in which New York's Chief Executive continued promoting innovations in support of the Union cause while simultaneously guarding state sovereignty. With enlistments still robust in the summer of 1861, Morgan proposed forming a force of reserve companies stationed at rendezvous, where they could thoroughly prepare themselves for deployment if needed. The debacle at Bull Run on July 21 killed this scheme, however, and prompted efforts to form new three-year regiments and fill up those already at the front.¹⁴⁰ The day after Bull Run, Congress authorized the president to accept half a million three-year troops, and a similar push followed on July 25.¹⁴¹ But such determination to fight on required practical support. Morgan assured Seward and Cameron of New York's willingness to contribute twenty-five thousand troops, provided the War Department supply him with the necessary legal authority and funds, for the state had no more to spare. These needs being addressed, New York began efforts to meet its combined quotas (including that of May 3) for 109,056 men.¹⁴²

Dramatic expansion of Union forces after Bull Run reinforced the importance of northern governors in mobilization, for Lincoln's administration continued to rely on them for men and materiel.¹⁴³ An historian of New York City's war experiences further identifies this period as the time when "regulation replaced enthusiasm;" the imprudent rush to the field in earlier months had sewed exasperation and chaos that required sorting out.¹⁴⁴ For the first time, volunteering

¹⁴⁰ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 39.

¹⁴¹ Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 63. Weigley believes the July 22 and 25 calls were meant to be separate, meaning that Congress authorized raising a total of one million troops. However, Cameron's language in subsequent months makes that doubtful. See also John F. Callan, *The Military Laws of the United States, Relating to the Army, Volunteers, Militia, and to Bounty Lands and Pensions, from the Formation of the Government to the Year 1863* (Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1863), 472.

¹⁴² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 354, 361-362, 380, 383-384; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 159.

¹⁴³ Harris, *Lincoln and the Union Governors*, 29-30.

¹⁴⁴ Spann, *Gotham at War*, 58.

lagged; in addition to controversies mentioned earlier, too many officers had been authorized to recruit, leading to skeleton regiments with little chance of completion. The great time and expense involved also dissuaded potential recruiting officers.¹⁴⁵ War supporters fretted that “rebellious journals in the city [of New York] and elsewhere ... have aided materially the cause of rebellion, by preventing many from enlisting.”¹⁴⁶ In response, officials in Washington and Albany sought to clarify their respective responsibilities and keep closer watch on recruitment and expenses as they redoubled mobilization efforts.¹⁴⁷ In August, Morgan worked with Cameron to speed up recruitment and mustering, as his call for twenty-five thousand volunteers was not authorized by state law. The governor and his military staff willingly took on additional responsibilities in mobilization since the state legislature was out of session and many believed federal orders hindered efforts.¹⁴⁸

A War Department general order authorized governors to collect and consolidate skeleton units into full regiments. Authorities also launched inspections to check for fraudulent practices—such as officers borrowing men from one another to meet the minimum number for mustering in—and ordered closer medical examinations. They lifted the ban on non-English-speakers and lowered the height standard to five-foot-three. Regiments in the field were granted permission to send recruiting parties back home to secure replacements.¹⁴⁹ Faltering enlistments

¹⁴⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 390, 415, 452, 458, 470-471, 583; Elias W. Leavenworth to Morgan, August 13, box 7, Marsena Patrick to Morgan, July 25, John J. Peck to Morgan, July 27, box 10, Seward to Morgan, August 3, box 11, all 1861, EDM Papers, NYSL; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 163-164; H. A. [Symonds?] to Daniel E. Sickles, May 21, 1862, box 1, Sickles Papers, NYPL.

¹⁴⁶ “Forrens” to “Editors of the Sunday Mercury,” August 22, 1861, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 44.

¹⁴⁷ Preston King to Morgan, July 27, December 25, box 7, Marsena Patrick to Morgan, October 19, box 10, S. D. Bradford to Morgan, July 25, reel 31, all 1861, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁴⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 410-411; Charles W. Yates to Morgan, August 30, 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁴⁹ Cameron to Morgan, August 18, 1861, box 3, Erasmus W. Keyes to Morgan, October 27, 1861, box 6, Thomas Hillhouse to Morgan, October 29, 1861, reel 31, EDM Papers, NYSL; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 426, 384, 391, 421, 461; Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 89, 90-91; George D. Ruggles to John A. Dix, August 6, 1861, in Skipper and Taylor, eds., *A Handful of Providence*, 231.

in the Navy had already prompted that branch to switch from three-year to one-year enlistments and accept anyone physically fit and under thirty-five, including novice landsmen.¹⁵⁰ At the state level, Morgan and State Adjutant-General Thomas Hillhouse issued an order on August 24 promising a premium of two dollars to anyone who supplied a recruit, as long as that recruit passed his examination and mustered into federal service, with a limit of sixty-four dollars (since thirty-two men were needed to muster in a company). This plan was dropped on October 19, having no basis in federal law, but the federal government would adopt a modified version eight months later.¹⁵¹ New York also now required potential officers to take proficiency examinations and sought to place all recruiters and mustering officers in the state under the charge of Major John T. Sprague, the General Superintendent of the Recruiting Service in Albany.¹⁵² As previously noted, state officials began to encourage overt targeting of the unemployed. Serious concerns over whether the nation, state, and communities could secure enough manpower that began after Bull Run never fully dissipated until the end of the war.

In the meantime, however, concentrated efforts in the late summer of 1861 wrought an immediate change. Already on September 10, Morgan informed Cameron that volunteering was picking up; nine days later, Seward happily observed that “I think we are passing the dead point.”¹⁵³ Another general order placed persons recruiting in loyal states on War Department orders under the authority of governors.¹⁵⁴ The importance of New York and its leadership in the

¹⁵⁰ Samuel Negus, “‘Conduct Unbecoming of an Officer’: Fraudulent Enlistment Practices at U. S. Navy Recruitment Rendezvous during the American Civil War,” *Northern Mariner* 22 (2012), 29-30; Langley, Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798–1862*, 125.

¹⁵¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 452-453, ser. 3, vol. 2, 171; *Albany Atlas and Argus*, n.d. (November 1861); Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 164.

¹⁵² Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 162; Marsena Patrick to Morgan, October 19, 1861, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁵³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 497; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 14; Seward to Morgan, September 19, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL (quote).

¹⁵⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 518.

war effort was underscored on October 26 when the War Department—at Morgan’s behest—established the Military Department of New York, headquartered in Albany, with Morgan commanding as a major general. This was unprecedented in the northern states.¹⁵⁵ Twice that fall, Morgan requested sanction to raise twenty-five thousand more men; rebuffed both times, he nevertheless informed the War Department of his intention to call for that number on February 1 if the war was not already won.¹⁵⁶ The remarkable extent of New York’s mobilization efforts was evident at year’s end. The state had enrolled an estimated 120,316 troops by January 1 (more than eleven thousand in excess of quotas), at a time when some states had failed to meet their assigned numbers.¹⁵⁷ As of December 12, the state comptroller recorded payment of various military expenses totaling over \$2,800,000.¹⁵⁸ In Albany, Superintendent Sprague exercised new, federally sanctioned authority to closely regulate recruiting parties.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, the new session of the state legislature that began on January 1 provided Morgan with an unusually honest and competent team of allies, including Democrats who cooperated on war bills.¹⁶⁰

Despite all this progress in picking up the pieces after Bull Run and placing greater emphasis on efficiency, for northerners the winter of 1861-1862 was marked by a pessimism unseen since that shocking defeat. Citizens’ hard work and sacrifice in mobilization seemed wasted as commanders—particularly Major General George B. McClellan of the Army of the

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 580, 597; Preston King to Morgan, January 16 and 17, 1862, box 7, EDM Papers, NYSL. Andrew Johnson, in his capacity as military governor of Tennessee, received a brigadier general’s commission. Ezra J. Warner, Jr., *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 251.

¹⁵⁶ OR, ser. 3, vol. 1, 540, 607-608, 679, 698.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 699, 382-383; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 17.

¹⁵⁸ “Total Amounts Paid For,” entry 1253, Documentation Relating to the Cost of Raising Troops, Comptroller’s Office Records, NYSA.

¹⁵⁹ OR, ser. 3, vol. 1, 722-723; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 16.

¹⁶⁰ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 180, 186-187; Rawley, Edwin D. *Morgan 1811-1883*, 171.

Potomac, the force in which most New York soldiers served—failed to move on the enemy. Diplomatic relations with Great Britain had soured, raising the possibility of war with that world power, and the government faced a persistent money shortage.¹⁶¹ In the Union’s most populous state, battles over authority and the direction of the war effort ground on. Morgan and his military staff continually sniped with the War Department and the Adjutant General’s Office about how much power the governor should hold over federal recruiters in New York. He expressed dismay when, on December 24, the Adjutant General removed governors’ authorization to raise regiments except on federal requisition, part of a larger federal effort to take control of mobilization. Morgan told Cameron that it was better for state pride and recruiting efforts to have state agents in charge, but the Secretary of War explained that since the goal of five hundred thousand volunteers had been met, the government sought to reduce expenses and complete organizations now forming.¹⁶² Additionally, political divisions in the state were widening. Former governor and Onondaga County native Horatio Seymour had emerged as an influential Democratic critic of Lincoln’s expanded powers in silencing dissent.¹⁶³ Sickles and the officers of his Excelsior Brigade (formed in heavily Democratic New York City) reviled Morgan and preferred that their commissions come from the general government.¹⁶⁴ The volunteering spigot had once again slowed to a trickle: the State Adjutant General reported that the “floating population” who enlisted on impulse “has become well nigh exhausted by previous levies,” necessitating more reform in recruitment and greater efforts to appeal to independent-

¹⁶¹ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 367-368, 389-391; Weber, *Copperheads*, 36-37, 38; Cuyler Van Vechten to Morgan, February 13, 1862, box 1, Copies of Correspondence Forwarded from the Governor’s Office, Inspector General’s Office Records, NYSA.

¹⁶² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 725-726, 758-759, 760, 804; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 323-324.

¹⁶³ Weber, *Copperheads*, 36.

¹⁶⁴ Lewis Benedict to Morgan, December 23, 1861, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL.

mindful country folk.¹⁶⁵ Two ready manpower sources—African Americans and Indians—remained untapped due to white prejudice and despite repeated offers of service from their communities.¹⁶⁶ Logistical problems continued to bedevil mobilization.¹⁶⁷ Greater oversight failed to halt recruitment fraud, a growing concern that hampered foreign relations. As early as May, witnesses had reported U. S. recruiting agents everywhere in Canada. Officials there reminded Canadians that, as British subjects, the Foreign Enlistment Act forbade them from serving in America's war, and Seward attempted to paper over the embarrassing scandal by discouraging the practice and assuring British foreign officers of his commitment to international law.¹⁶⁸ But fraud, the diplomatic tensions it caused, and other complications in mobilization only increased as the war continued.

Northern fortunes turned a corner in early 1862. That January, Lincoln finally sacked Simon Cameron and placed the War Department under the more efficient Edwin M. Stanton.¹⁶⁹ Soon afterward, a series of victories in the field restored the confidence of Union loyalists.¹⁷⁰ Morgan, meanwhile, continued his tireless efforts to improve New York's military capabilities. Since October, influential New Yorkers including Horatio Seymour and Judge Advocate General William Henry Anthon had pressed for an overhaul of the state's antiquated militia system,

¹⁶⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 18-19, 21, 22-23.

¹⁶⁶ For blacks' offers to volunteer and the resulting debate in their communities over whether they should serve, see for instance, letters and editorials in the *New York Weekly Anglo-African* in the fall of 1861.

¹⁶⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 453; George L. Hoyt to "Dear Father Jackson," January 9, 1862, in B. Conrad Bush and Donna Mitchell, eds., *Diary and Civil War Letters: Corporal Van Rensselaer Evringham; with Letters from His Comrades, Company I, 12th New York Volunteer Infantry, December 10, 1861 to April 20, 1862* (West Falls, NY: Bush Research, 2002), 15. Inspector General Marsena R. Patrick informed Morgan that employees at state depots were "suffering" from lack of pay and advised that their payment be charged to the federal government. Patrick to Morgan, December 26, 1861, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁶⁸ *Maine Farmer*, May 30, 1861; Reid, *African Canadians in Union Blue*, 50; Robin W. Winks, *The Civil War Years: Canada and the United States* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 190, 192. See also various documents in James J. Barnes and Patience P. Barnes, eds., *The American Civil War through British Eyes: Dispatches from British Diplomats* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003), vols. 1-2.

¹⁶⁹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 7-8; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 324.

¹⁷⁰ Weber, *Copperheads*, 39-42.

which Anthon called “utterly worthless in an emergency like the present.” Such calls gained more urgency with the possibility of war with Britain on New York’s long, undefended Canadian border.¹⁷¹ (Recruiters used the specter of an American-British war to recruit Irishmen, with little success.)¹⁷² By a two-thirds vote on April 23, legislators passed a Militia Act, inspired partially by the Prussian Landwehr, which established greater state oversight and encouragement. It revised procedures for enrolling and organizing the militia, renamed it the National Guard—indicating increased appreciation for centralized efforts in war—and incorporated a state facility to provide for soldiers’ children.¹⁷³ The pressures of large-scale war and commitment to state and national defense had led the predominantly unmilitary people of New York to accept the value of a modern, proficient militia, though implementation lagged behind regulations.

Developments far to the south soon placed renewed demand on New York’s soldiery. State Adjutant General Hillhouse completed and forwarded the remaining volunteer regiments in the state and predicted that “a broad field will be opened for recruiting for regiments now in service,” something that federal officials had long urged.¹⁷⁴ But this sensible emphasis on filling experienced units was suddenly checked on April 3, when Stanton ordered the volunteer recruiting service discontinued.¹⁷⁵ Historians, particularly James W. Geary, characterize this as one of the worst decisions Stanton made during his eventful career as Secretary of War; it certainly gave a premature impression of imminent victory and partially dismantled the

¹⁷¹ Anthon to Morgan, October 29, 1861, box 1, (quote), Seymour to Morgan, December 17, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 33-48; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 735.

¹⁷² Marsh, “A History of Rochester’s Part in the Civil War,” 22.

¹⁷³ *The Militia Law of the State of New York: 1862* (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1862).

¹⁷⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 922-923 (quote); *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863* (Albany: Comstock & Cassidy, 1863), 5.

¹⁷⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 2-3.

replacement system deemed so important.¹⁷⁶ Stanton himself said on May 1 that he had issued the order “for the purpose of compelling returns [i.e. reports] from the respective Governors;” now that he had those returns, the governors could be asked to recruit for old regiments again.¹⁷⁷ Since Stanton had ordered recruiters to sell off the public property in their possession, he may have intended for the states to resume responsibility for recruitment, thus saving federal costs as the war wound down. But Confederates drove Union troops out of the Shenandoah Valley in May, eroding northern confidence and threatening the safety of Washington.¹⁷⁸ On May 16, Stanton asked the governors for new regiments, including six from New York. With the planting season on, volunteer recruitment halted, and no state appropriations for expenses, Morgan resolved to answer this call with the National Guard. The governors of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania did likewise.¹⁷⁹ In scenes reminiscent of the year before—and despite the same sort of confusion over terms of service—militia regiments (filled in some cases with the sons of leading New York families) rushed to the colors. Twelve regiments, totaling over 8,500 men, enlisted for three-month tours.¹⁸⁰ Americans had once again demonstrated their readiness to offer brief service in times of national emergency.

Grim necessity would soon draw upon New Yorkers and their fellow northerners for greater efforts. On May 21, the Army Adjutant General made a request for more three-years’ troops. Two weeks later, the War Department restored the volunteer recruiting service and

¹⁷⁶ Geary, *We Need Men*, 8; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 16-18.

¹⁷⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 29.

¹⁷⁸ Weber, *Copperheads*, 45-47.

¹⁷⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 44, 60-61, 68, 72.

¹⁸⁰ Resolutions dated May 16, 1862, Minutes book, box 2, Albany Zouave Cadets Collection, NYSL; De Mandeville, *History of the 13th Regiment, N. G., S. N. Y.*, 35; George Opdyke to Morgan, May 26, 1862, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 6-7, 129-130.

Lincoln convinced Morgan to authorize Francis B. Spinola to raise a brigade.¹⁸¹ With new authorizations granted to thousands of potential company commanders and enlistment offices reopened, Stanton confidently informed Ohio's governor that "if recruits can be had rapidly enough to allow all the drilled force to be put into the field the war can be finished up in three months."¹⁸² Over the past fourteen months, the Union's fortunes in the field had been directly tied to northerners' ability and willingness to answer calls for sacrifice. By the midpoint of 1862, nearly 150,000 New Yorkers had volunteered for various periods of service.¹⁸³ But the progress of the latest call for three-year volunteers showed that the free citizens of the North still responded to the national crisis on their own terms. With planting in full swing and the war's bloodshed ongoing, Hillhouse reported "apathy" and few enlistments in New York.¹⁸⁴ Bad tidings from the battlefield soon prompted Morgan and his fellow governors to take the lead in promoting new innovations and centralized efforts to secure manpower.

¹⁸¹ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 8; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 103-104, 109.

¹⁸² *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 18; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 103 (quote).

¹⁸³ This estimate includes the roughly 120,000 raised in 1861 and the over 27,000 volunteers and militia enlisted in the first six months of 1862. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 5, 6-7.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

CHAPTER FOUR

“POURING IN LIKE THE WATERS OVER NIAGARA”:

THE GREAT VOLUNTEER DRIVE OF 1862

In July 1862, during one of the war’s darkest moments for Union loyalists, a young Episcopal priest named William C. Doane told Edwin D. Morgan that raising new forces hinged on two things: offering bounties and keeping the public informed about events.¹ This was hardly news to New York’s able governor, but Doane’s assertion highlighted both change and continuity in northern mobilization. The state would enlist more troops that year than in any other and witness a surge of popular commitment, but the process was rife with unprecedented controversy and what some viewed as a disheartening turn toward cynicism. Citizens connected recruitment with the success or failure of the war effort and demanded that mobilization practices be carried out with efficiency, not simple enthusiasm. This involved offering larger practical benefits to attract sufficient volunteers and widening the field of potential soldiers. Events and attitudes in the second half of 1862 demonstrated how that crucial year turned time and again on issues of recruitment.

For Union supporters in New York and across America, the summer of 1862 was filled with anxiety. In June, as northerners awaited news from what seemed to be a decisive campaign underway near Richmond, enlistment returns closer to home were disappointingly meager. Federal officials finally came around to the necessity for clear and encouraging policies to promote volunteering, something that Morgan and State Adjutant General Hillhouse had sought

¹ William C. Doane to Morgan, July 19, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL.

months earlier.² Morgan now recommended that volunteers be enlisted for the unexpired terms of regiments in the field; this would have a double benefit of providing appealingly short tours of duty for potential recruits and quickly strengthening fighting units. He also suggested promising three-year enlistees a two-dollar premium and one month's advance pay; these last two measures were adopted.³ Something had to be done to spur interest, but Lincoln worried that issuing another large call for men in the face of discouraging war news might cause "panic."⁴ Statistics here provided a barometer for public support. Between the reopening of the volunteer recruiting service on June 6 and July 1—during which time Union troops fled from the Shenandoah Valley and McClellan seemed stalled on the Peninsula—New York issued 150 authorizations to raise companies but no more than three thousand men signed on to join them.⁵

Now came a turning point. On the night of June 29, as McClellan retreated from the outskirts of Richmond, Seward summoned Morgan and Thurlow Weed to a conference at the Astor House in New York City. The next day, after they were joined by Governor Andrew G. Curtin of Pennsylvania and exchanged telegrams with other governors, Seward drafted two documents. The first was a memorial from the governors to Lincoln—backdated to two days before so that it would not look like a desperate response to defeat on the Peninsula—urging him to issue another troop call and capitalize on this "decisive moment" to end the rebellion. The second document was meant to be the president's response: it approved the governors' language and requested a force of 150,000 infantry. Seward sent the papers to Lincoln for consideration, telling him, "I am assured by the good and great men around me that the re-enforcements can be

² *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 15, 1862*, 18.

³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 149, 171.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 179-180.

⁵ Weber, *Copperheads*, 50; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 9.

raised through an appeal to the country, which they are prepared to make immediately.”⁶ Lincoln accordingly proclaimed a call on July 1 for twice the number of men originally suggested. Northerners then launched another massive volunteering campaign to raise “three hundred thousand more.”⁷ As they did throughout the war, Union supporters and their leaders recognized that saving the nation hinged on raising large military forces.

Historians have noted that these events in late June and early July opened a new and critical chapter in Union war making, one in which the various state forces finally came together in a “nationalized army” with standardized incentives and terms and committed to winning the war through concerted effort.⁸ Yet several aspects of the Union’s war remained a decentralized affair in which states retained much authority to shape mobilization. The Confederacy had adopted national conscription that April, but the Union would not follow suit for almost another year; until then, the onus was on the states to cajole and compel their citizens to meet quotas.⁹ For confident, energetic Morgan, this had a positive effect. On July 2, the War Department placed recruitment and supply in New York “entirely” under the governor’s control and later assured him that “nothing will be done by this Department” to interfere with his new mobilization plan, which Stanton “cordially approved.”¹⁰ On July 3, Lincoln sent his old ally Morgan a “private and confidential” request for fifty thousand new men within a month, explaining that so many men available so quickly would have a greater impact than the entire

⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 181-182.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 187-188. The official story given for the gestation of the July 1 call apparently was that Morgan openly brought the governors together to issue their memorandum to Lincoln. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 9.

⁸ Weber, *Copperheads*, 50 (quote); McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 491-492.

⁹ On Confederate conscription, see McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 429-431.

¹⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 199 (first quote); C. P. Buckingham to Morgan, August 2, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL (second quote).

force becoming available months later. Seward likewise urged Morgan to concentrate on quickly securing men and argued that such a show of force would save the day.¹¹

New York faced a quota of 59,705 three-year enlistments. The state's new militia law provided for enrollment of all male citizens age eighteen to forty-five, a process now underway but impossible to finish in time to aid in filling the call.¹² Morgan's program for quickly and efficiently meeting the quota made adroit use of the community and associational structures in which New Yorkers and other Americans approached their lives and social needs. On July 5, Hillhouse addressed letters to community leaders throughout New York informing them: "The State has been divided into regimental districts, conforming to the present senatorial subdivisions, and it is designed to have a regimental camp in each." Each letter recipient was now part of a committee in his senatorial district, "to aid, by their earnest and determined efforts, the organization of a Regiment of Volunteers, under the recent call of the President." Committees were to nominate a qualified person to command their regiment and otherwise aid in recruiting and organizing it. The war had taken a grim turn, Hillhouse noted, and only through a "prompt and patriotic response of the people" could the Union and the Constitution be saved.¹³ Letters also went out to town supervisors in which the governor urged them to cooperate with their regimental district committee.¹⁴ This effective strategy combined familiar calls for patriotic devotion and quick action with a more sophisticated employment of local pride and leadership than that seen previously. It took several weeks for district committees to come together and begin their mission, but once they did, New York saw immediate results in filling its quota.¹⁵ At

¹¹ Lincoln to Morgan, July 3, 1862, and Seward to Morgan, July 6, 1862, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹² Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 175.

¹³ Example of the letter, July 5, 1862, box 24, Franklin B. Hough Papers, NYSL.

¹⁴ Form of the letter, July 10, 1862, box 16, folder 2, *ibid.*

¹⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 11.

least one other state, Connecticut, implemented a similar plan, and later that month the War Department called on other states to adopt it.¹⁶

State influence was seen also in the matter of enlistment incentives. While conferring with the governors in late June, Seward informed Stanton that recruiting would be particularly difficult in New York and Massachusetts unless the general government offered men \$25 of the \$100 federal enlistment bounty up front. Under the pressure of Seward's pleading and the urgent need for troops, Stanton decided to provide the money out of a departmental recruiting fund.¹⁷ Senator Henry Wilson—probably the most influential figure in northern recruitment next to Lincoln and the War Department heads—and Governor John A. Andrew, both of Massachusetts, had initiated a campaign to authorize advance bounty payments, and the Bay State and Connecticut offered their own bonuses to volunteers.¹⁸ Prominent New Yorkers reminded Morgan that citizens would not leave their farm work to enlist unless offered bounties; this meant the governor must call for an extra session of the legislature to provide bounties through taxation; the only alternative was a draft.¹⁹ On July 17, Morgan made his move, characteristically taking extra responsibility at a crucial moment. He announced that New York would offer fifty-dollar bounties, advancing the funds from the state treasury and counting on the legislature to authorize the payments once back in session. Morgan's bounty proved popular and decisive.²⁰ Recruits received a total of ninety dollars upon enlistment, as the state bounty was combined

¹⁶ Calvin G. Child to Morgan, July 15, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL. The War Department circular suggested that governors appoint committees throughout their states of the "most reliable and influential" people to recruit, thereby "exerting a wholesome influence on the volunteer recruiting service." *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 247-248.

¹⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 182, 186 (quote).

¹⁸ Geary, *We Need Men*, 12, 15-17; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 176. New Jersey adopted a state bounty in early August that was similar in its success to that offered by other states. Alan A. Siegel, *For the Glory of the Union: Myth, Reality, and the Media in Civil War New Jersey* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984), 66.

¹⁹ Noah Davis, Jr., to Morgan, July 13, Ward Hunt to Morgan, July 15, William C. Doane to Morgan, July 19, reel 32, Washington Hunt to Morgan, July 13, box 6, all 1862, EDM Papers, NYSL.

²⁰ William W. Evarts to Morgan, July 14, 1862, reel 32, *ibid.*; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 176-177.

with a portion of the federal bonus, one month's advance pay, and a two-dollar enlistment premium. The remainder of the federal bounty was to be paid upon completion of service.²¹ The state at last had something immediate and tangible to offer potential soldiers. Hillhouse credited the promised payments with having a great effect once they got underway, helping to dispatch 35,000 new men to the front by October 1.²² Morgan's bounty also brought the Empire State into the era of advance bounties and increased incentives for fraud.²³

In addition to Morgan's bounty program, July 17 saw the advent of a national law with greater influence. On that day, Lincoln signed the Militia Act; as detailed in the next chapter, this law provided the groundwork for federal conscription, authorizing the president to call up state militias for nine months. The volunteering situation highlighted the need for greater energy and centralization. In late July, a cautiously optimistic Morgan informed Lincoln that he expected to start sending off new regiments soon, but that enlistments for old regiments remained slow—a common report across the North as the harvest loomed and recruiting for field units remained in War Department hands.²⁴ Stanton himself was widely blamed for the Peninsula disaster, having withheld reinforcements from McClellan, and the Secretary of War now eagerly employed powers granted the federal government by the new Militia Act.²⁵ On August 4, Stanton ordered the states to supply three hundred thousand nine-month militia. States were assigned quotas duplicating those for their three-year volunteers, meaning that New York, for example, now faced the task of raising 59,705 men in addition to the previous call for the same number. Any

²¹ *New York Times*, July 22, 1862.

²² *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 11-12.

²³ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 19-20; Geary, *We Need Men*, 17-18.

²⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 265-270.

²⁵ For public blame directed at Stanton, see Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 239; *New York Times*, August 8, 1862.

states that failed to meet their July 2 and August 4 quotas by August 15 were to make up the difference with another militia draft.²⁶

The situation that New Yorkers faced in the second half of 1862 revealed more than ever before the strengths and weaknesses of northern recruitment. With the machinery for this large-scale mobilization awkward and new and the numbers involved dwarfing anything previously seen in America, citizens remained reliant on community and political leaders to guide them but reserved the privilege of determining their own levels of participation. Those turbulent months saw great successes in calling out volunteers; they also were marked by intense divisions over war aims and the draft, along with an alarming increase in recruiting opposition and fraud.

As the *Evening Post* reminded its readers on July 15, the people of the North, not politicians or generals, were the ultimate authors and arbiters of policy.²⁷ Setbacks in the field and recruiting offices must be overcome, and once Union supporters received governmental guidance in the form of quotas and New York's senatorial district plan, they met the new manpower crisis with a determination unseen in nearly a year. Old and new committees got to work with intertwined goals of affirming northern war support and raising more troops. On July 3, the New York State Chamber of Commerce met in New York City, where they resolved to work with other groups in furtherance of the cause and to "preserve and maintain the character of this community for patriotism and loyal devotion to the Union;" doing so, of course, meant forming more committees.²⁸ Several such bodies, including a temporarily revived Union Defense Committee, met six days later and began planning a mass meeting for July 15 in Union Square,

²⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 291-292.

²⁷ *New York Evening Post*, July 15.

²⁸ John Austin Stevens, Jr., *Proceedings at the Mass Meeting of Loyal Citizens: On Union Square, New-York, 15th Day of July, 1862, under the Auspices of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, the Union Defence Committee of the Citizens of New York, the Common Council of the City of New York, and other Committees of Loyal Citizens* (New York: George F. Nesbitt & Co., 1862), 3-8 (quote p. 3).

site of the monster rally held after Fort Sumter's surrender. Invitations went out to "all Associations, Corporations, and Societies," as well as citizens, in the city. The organizers asked businesses to close an hour beforehand in order to encourage attendance.²⁹ With Mayor George Opdyke presiding at the meeting, assisted by an array of vice presidents and secretaries, the crowd of thousands was treated to artillery salvos and rousing speeches on the need for renewed devotion and perseverance.³⁰ They then heard resolutions adopted earlier by the convention of committees, which called for a united effort to crush the rebellion, backed Lincoln's call for three hundred thousand volunteers, and advised the city to offer its residents twenty-five-dollar bounties to join regiments in the field. Further speeches and resolutions led to a recommendation that the governor and legislature immediately authorize a state bounty, and this was followed by a call from Francis B. Spinola for men to join his new brigade.³¹ Even as a rainstorm brought the rally to a close, those present adopted a final set of resolutions urging the "young men of New-York" to quickly join their country's cause and the government "to overstep the constructive bounds which prevent the employment of ... EVERY means of suppressing this infernal rebellion."³² Attendance and enthusiasm at the July 15 Union Square meeting did not match that of fifteen months earlier (though it was said to be the second-largest meeting ever held in the city), but it exemplified what the *Evening Post* called the "Second Uprising of the North." Devotion to the war effort was as strong as ever, the paper maintained, but now "tempered by a greater thoughtfulness." This time around, citizens expected more efficient, systematic, and comprehensive war measures bringing all resources to bear.³³

²⁹ Ibid., 9-14 (quote p. 12); Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, 1: 82.

³⁰ Stevens, *Proceedings at the Mass Meeting of Loyal Citizens*, 17-25.

³¹ Ibid., 25-26, 38-39..

³² Ibid., 91.

³³ *New York Evening Post*, July 16, 1862 (quotes); *New York Daily Tribune*, July 16, 1862.

The front page of that same July 16 edition of the *Post* featured an anonymous poem, “Three Hundred Thousand More.” The work depicted heroic youth from New England to Minnesota leaving their farms and families to fight for the Union, punctuated with the refrain “We are coming, Father Abra’am, three hundred thousand more!”³⁴ Seldom has a piece so perfectly met the needs of the hour, and the poem was soon reprinted, set to music, and sung all over the Union. Its author turned out to be James Sloan Gibbons, a leading abolitionist of New York City.³⁵ Gibbons’s work not only popularized the image of Lincoln as a father figure to the nation’s volunteers; it summarized far more succinctly than the Union Square rally could the Union’s pressing need for a greater mass commitment than ever before. But how could northerners make the stirring word-pictures of “Three Hundred Thousand More” come to life? How could they hope to attract such a large—and, after August 4, twice as large—body of volunteers quickly enough to reverse recent setbacks while also avoiding conscription?

The key, many believed, lay in strengthening regiments already in the field, offering better incentives, and opening enlistment to groups previously excluded. Soldiers and civilians alike understood that keeping veteran regiments fully staffed was far preferable to forming new commands. As George T. Strong predicted: “Three hundred new regiments, with their officers and men all equally raw, will be a mere mob of Bull-Runagates for six months after they are mustered into service.”³⁶ Older units, on the other hand, had experienced leaders and men able to train recruits and provide a steadying influence in battle. Replacements were essential because regiments almost never maintained full strength after their first weeks in service, suffering from

³⁴ *New York Evening Post*, July 16, 1862. The original printed version does not include an apostrophe in the president’s name.

³⁵ Silber, *Songs of the Civil War*, 92.

³⁶ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 241. See also Theodore A. Dodge, *On Campaign with the Army of the Potomac: The Civil War Journal of Theodore Ayrault Dodge*, ed. Stephen W. Sears (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), 71; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 48.

attrition in numerous forms. Desertion, for instance, bedeviled the Union forces as early as May 1861; by late 1862, it would reach almost crippling levels and never abate during the war.³⁷ Even the bounty system, meant to stimulate volunteering, encouraged widespread desertions by “bounty jumpers” who absconded after receiving advance payments.³⁸ Other forms of wastage were possibly even more harmful than desertion. An estimated two-thirds of officers in New York’s two-year regiments did not serve their full terms, with half of them resigning in the first six months.³⁹ Enlisted men could not resign but nonetheless melted away by the thousands. The state’s first regiment formed under the call for “three hundred thousand more,” the 107th or Young Southern Tier Regiment, reached full strength by August 7, 1862, receiving a banner from Governor Morgan in recognition and inspiring pride in the regiment’s district. After two months of rampant illness and hard campaigning, only 250 men remained on duty.⁴⁰ Recruiting parties for various regiments had begun supplying replacements in July 1861, but these small groups could not stem the tide of attrition.

Desertion, disease, and field conditions were not the only culprits. Lax medical inspections brought thousands into the ranks who soon fell out, while recruiting officers often failed to return to the field promptly with the men they enlisted, and commanders at rendezvous sometimes let recruits accumulate instead of sending them forward in groups.⁴¹ In September

³⁷ Adolph Von Steinwehr, note of May 25, 1861, D’Utassy Papers, N-YHS; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 27, 1861; Elliott F. Shepard to Morgan, July 2, 1861, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 67; Geary, *We Need Men*, 51-52.

³⁸ Geary, *We Need Men*, 15, 17-18.

³⁹ Burt, *My Memoirs of the Military History of the State of New York during the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 28.

⁴⁰ Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby*, 129, 130-131, 180; Tuttle, *The Civil War Journal of Lt. Russell M. Tuttle, New York Volunteer Infantry*, 16.

⁴¹ Henry C. Lyon to “Dear Brother,” July 6, 1861, in Lyon, *“Desolating This Fair Country”: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Lt. Henry C. Lyon, 34th New York*, ed. Emily N. Radigan (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1999), 28; Louis F. Whitney to John T. Sprague, September 18, 1862, and Robert H. Hall to A. S. Diven, April 1, 1865, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Reports, and Lists for Various New York Districts, entry 2511, RG 110, NARA-NY; Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 419; Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 258.

1864, General U. S. Grant would report that less than one in five new recruits actually reached the army.⁴² Soldiers worried that civilians did not fully grasp attrition's effect on the war effort and local honor.⁴³ On July 19, 1862, just as his countrymen geared up to meet the latest call, a New York City soldier informed a hometown newspaper that his regiment, the Second Fire Zouaves, could muster only 130 men for duty after a year of service. "I think if the Fire Department of New York wants us to uphold the laurels we have already won," he added, "... it is their duty to try and fill the thinned ranks of our regiment, which fell in so noble a cause."⁴⁴ Hillhouse's annual report for 1862 would identify the question of how to replace the army's losses as the single greatest problem facing the national and state governments.⁴⁵ Attrition highlighted the need for effective recruiting policies: without a large and steady supply of new men the Union had no chance of victory.

Strengthening forces in the field with reliable volunteers would be a daunting task: In early August, Stanton informed Morgan that more than fifty-four thousand recruits were needed to fill New York's old regiments alone.⁴⁶ Earlier, General McClellan had advised the governor that priority should be given to filling old regiments over creating new ones and to forcing the many able-bodied soldiers remaining home on sick leave to return to duty.⁴⁷ Strong and other members of the U. S. Sanitary Commission Executive Committee wrote to Lincoln urging policies of filling old regiments and thorough medical inspections of recruits, which the president

⁴² Geary, *We Need Men*, 13.

⁴³ Alpheus S. Williams to "My Dear Daughters," July 21, 1863, in Milo M. Quaife, ed., *From the Cannon's Mouth: The Civil War Letters of General Alpheus S. Williams* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 239.

⁴⁴ *New York Sunday Mercury*, July 27, 1862, in Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 111.

⁴⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 48.

⁴⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 354.

⁴⁷ George B. McClellan to Morgan, July 15, 1862, box 12, Henry M. Naglee to Morgan, July 16, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 225-226.

endorsed.⁴⁸ “Fill up the Old Regiments” became a mantra across the North that summer and fall as communities strove to meet their quotas, preserve local honor, and aid the cause in the most effective manner.⁴⁹ Efforts to fill veteran commands received a boost from Stanton on July 21 when he acceded to Morgan and Andrew’s requests that they be “authorized to say that new recruits for old regiments will be mustered [out] with the regiment.”⁵⁰ In other words, recruits for these units could expect to serve only their regiment’s unexpired term, not a full three years—a powerful incentive and one that recruiters exploited to the hilt. (A similar guarantee had been held out to volunteers for old regiments the previous year.) After Stanton called for nine-month militia on August 4, canny recruiters began enticing volunteers for old regiments with the promise that the nine-month term applied to them. “The Term of Service is so short,” declared a lieutenant recruiting for a Jefferson County regiment that October as conscription seemed imminent, “the Town Bounties so liberal, added to the Certainty of being Discharged at the End of the Term, That it is believed men will be readily found to fill up the entire quota in this County—a thing earnestly desired by all who wish to spare old Jefferson the disgrace of a draft.”⁵¹ Officials played another card in late August when they discontinued bounties for recruits joining new regiments while keeping them available for those enlisting in old ones.⁵²

Lincoln and Stanton closely monitored states’ efforts to fill old regiments. Morgan and his fellow governors of Ohio and Pennsylvania reported to the president on July 28 that the program was proving less effective than hoped.⁵³ The main problem lay in a dearth of officers

⁴⁸ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 245.

⁴⁹ See for instance *Pittsburgh Gazette*, July 31; *Tiffin (Ohio) Tribune*, August 8; *Burlington (Iowa) Weekly Hawk-Eye*, August 13; *Detroit Free Press*, August 20; *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, September 4; *Hartford Courant*, November 11, all 1862; “Letter from Senator Wilson,” *The Liberator*, vol. 32, no. 33 (August 15, 1862): 130.

⁵⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 149, 240.

⁵¹ *Cape Vincent Frontier Patriot*, October 18, 1862.

⁵² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 452.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 265, 268-269, 452.

recruiting for old regiments. Few citizens could be found willing to do the hard work of enlisting men who would go to someone else's unit when they had the more attractive option of forming their own companies and regiments. Out of three thousand authorizations that New York's Adjutant General granted from May to December 1862 for recruiting companies, only 150 were for companies to be attached to old regiments. This and the many "superior attractions of the new regiments," Hillhouse reported, crippled replacement efforts.⁵⁴ From the summer through year's end, New York secured roughly fifteen thousand men for regiments in the field, far more than any other state enlisted but barely one quarter of the number needed.⁵⁵ Many of these men would receive a rude shock the following spring when the army's promises evaporated and they were kept on for three-year terms.

Lincoln and Morgan's calls for volunteers in early July were a tonic to loyal New Yorkers, but organizing recruiting committees in the senatorial districts would take time that the nation could ill afford. On July 10, the New York City Board of Aldermen directed its Joint Committee on National Affairs to meet with the governor and work out an arrangement for more quickly meeting the need for troops. Out of that meeting was born Morgan's July 17 proclamation, issued without legislative approval, pledging fifty-dollar bounties to volunteers. The Board of Aldermen printed thirty thousand copies of its July 21 resolutions supporting the governor's action, promising to provide city volunteers with rapid family support, and challenging other counties to meet their share of the debt resulting from the new bounty, just as Gotham would. If pressed, New York City could do more, the Committee on National Affairs

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 269; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 17-18 (quote).

⁵⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 861; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 17. New York enlisted twenty thousand recruits for old regiments during the entire year. *Annual Report*, 19.

had acknowledged, and the city “is prepared, should the emergency demand it, to expend her last dollar, and sacrifice the last of her sons, in defence of the integrity of the Union; but, in the opinion of your Committee, such a sacrifice is not needed at this time.” Instead, the city would employ new efficiency and dedication to advance the Union cause and help the Empire State meet its quota within thirty days, a policy echoing the resolutions passed at the Union Square meeting.⁵⁶ In August, state legislators advanced the cause by convening an extra session and retroactively approving the bounty.⁵⁷

The massive effort to meet the Empire State’s quotas finally achieved headway that month. “Stimulated by bounties, by the efforts and zeal of local committees, by fear of a draft, and the apprehension of unfavorable intelligence at any moment,” Morgan told Stanton on August 14, “the reserve power of the State is fairly in motion.” New York had enlisted thirty thousand men for the senatorial district regiments and three thousand to fill old commands.⁵⁸ Morgan and Thurlow Weed—whose influence as a public affairs advisor far exceeded his official position as an editor—informed the war secretary that their state could fill both its quotas within three weeks so long as public zeal was not discouraged; in other words, New York must have a free hand to accept volunteers without being weighed down by federal regulations.⁵⁹ “The popular feeling is at high war heat,” Weed declared. “It has cost much to get this steam up. Pray do not require the Governor to ‘blow it off.’” He added that New Yorkers from all over the state were awaiting Stanton’s decision. The secretary replied that he hardly desired to shut down the machinery at such a critical moment. He had already halted bounties for

⁵⁶ *New York Times*, July 22, 1862.

⁵⁷ George Winston Smith, “The National War Committee of the Citizens of New York,” *New York History* 28 (1947), 441.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 385.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 385, 393.

new regiments while continuing them for old ones, given governors authority to apportion their quotas among counties and subdivisions of counties, and postponed the draft until September 3 so that states had more time to fill their quotas with volunteers.⁶⁰ Stanton called New York's progress "highly gratifying" but urged that more troops be hurried on.⁶¹

The "efforts and zeal of local committees" and the communities that birthed them did indeed go far toward addressing the manpower crisis. J. Matthew Gallman has argued that the summer 1862 calls transferred the war's burdens from individuals to communities.⁶² But local pride had served military efforts well since the war's beginning as cities, towns, and wards connected troop-raising and family support to community honor and Union fortunes. In the summer of 1862, however, an adjustment in the community-honor impulse did occur as local quotas were established and the draft loomed. Area pride now hinged on meeting the first with volunteers in order to avoid the latter, and the possibility of violent opposition to drafting made this a practical consideration as well. George Opdyke suggested to the governor that New York City wards should be assigned their own quotas (a process already underway); "local pride" would be consequently stimulated and the city's quota filled.⁶³ Endless complaints and accusations sprang up about certain locales contributing more or less than their share; residents of predominantly Republican Pierrepont felt they had given more men than their duty required and should therefore be exempt from the draft, especially since Democratic towns had done nearly as much. Republican Senator Preston King forwarded this report to Morgan with approval.⁶⁴ Communities of all sizes offered their own bounties just as they did family aid

⁶⁰ Ibid., 380-381, 393 (quote), 413.

⁶¹ Ibid., 393 (quote), 413.

⁶² Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 139-143.

⁶³ Opdyke to Morgan, August 18, 1862, box 19, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁶⁴ Orrin A. Howard to Preston King, August 26, and King to Morgan, August 30, both 1862, box 7, *ibid.*

money. Nineteen men in a Washington County town pledged to pay one dollar each to every able-bodied resident who enlisted before September 1.⁶⁵ Enlistment committees in Brooklyn's Third and Ninth Wards raised more modest bounties through subscriptions. Kings County, home to Brooklyn, paid its own bounty to more than six thousand volunteers up to October 15, when funds evidently ran out—a common circumstance.⁶⁶

Fear of conscription modified but did not supplant idealism. While New Yorkers increasingly divided over various war issues, belief in sacrifice for the Union cause remained strong with the majority. Some efforts succeeded while others fell short. When Brooklyn's Third Ward Enlistment Committee failed to raise enough money for a bounty, members deposited \$500 in a fund for sick and wounded Kings County soldiers.⁶⁷ The Women's Central Association of Relief entertained a proposal by one of its members to convince businessmen around the country to replace their military-age male workforce with females and have the men enlisted; nothing apparently came of this idea.⁶⁸ In Albany, war committees in the Third and Fourth Wards continued raising troops after meeting their quotas; the resulting surplus helped Albany County meet its overall quota, and the ward committees used remaining monies for a family relief fund.⁶⁹ Civilians and soldiers alike appreciated *esprit de corps*: they cheered the achievements of local regiments, jealously guarded their honor, and strove to fill their ranks so they would not be

⁶⁵ Pledge in folder 19, box 2, Adjutant General's Correspondence, NYSA.

⁶⁶ Ledger of subscriptions and scrapbook of newspaper clippings, Third Ward Enlistment Committee Records, 1862-1871; "From the Brooklyn Eagle," Brooklyn, N. Y. Civil War History Collection; both BHS.

⁶⁷ Unidentified article in scrapbook, Third Ward Enlistment Committee Records, BHS.

⁶⁸ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 139.

⁶⁹ *Albany Morning Express*, January 13, 1863. See also *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1862, for a report from Savannah, New York, which was "wild with patriotic enthusiasm," had already reached its quota, and was still recruiting.

consolidated with others. Companies, regiments, and even a few brigades were seen as extensions of the civilian communities they came from.⁷⁰

Painfully aware that the Union's survival (and avoiding conscription) depended on meeting manpower quotas, citizens not only held rallies and raised money but frequently became recruiters themselves. Rochester's mayor called on the city's businesses to close early ten days in a row in order to encourage locals to raise soldiers, and a city newspaper declared that the "work must be carried on like a political campaign or religious revival," two subjects very familiar to Western New Yorkers.⁷¹ Community leaders around the state stepped forward with offers of private bounties for volunteers. In New York City, editor S. H. Wales of *Scientific American* announced on August 9 the opening of the magazine's own recruiting office. It proved to be a very successful endeavor, with fifty-one volunteers secured in less than a month thanks to efforts of the magazine's staff and the bounty they offered. A fellow editor hailed the example of his colleague Wales. "Spontaneous action of this sort adds greatly to the general momentum and enthusiasm," he noted, "and provokes to more earnest effort the regular recruiting officers. When the people have a mind for the work, it will move right along."⁷²

The work indeed moved right along in August and September as senatorial district committees and private individuals all lent their efforts. The wide variety of units recruiting

⁷⁰ "5th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/5thArtHvy/5thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016); John T. McMahon, *John T. McMahon's Diary of the 136th New York, 1861-1864*, ed. John M. Priest (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Co., 1993), 26; *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, September 15, September 18, 1862; Cornelius Van Vechten and Richard Busted to Morgan, September 22, Francis B. Spinola to Van Vechten, September 25, Van Vechten and Busted to Spinola, September 25, all 1862, box 1, Administrative Correspondence Files, Inspector General's Office Records, NYSA. On the power of *esprit de corps* for soldiers, see Mark H. Dunkelman, *Brothers One and All: Esprit de Corps in a Civil War Regiment* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004). Dunkelman, however, errs in asserting that "the typical regiment was formed within relatively narrow geographic confines," meaning towns and counties. *Ibid.*, 16-17. As we have seen, this was more often true of companies.

⁷¹ Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 32.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 31-32; *New York Evangelist*, August 21, 1862 (quote); "Our Military Department," *Scientific American*, vol. 7, no. 10 (September 6, 1862), 154.

meant that prospective volunteers could choose the organization that best fitted their nationality, choice of duty, and even faith. Delegates from New York City and Brooklyn Presbyterian churches recruited among their congregations for a regiment called the Monitors, the idea being that the men would “monitor” one another to avoid succumbing to the vices of army life.⁷³ (This lofty notion failed as the Monitors gained a poor reputation much like that of Ellsworth and Wilson’s Zouaves.)⁷⁴ The Ironsides Regiment—its name evoking Oliver Cromwell’s tough Protestant warriors—organized on a similar principle.⁷⁵ The powerful connection between communities and their regiments was demonstrated by the creation and sendoff of Albany’s senatorial district regiment, the 113th New York Infantry. Each company of the command recruited in a different city ward; thanks to what a newspaper called the “untiring zeal of the several Ward Committees, and our citizens generally,” the ranks were filled in thirty days. Ten thousand people gathered on August 19 to cheer the 113th as it marched through Albany on its way to the front. “No equally intense enthusiasm has marked the departure of any Regiment since the war began,” a witness claimed, “and no finer body of men ever went to the tented field in any country.” Two years and several bloody battles later, only one of its original officers would remain with the 113th.⁷⁶

Such “extraordinary exertions” and “remarkable” enlistment rates, as Adjutant General Hillhouse characterized efforts across the state, made August and September the most successful

⁷³ R. W. Raymond, “To The Christian Men and Women of Brooklyn,” n.d. (1862), box 1, Administrative Correspondence Files, Inspector General’s Office Records, NYSA.

⁷⁴ Robert J. Zalin, “A Disturbance in the City: Black and White Soldiers in Postwar Charleston,” in *Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era*, ed. John David Smith (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 365-366.

⁷⁵ *New York Times*, September 27, October 11, 1862.

⁷⁶ “7th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/7thArtHvy/7thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016). The 113th reorganized as heavy artillery soon after reaching Washington.

months of the entire war in terms of recruiting in New York.⁷⁷ Relief mingled with pride as many districts exceeded their quotas and it appeared the Empire State might meet its huge quotas without having to draft. Also encouraging was the fact that most volunteers enlisted for three years rather than nine months. As early as August 15, improved recruiting injected confidence into the business and financial communities, including a rebound in the stock market.⁷⁸ By October 23, nearly seventy-five thousand men had been raised under the July 2 and August 4 calls. “No other State can present a nobler record,” an Albany paper declared, although the majority of Union states likewise reached their quotas.⁷⁹ Reality had finally caught up to the earnest words of Gibbons’s poem “Three Hundred Thousand More.”

Alarming developments, however, indicated the drastic financial and social costs of this unprecedented mobilization. By year’s end the state would pay nearly three and a half million dollars in bounties; raising and tracking this and other recruitment expenses caused endless headaches in Albany, as did logistical difficulties at the state and federal levels.⁸⁰ The people were answering the call but Washington failed to meet its own responsibilities, repeating the frustrations of 1861. “Our volunteers in many parts of the State are pouring in like the waters over Niagara,” Morgan told Stanton in August. “Will they be detained for necessary supplies?”⁸¹ Meanwhile, the rate of volunteering differed widely across the state and some districts would

⁷⁷ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 44 (quotes); Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, 671-673.

⁷⁸ *Railway Times*, August 16, 1862.

⁷⁹ Merrill Colby to “Dear Son,” September 14, 1862, in Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby, New York Infantry*, 139-141; “What New York Has Done,” newspaper clipping in entry no. 1253, Documentation Relating to the Cost of Raising Troops, Comptroller’s Office Records, NYSA (quote); Geary, *We Need Men*, 79.

⁸⁰ George Bliss, Jr. to Lucius Robinson, December 27, 1862, and “Memorandum of Differences Found in Examination of Accounts,” entry no. 1253, Documentation Relating to the Cost of Raising Troops, Comptroller’s Office Records, NYSA; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 15.

⁸¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 328.

still struggle to meet their quotas after the New Year.⁸² Even dominantly Republican areas saw scattered interference with volunteering, while many citizens lost interest once their local quotas were achieved.⁸³ Nowhere was declining enthusiasm for mobilization more obvious and consequential than in the New York metropolitan region. Police in the city guarded recruiting stations from hostile mobs, while the Democratic press mocked abolitionists, especially Horace Greeley, for supporting war on southern slaveholders but keeping themselves out of harm's way.⁸⁴ Over the course of the war the proportion of Empire State troops recruited in New York City dropped to eighteen percent despite the city having over one quarter of the state's population.⁸⁵ But growing opposition to recruitment was a nationwide dilemma in the second half of 1862, particularly in states where drafting occurred. Historians William Blair, Carol Reardon, and Mark A. Snell have produced case studies of Pennsylvanians and their reactions to the calls for six hundred thousand, demonstrating that community values and localism—in addition to the political differences that historians most often cite—inspired resistance to the notion of compulsory service.⁸⁶ As detailed in the next chapter, disputes over quotas and draft enrollment brought tremendous strain to New York's communities throughout the 1862 manpower drive and beyond.

⁸² *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 31, 42.

⁸³ *Watertown Daily News and Reformer*, August 12, 1862; Merrill Colby to "Dear Son," September 14, 1862, in Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby, New York Infantry*, 139-141.

⁸⁴ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 149-150; "Military Matters," *New York Sunday Mercury*, September 28, 1862, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 125; *New York Herald*, November 4, 1862.

⁸⁵ Spann, *Gotham at War*, 60.

⁸⁶ William Blair, "We Are Coming, Father Abraham—Eventually: The Problem of Northern Nationalism in the Pennsylvania Recruiting Drives of 1862," in *The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War*, ed. Joan E. Cashin (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 183-208; Carol Reardon, "'We Are All in This War': The 148th Pennsylvania and Home Front Dissension in Centre County during the Civil War," in *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments*, ed. Paul A. Cimbal and Randall M. Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 3-29; Mark A. Snell, "'If They Would Know What I Know It Would Be Pretty Hard To Raise One Company in York': Recruiting, the Draft, and Society's Response in York County, Pennsylvania, 1861-1865," in Cimbal and Miller, *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front*, esp. 83-90.

Soldiers remained part of their home-front communities after they went to war and continually expressed interest in the progress of local recruiting and conscription. The majority supported renewed manpower calls and a draft, hoping these levies would fill up veteran regiments. Soldiers, like civilians, linked recruitment with the survival of the Union and deplored eligible men who remained at home and policies allowing them to do so. A naval officer insisted that all states should double their quotas. “It is a shame,” he added, “that our brave men in the field have been left to combat with overwhelming rebel hosts, while we have had at home such an irresistible reserve force.”⁸⁷ Many soldiers believed that filling the ranks through drafting would allow the Union to quickly crush the Confederacy—a variation on assertions that many northerners had made in the spring of 1861 when they called for near-total mobilization.⁸⁸ Yet in their private letters home, many men stopped short of calling on their own kin and friends to sign on. An officer who had been one of the first in the Southern Tier region to enlist over a year before warned his father against allowing his brother to join him: “Tell Henry *not to be fooled into volunteering for if he does he ought to be hung and will be sorry when it’s too late.*”⁸⁹ Soldiers often told the folks at home that one family member in uniform sufficed. Such prohibitions from soldiers who otherwise supported mass mobilization were extremely common,

⁸⁷ Milton B. Cushing to “Messrs. Editors,” July 16, 1862, in Garland, *Civil War Letters, 1861-1865, Copied from the Fredonia Censor*, 505-507.

⁸⁸ For soldier support of recruitment and the draft in 1862, see also anonymous soldier of the 49th New York to “Editors of the Censor,” July 28, 1862, in *ibid.*, 548; Charles T. Bowen to “Dear Grandpa,” August 2, 1862, in Edward K. Cassidy, ed., *Dear Friends at Home: The Civil War Letters and Diaries of Sergeant Charles T. Bowen* (Baltimore: Butternut and Blue, 2001), 137; Dodge, *On Campaign with the Army of the Potomac*, 71; Thomas Jones to “My Dear Sister,” August 13, 1862, in Richard M. Trimble, ed., *Brothers ‘Til Death: The Civil War Letters of William, Thomas, and Maggie Jones* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000), 32-33; soldier in 57th New York to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, August 17, 1862, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 115.

⁸⁹ Newton T. Colby to “Dear Father,” August 24, 1862, in Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby*, 135 (emphasis in the original).

occurred throughout the war, and may reveal the limits of northern resolve, though it is difficult to fault men who had experienced the war's horrors for encouraging loved ones to stay safe.⁹⁰

Recruitment competition and fraud, which became pronounced that summer and established trends that only worsened as the war went on, also indicated the limits of commitment. Many soldiers and civilians freely indulged in dishonesty for the cause, and soldier recruiters often rivaled the notorious brokers in their fierce competition and willingness to bend the truth. Officers and enlisted men eagerly sought recruiting duty, seeing it as a chance to relax, visit home, and gain promotion.⁹¹ Major Harmon D. Hull of the Fifth New York Zouaves returned to New York City in August to find replacements for the regiment's battered ranks. After attracting hundreds of men with the Fifth's renowned uniform and reputation, Hull held onto most of them despite orders to forward the recruits to the field, planning to form his own regiment. The plot backfired as officers remaining with the Fifth expressed anger and Hull failed

⁹⁰ For more examples, see Seymour Dexter to "My Dear Friend," October 26, 1861, in Dexter, *Seymour Dexter, Union Army*, 54-55; John Young to "Dear Wife," May 17, 1862, in John Young, *The 14th U. S. Infantry Regiment in the Civil War: John Young Letters*, ed. C. Russell Hunley (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 2000), 4; Wayne Mahood, *Fight All Day, March All Night A Medal of Honor Recipient's Story* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 81-82, 85; Patrick Farrington to "Dear Father," April 5, 1863, in Farrington, *The Civil War Letters of Patrick Farrington*, 79; Alexander Campbell to wife, September 9, 1862, in Johnston, "Him on the One Side and Me on the Other," 117; Hermon Clarke to "My Dear Father," April 11, 1863, in *Back Home in Oneida: Hermon Clarke and his Letters*, ed. Harry F. Jackson and Thomas F. O'Donnell (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1965), 66, same to same, November 7, 1863, 114, same to same, December 7, 1863, 117-118, and Clarke to "My Dear Brother," January 29, 1865, in *ibid.*, 188; Robert Rossi to "Dear Elise," June 19, 1863, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 82; Charles Biddlecom to "Dear Wife," January 24, 1864, in Charles Biddlecom, *No Freedom Shrieker: The Civil War Letters of Union Soldier Charles Biddlecom*, ed. Katherine M. Aldridge (Ithaca, NY: Paramount Market Publishing, 2012), 85, and Biddlecom to "Dear Esther," December 12, 1864, in *ibid.*, 253-254; George Englis to "Dear Mother," July 19, 1864, in *This From George: The Civil War Letters of Sergeant George Magusta Englis 1861-1865 Company K, 89th New York Infantry Regiment of Volunteer Infantry Known as the Dickinson Guard*, ed. Eileen Mae Knapp Patch (Binghamton, NY: Broome County Historical Society, 2001), 149; William Rimmel to "My Dear Parents," September 17, 1864, in William Rimmel, *Like Grass Before the Scythe: The Life and Death of Sgt. William Rimmel, 121st New York Infantry*, ed. Robert Patrick Bender (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 122-123, and same to same October 15, 1864, in *ibid.*, 125; George Breck to "My Dear Ellen," February 19, 1865, in "George Breck's Civil War Letters from the 'Reynolds Battery,'" *The Rochester Historical Society Publications*, vol. 22: *Rochester in the Civil War*, ed. Blake McKelvey (Rochester: Rochester Historical Society, 1944), 149.

⁹¹ Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 111, 113; Robert M. Goldwaite to "My Dear Wife," August 3, J. Cooke James to Goldwaite, September 26, and John B. Hanna to Goldwaite, September 26, all 1862, in Skipper and Taylor, *A Handful of Providence*, 142, 246, 247.

to secure enough men. Those he had enlisted were mustered in as a six-company battalion under a different officer; outraged, Hull did his best to undermine the new unit.⁹² Commissioners of the New York City Metropolitan Police decided to form their own brigade; patrolmen on their beats acted as recruiters, and the deserters they arrested promptly found themselves enlisted into the Metropolitan Brigade.⁹³ Nor did New Yorkers confine themselves to their own state, as outraged Chicago residents learned when New York officers enlisting for the mysterious “Marine Artillery” appeared in the city and drew away men who would now not count toward local quotas.⁹⁴ Competition became a top-down affair that year. On July 5, the U. S. Navy created the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting to address the service’s logistical and manpower difficulties. One of the new department’s charges was to encourage transfers of army personnel to the navy.⁹⁵ Similarly, a War Department order issued in October authorized transfer of volunteers to regular army regiments. Regular officers and sergeants eagerly took advantage of the order—even to the extent of enticing men away from guard duty—until exasperation from volunteer officers caused the order’s recall the following February.⁹⁶ Added to all this was the failure of recruiting for old regiments, whose officers often had to pay their own expenses and waged losing competition with the better-connected recruiters for new commands.⁹⁷

Competition stalked hand-in-hand with fraud. Dire need for bodies in uniform encouraged recruiters to adopt lax standards; New York gained an especially poor reputation in

⁹² Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 307-308, 366, 419-422; Abel Smith, Jr., to Gen. Van Vechten, November 17, 1862, box 4, Adjutant General’s Correspondence, NYSA.

⁹³ James Bowen to Morgan, August 15, 1862, box 2, and Thomas B. Van Buren to Morgan, September 21, 1862, box 13, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁹⁴ *Proceedings of Citizens of Chicago, in Relation to the So-Called "Marine Artillery"* [Chicago, n.p., 1862].

⁹⁵ Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798–1862*, 126-127. Between ten thousand and twelve thousand soldiers transferred to the navy during the war. Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 15.

⁹⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 654, and ser. 3, vol. 3, 38; Newton T. Colby to “Dear Father,” October 25, 1862, in Colby, *The Civil War Papers of Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby, New York Infantry*, 187.

⁹⁷ Thomas B. Van Buren to Morgan, September 21, 1862, box 13, EDM Papers, NYSL.

this regard.⁹⁸ Officers on permanent recruiting duty and communities striving to meet quotas felt little incentive to accept only reliable men. “When the regiment was recruited,” wrote the surgeon of New York City’s 119th Infantry, “they took anything, the old, the weak, the sick—and now, of course, they can’t take the extremely strenuous war conditions. . . . We have fourteen-year-old boys in our regiment who aren’t even strong enough to carry a gun.”⁹⁹ Emphasis on quantity rather than quality or preparation of enlistees bore evil effects at the front. When McClellan faced invading Confederates at the decisive battle of Antietam, Maryland, on September 17, more than one-quarter of his infantrymen were new recruits; some of these raw soldiers loaded their muskets for the first time as they went into battle that day. Historians examining the causes of McClellan’s hesitation in the campaign and failure to destroy the enemy often note his great numerical advantage but less often these striking facts.¹⁰⁰

By November, Army Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas reported that a “system of brokerage has sprung up” across the Union in which civilian agents exploited the need for manpower, often using corrupt methods to cheat enlistees and towns while lining their own pockets.¹⁰¹ This situation was all too common in New York as conscription loomed, especially since haphazard recordkeeping made draft enrollment figures unreliable and often prompted different towns to claim the same men on their quotas. The ill-advised practice of paying bounties up front encouraged desertions and an “organized scheme” of bounty jumping, Hillhouse noted.¹⁰² On August 23, two separate letter writers warned Morgan that the new

⁹⁸ “Medical Inspection of Recruits,” *American Medical Times*, August 30, 1862: 123-124; “Army Medical Intelligence,” *American Medical Times*, September 6, 1862: 138.

⁹⁹ Carl Uterhard to mother, March 23, 1863, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 156.

¹⁰⁰ See D. Scott Hartwig, “Who Would Not Be a Soldier: The Volunteers of ’62 in the Maryland Campaign,” in *The Antietam Campaign*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 143-168.

¹⁰¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 864.

¹⁰² *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 37-39 (quote), 42.

competitive bounty culture among counties, towns, and wards damaged home-front morale and even recruitment. State and national bounties were beneficial, the state's assistant inspector general noted, providing soldiers with a tidy sum to leave with their families. But ever-rising local bounties possibly broke the law and prompted uncomfortable questions about the morality of buying citizens for something (army service) that should be considered a patriotic endeavor.¹⁰³ The War Department addressed corruption in a major way by founding the Provost Marshal General's Office on September 24, charging the new body with policing deserters, directing draft enrollment, and cracking down on recruiting fraud.¹⁰⁴

One month earlier, a new organization had formed in New York City to reinvigorate the public and promote state efforts. Another mass meeting to promote volunteering occurred, this time in City Hall Park, on August 27. Attendance was unimpressive and the crowd muted, but Hiram Walbridge—a prominent New Yorker who had long championed mass mobilization—managed to get resolutions passed creating the National War Committee of the Citizens of New York. The intended goal of this group was to reinforce the old New York regiments, support efforts to form new ones, and help Michael Corcoran complete his new Irish brigade, in that order.¹⁰⁵ Like the Union Defense Committee had the year before, the new body filled its roster with leading local merchants and other elites (many of whom had served in the UDC) and adopted a comprehensive approach to serving the cause. Yet the National War Committee was, if anything, even farther-reaching and controversial than its predecessor. Several prominent figures elected to the NWC refused to serve on it, and August Belmont publicly expressed his mistrust

¹⁰³ Silas W. Burt to Morgan, August 23, 1862, and L. P. Hickok to Morgan, same date, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁰⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 936.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 440, 442; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 153; Minutes book, National War Committee of the Citizens of New York Records, N-YHS (hereafter NWCCNY).

of the organization even as he donated one thousand dollars to its volunteer campaign.¹⁰⁶ The committee's membership reflected the increasingly bitter division of Union supporters into "radical" and "conservative" factions, which differed over emancipation and how severely military power should be applied to the South.¹⁰⁷ Mayor Opdyke, committee chairman, and several of his fellow Radicals in the NWC went beyond their mandate: taking the "National" in their name literally, they denigrated state efforts and argued that efficiency in the war effort could only be achieved if the federal government assumed near-total control. One need only look to the draconian Confederacy and its battlefield successes over the Union to see the necessity of centralization, the NWC leadership asserted.¹⁰⁸ Lincoln's administration must prosecute the war remorselessly and hold officers and men strictly to their duties, while "the different cities, and villages of the country" should form committees to join forces with the NWC "with the view to secure united and vigorous efforts in support of the Government."¹⁰⁹

NWC members met frequently over the anxious final four months of 1862. Their subcommittees determined to "call personally on monied corporations and citizens and solicit subscriptions to the Corcoran and General Fund." They passed endless sets of resolutions exhorting loyal citizens to aid recruitment and entertained funding requests from officers. They inspected state defenses and new weapons, attempted to reform mobilization in other states, and presented Washington officials with a plan for a "uniform depot system" across the North. They

¹⁰⁶ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 153, 154. The NWC returned the money in protest of Belmont's insinuations. *Report of the Proceedings of the National War Committee of the Citizens of New-York* (New York: The committee, 1862), 7.

¹⁰⁷ For the evolution of Union war policy, see Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹⁰⁸ *Report to the National War Committee of the Citizens of New-York, on Army Organization and Depot Camps* (New York: N. p., 1862), 1-5.

¹⁰⁹ Minutes book, NWCCNY.

even proposed a military operation to redeem West Texas.¹¹⁰ In the wake of yet another Union defeat in Virginia, the committee on September 2 publicly requested the New York militia regiments recently returned from three-month tours to once again deploy for the front, but the militiamen demurred.¹¹¹ In all of this, the NWC invited widespread criticism for overreach, inefficiency, and ignoring its original obligations. The ambition of leading committeemen exceeded their resources and tact. One particularly active member was the influential young attorney and Radical John Austin Stevens, Jr., previously a leader in the UDC. Morgan, despite his desire to assist in filling up the old regiments, had refused to cooperate with Stevens, whom the War Department appointed to handle the matter, after Stevens attacked Morgan in the pages of the *Evening Post*.¹¹² (The governor otherwise “cheerfully” assisted NWC efforts.)¹¹³ Committee membership fluctuated as its affiliates argued constantly over the direction they should take, while Corcoran’s men grew angry as the NWC failed to deliver promised bounties. The committee scrupulously published its activities in public reports.¹¹⁴ Ironically, committee members hoped to overhaul northern war making and promote efficiency and transparency in mobilization, but their efforts only caused greater confusion and factionalism, achieving even less than the similarly controversial Union Defense Committee before it. The quixotic National War Committee stopped meeting in December.¹¹⁵ That July, the War Department had suggested state governments should appoint committees of their “most reliable and influential” residents to

¹¹⁰ Call for subscriptions from citizens and corporations issued by NWCCNY, August 30, 1862, NWCCNY; Minutes book, NWCCNY (quote); *Report to the National War Committee of the Citizens of New-York, on Army Organization and Depot Camps*, passim; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 154-156.

¹¹¹ Minutes book, NWCCNY.

¹¹² Morgan to Stanton, August 25, 1862, box 12, EDM Papers, NYSL. For Stevens’s letter criticizing Morgan’s response to the July 2 levy, see *New York Evening Post*, July 23, 1862.

¹¹³ Telegram of Michael Corcoran and J. Dayton to David Dudley Field, September 3, 1862, NWCCNY.

¹¹⁴ Minutes book, NWCCNY.

¹¹⁵ Smith, “The National War Committee of the Citizens of New York,” 456; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 156.

take charge of volunteering, predicting that this would create “a wholesome influence on the volunteer recruiting service.”¹¹⁶ The overreaching, abortive career of the National War Committee was surely not what department officials had envisioned.

Who were the new volunteers of 1862, the men and boys brought in by the sustained recruiting drive that summer and fall? There is evidence to support Gibbons’s depiction in “Three Hundred Thousand More” of “sturdy farmer boys” and townsmen rushing to the call in great numbers, motivated by patriotism and group identity. The 154th, composed of men from rural Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties, contained fifty-eight sets of brothers and eight father-and-son pairs. Far to the east, many siblings enlisted together as replacements in the Fifth New York Zouaves.¹¹⁷ In November, a Union general gathering a force for the Gulf of Mexico noted that these New Yorkers and New Englanders “are new, but of a better class of men than those of earlier levies, and the men are earnest for the expedition.”¹¹⁸ But other observers differed on the social makeup of the new volunteers versus veterans.¹¹⁹ “An Old Member” of a famous Brooklyn regiment attacked Representative Moses F. Odell in the pages of a local newspaper for implying that “the scum of Brooklyn came out first, but that the pride of Brooklyn came out last.” In fact, claimed this veteran of eighteen months’ service, the new men had been attracted by bounties and often malingered in hospitals.¹²⁰ Edward King Wightman, a college graduate and newspaperman, had declined volunteering over the past year because of personal commitments and an assumption that there were enough unemployed men to meet the army’s manpower needs. After careful thought, Wightman enlisted in August 1862, explaining that

¹¹⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 247-248.

¹¹⁷ Dunkelman, *Brothers One and All*, photograph supplement following page 247; Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 309.

¹¹⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 713.

¹¹⁹ Marsh, “A History of Rochester’s Part in the Civil War,” 23-24.

¹²⁰ “An Old Member” to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, October 27, 1862, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 133.

many others were not stepping forward and it was “disgraceful ... for young men [to be] living peacefully and selfishly at home” with the country imperiled. Upon joining Hawkins’ Zouaves, the sophisticated Wightman was shocked by the regiment’s new and old men alike. His fellow recruits were “rough material” and the regiment’s privates as a whole “disgustingly immoral and profane.” Veterans abused the newcomers for being “bounty men” instead of “patriots” like them.¹²¹ It is unclear how common such behavior was in the army; in the navy, brutal hazing of new sailors was a long-established practice.¹²² Tensions between veterans and recruits demonstrated how mobilization practices affected the cohesion of the Union military.¹²³

The manpower crisis in the summer of 1862 brought new or expanded opportunities for marginalized segments of the population, including northern African Americans. Northerners’ two great causes—saving the Union and, eventually, abolishing slavery—came together at the intersection of mobilization. Henry Wilson’s militia bill of July 1862 included provisions for freeing and employing blacks as military laborers and soldiers; the abolitionist senator supported these items in his proposal for a draft (something less controversial and widely backed that summer) with the goal of enacting some concrete form of emancipation, however limited.¹²⁴ When the Militia Act became law on July 17, reaction among white New Yorkers indicated how a year of war had changed some attitudes while reinforcing others. As late as July 10, the Republican *Times* had spoken for many when it supported black military labor as part of the movement to “adopt any and every means to put down the rebellion” but added: “We believe

¹²¹ Edward K. Wightman to “Dear Mother and Sisters,” September 1, 1862, in Wightman, *From Antietam to Fort Fisher: The Civil War Letters of Edward King Wightman, 1862-1865*, ed. Edward J. Longacre (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985), 23-24; Wightman to “Dear Brother,” September 12, 1862, and same to same, January 3, 1863, in *ibid.*, 26, 97, 99.

¹²² Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 36-37.

¹²³ On class tensions and discipline in the army, particularly between officers and enlisted men, see Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Manhood, Honor, and Violence in the Union Army* (New York: New York University Press, 2010).

¹²⁴ Geary, *We Need Men*, 22-23, 28-30.

that, just now, it would be better to employ them in this work than to use them as soldiers, for which plenty of far more efficient men can be found.”¹²⁵ The qualifier “just now” indicated willingness on the part of editor Henry Raymond and his paper to change tack on African American enlistment should Union fortunes and white volunteering continue to falter. Especially strident abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, on the other hand, deplored the Militia Act for only addressing slaves in the Confederacy and offering no provision for northern black enlistment.¹²⁶

The tide of public opinion was shifting, and war supporters increasingly called for black freedom and service as logical and potentially war-winning weapons in the Union’s arsenal. People had tired of the government playing at war, noted the *Evening Post* in the same issue containing Gibbons’s poem and coverage of the Union Square rally, and demanded an attack on the bondage system buttressing the Confederacy.¹²⁷ A Western New York soldier writing to his hometown paper eagerly espoused black enlistment, saying he preferred their company in the army to that of his white friends and predicting they would make better soldiers when stationed in the South.¹²⁸ An array of white New York City residents prepared a petition for Lincoln that spoke of “thousands of colored persons in the State of New York, whose attachment to the cause of the Union is as great as our own, and who are anxiously awaiting an opportunity to serve their country on the battle field [sic],” and asked Lincoln to allow Governor Morgan to form black regiments. (The petition took the form of a twenty-five-foot scroll containing eight hundred

¹²⁵ *New York Times*, July 10, 1862.

¹²⁶ Douglas R. Egerton, *Thunder at the Gates: The Black Civil War Regiments that Redeemed America* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 52-53.

¹²⁷ *New York Evening Post*, July 16, 1862

¹²⁸ Anonymous 49th New York soldier to editors of *Fredonia Censor*, July 30, 1862, in Garland, *Civil War Letters, 1861-1865, Copied from the Fredonia Censor*, 517-521. See also Daniel M. Holt to “My dear Wife,” November 20, 1862, in Daniel M. Holt, *A Surgeon’s Civil War: The Letters and Diary of Daniel M. Holt, M. D.*, ed. James M. Greiner, Janet L. Coryell, and James R. Smither (Kent, OH, and London: Kent State University Press, 1994), 47.

signatures, but unaccountably was never sent.)¹²⁹ Morgan himself received several requests to grant commissions to white men for raising such forces.¹³⁰ On August 10, even the Democratic New York *Sunday Mercury*—a favorite journal with soldiers but no friend to Lincoln’s government—approvingly quoted the *Anglo-African*’s call for blacks to serve the Union and added: “The darkeys are ready—let Old Abe sound the bugle.”¹³¹

Other Democrats and their newspapers vehemently opposed these suggestions, however.¹³² On August 13, the widely influential *Herald* expressed shock at a Union general’s proposal to recruit slaves in Louisiana, calling it “an act of barbarism” and “a suicidal policy” dreamed up by abolitionists desiring a slave insurrection. “It is a libel on the white race of the North, numbering two to one of the inhabitants of the Southern States ...” the *Herald* opined, “to say they cannot put down the rebellion without arming the slaves against their masters’ wives and children ...”¹³³ Such objections merely previewed the uproar that greeted news of Lincoln’s Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22. Nothing except the draft so outraged conservative Democrats like this announcement that slaves in rebellious states would be free on January 1, 1863—despite the document making no mention of black military service, which would only be authorized by the final proclamation issued that day.¹³⁴ On September 24, the president suspended habeas corpus and sanctioned a crackdown on disloyalty, defined to include

¹²⁹ “Petition to Abraham Lincoln for Recruitment of Black Troops,” N-YHS Manuscript Collection. The petition is profiled in Harold Holzer and the New-York Historical Society, *The Civil War in 50 Objects* (New York: Viking, 2013). I am grateful to collections librarian Tammy Kiter of the New York-Historical Society for alerting me to the original document.

¹³⁰ See for instance W. S. Miller to Morgan, August 7, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹³¹ *New York Sunday Mercury*, August 10, 1862, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 114-115.

¹³² Geary, *We Need Men*, 33-34; Egerton, *Thunder at the Gates*, 59-60.

¹³³ *New York Herald*, August 13, 1862.

¹³⁴ Weber, *Copperheads*, 66; Abraham Lincoln, “Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation,” in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 5: 433-436; Lincoln, “Emancipation Proclamation,” in *ibid.*, 6: 28-30.

opposition to volunteering and conscription.¹³⁵ Republican and Democratic daily newspapers in Rochester had held a truce since July, but from late September on, they became more bitterly partisan than ever.¹³⁶ New York's Peace and War Democrats begrudgingly reunited and would help turn the fall elections into an acrimonious referendum on Lincoln's policies and the war's progress. The Copperheads, incensed by emancipation and draft proposals, had emerged as a potent force under gubernatorial candidate Horatio Seymour.¹³⁷ The spirit of cooperation in the cause that Republicans and Democrats had fostered that summer was falling apart, and this would have ill effects for Lincoln and Morgan's party in November. Battles over black freedom and service that deepened divisions in the North were inextricably linked to issues of mobilization and commitment to the war effort.

The question of African American participation was not the only factor that made mobilization a diverse and controversial affair. During the four years of the war, some eight hundred thousand immigrants came to the United States; of these, over 180,000 served in the military alongside many more who had immigrated previously.¹³⁸ The great contribution of foreign-born Americans to the northern war effort is well known, but historians differ on immigrants' motives, the extent of their involvement, and whether it helped them assimilate into larger American society. A growing band of transnational historians have shown that the Civil War must be placed in the context of the revolutions of 1848 and other examples of "a bloody worldwide process that existed outside the control of historical actors in any one nation," as Patrick J. Kelly notes. Bruce Levine anticipated this school of thought in a study of German-

¹³⁵ Geary, *We Need Men*, 40; Weber, *Copperheads*, 65; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 47.

¹³⁶ Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 33-34.

¹³⁷ Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 34, 36; Weber, *Copperheads*, 56, 66.

¹³⁸ Paludan, *A People's Contest*, 284; Dean B. Mahin, *The Blessed Place of Freedom: Europeans in Civil War America* (Washington: Brassey's, 2002), 51-58.

American craft workers and their injection of “the spirit of 1848” into northern white labor’s opposition to the expansion of slavery.¹³⁹ Thomas Bender took a broader view in explaining how, far from being exceptional, the American Civil War was part and parcel of a global movement toward nationalism and centralized, liberal government. Andre Fleche pushed this point by averring that the “fight over the future of republican government in America can also be seen as a fight over the legacy of 1848 and the meaning of nationalism and revolution in the Atlantic world.”¹⁴⁰ Transnational historians provide more explanations for how America descended into conflict and emerged, arguably, a stronger nation.

Evidence from the Union’s most diverse state complicates the story of immigrant participation in the conflict. Historian Don H. Doyle has partly resurrected old assumptions that immigrant soldiers in the Union military were motivated primarily by loyalty to their adopted nation and that their service did much to break down nativist prejudice.¹⁴¹ Other scholars’ findings and conditions in wartime New York weaken these notions. Doyle does not argue such, but it should be noted that immigrants did not universally welcome the chance to fight for their new country, including many of those who supported the Union cause; German males, in fact, commonly left their homeland to avoid service and to secure the freedom and financial reward that America offered—opportunities that might be jeopardized by enlistment. Among Irish and

¹³⁹ Patrick J. Kelly, “The European Revolutions of 1848 and the Transnational Turn in Civil War History,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4 (2014): 431-443; Bruce Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America’s Place in World History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006); Andre Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 3 (quote).

¹⁴¹ Don H. Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 165, 170. For findings similar to Doyle’s, see Paludan, “*A People’s Contest*,” 284; Mahin, *The Blessed Place of Freedom*, 10; Dunkelman, *Brothers One and All*, 23-24.

Germans alike (along with the native-born), some were motivated to enlist out of patriotism, some for pay; many did not enlist at all.¹⁴²

In the first full year of the war, New Yorkers drew inspiration from the wonderful commitment of Germans, Irish, French, Scots, and other immigrant communities.¹⁴³ Immigrants had been heavily represented in New York's military forces since the colonial era, and the regular army and navy nearly resembled foreign legions despite regulations such as the army's prohibition on non-English-speaking recruits.¹⁴⁴ Neighborhoods of the foreign-born and their children embraced the associational culture that so profoundly shaped nineteenth-century life and public responses to war. In churches, beer halls, and meeting rooms across New York, German-Americans in all their diversity cultivated a wide variety of groups, or *vereine*, that included unions, shooting and singing clubs, debate societies, fire and militia companies, and, most importantly, the Turner societies promoting what one historian calls "muscular republicanism."¹⁴⁵ As with associations formed of the native-born and others, this culture bonded nationalities and ethnicities; additionally, exclusive associations brought their members into American society while simultaneously building walls. New York's German speakers seemed united by a common language and nothing else; other historians, however, demonstrate

¹⁴² Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 26-28, 44-46; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 60, 199-200. In the case of Germans, Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 7, also find that Republicans enlisted more readily than Democrats, and Protestants more often than Catholics.

¹⁴³ *New York Herald*, April 19, 1861; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 19, 1861; "31st Regiment New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/31stInf/31stInfCWN.htm>, and "29th New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/29thInf/29thInfCWN.htm>, both *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center* (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹⁴⁴ William B. Skelton, "The Confederation's Regulars: A Social Profile of Enlisted Service in America's First Standing Army," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 46 (1989), 777; Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 114-115; Reese, *Sykes' Regular Infantry Division*, 14-15; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 32; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 10, 1861.

¹⁴⁵ Honeck, "Men of Principle," 41, 42, 43 (quote); Lorezkowski, *Sounds of Ethnicity*, 15; Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 91-94; Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 244.

that German-Americans could unite when they wished.¹⁴⁶ Evidence indicates that Germans marched to war under Franz Sigel, Carl Schurz, and other icons of the Forty-Eighter movement in part to gain political capital and to assimilate themselves into a German-American identity supportive of liberty and other democratic values.¹⁴⁷

Cultural ties, associational culture, and language barriers prompted the formation of several regiments that were wholly or largely Teutonic, and two historians of German service in the war posit that “the German regiments were little more than an extension of traditional German associations and clubs, adapted to the war situation.”¹⁴⁸ Five days after the outbreak of war, the president of New York City’s Turner Society called upon his fellow members to enlist for the Union; this resulted in a meeting where two hundred Turners promised to form a regiment and a committee of five got the unit underway. Subscriptions and support from the Turner Sisters helped complete the project, which also brought in Turners from Brooklyn, Albany, and other localities. The resulting regiment, the Twentieth New York or United Turner Rifles, failed to secure Sigel as colonel (he was busy recruiting in St. Louis) but mustered in that May as one of the state’s two-year regiments.¹⁴⁹ When their muster-out time approached two years later and the government seemed about to renege on its promises to the regiment, the men of the United

¹⁴⁶ Nadel, *Little Germany*, 109, 110-111, 112, 113, 158-160; Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism*, 163-164, 166-167; Honeck, “Men of Principle,” 42.

¹⁴⁷ Stephen D. Engle, “A Raised Consciousness: Franz Sigel and German Ethnic Identity in the Civil War,” *Yearbook of German American Studies* 34 (1999): 1-18; Engle, *Yankee Dutchman: The Life of Franz Sigel* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1993), 46-47; Hans L. Trefousse, *Carl Schurz: A Biography* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 104. For more on immigrant conceptions of citizenship during the war, see also Alison Clark Efford, *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Christian G. Samito, *Becoming American under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship during the Civil War Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁸ Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 20 (quote), 22-23.

¹⁴⁹ *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 145-148; *Albany Evening Journal*, April 18, April 21, 1861; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 20, 1861; “20th Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/20thInf/20thInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

Turner Rifles would mutiny, receiving encouragement from home-front *vereine*.¹⁵⁰ The Forty-First or De Kalb Regiment—one of several named for Teutonic heroes of the American Revolution—departed the city in July 1861 escorted by the New York Liederkrantz and other German-American societies.¹⁵¹ Eventually over two hundred thousand German-Americans served in the Union forces.¹⁵²

The second-largest group of foreign-born volunteers, Irish-Americans, also flocked to the colors in 1861 through the influence of community leaders and associations. Seeing service as a chance to improve their economic condition, weaken native-born hostility, and drub Britain (whose leaders often supported the Confederacy), Irish New Yorkers followed their hero Michael Corcoran into the ranks of the Sixty-Ninth Militia and other regiments. Corcoran encouraged the formation of wholly Irish units in order to raise the profile of their service to the Union.¹⁵³ In September 1861, Morgan accepted an offer from Irish expatriate and Sixty-Ninth veteran Thomas F. Meagher to raise a full brigade of his countrymen in thirty days; the Irish Brigade would go on to forge a legendary reputation and suffer higher losses than any other brigade.¹⁵⁴ The exclusive ethnic character of many urban regiments like the Forty-First, the Sixty-Ninth, and the Seventy-Ninth often declined as they suffered heavy casualties and received replacements from varied backgrounds. Within one year of mustering in, the Seventy-Ninth—a

¹⁵⁰ Thaddeus Romansky, “‘This Large Class of Our Soldiers’: Self-Government, *Deutschtum*, and German-American Associationalism in the Mutiny of the 20th New York Infantry Regiment,” *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 49 (2014): 115-140.

¹⁵¹ “41st Regiment, New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/41stInf/41stInfCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016).

¹⁵² Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 20.

¹⁵³ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 52, 60, 66.

¹⁵⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 497. See David P. Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and its Campaigns: With Some Account of the Corcoran Legion, and Sketches of the Principal Officers* (New York: William McSorley, 1867); Paul R. Wylie, *The Irish General: Thomas Francis Meagher* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

famously Scottish command called the Highland Guard—began receiving Irish, Canadians, Germans, English, Swiss, and Italians alongside Scots.¹⁵⁵

The rhetoric and actions of native-born Americans toward their immigrant neighbors in the war's first year almost give the impression that nativism was extinct. Recognizing immigrant communities as valuable allies in the war effort, especially since many foreign-born men had military experience, influential northerners enthusiastically encouraged their participation.¹⁵⁶ Corcoran, as colonel of the Sixty-Ninth, had been arrested in 1860 for refusing to parade his regiment in honor of the visiting Prince of Wales, an incident that exacerbated ethnic tensions already strained by Irish Democrats' sympathies for the South. As New York geared up for war the following April, all seemed forgiven, and Morgan ordered the charges against Corcoran dropped. The colonel immediately began recruiting his command up to war strength and received over six thousand applicants within days even though he discouraged enlistment of Fenians. The Sixty-Ninth left for Virginia escorted by two thousand members of Irish societies.¹⁵⁷

The federal and state governments received a surge of offers from the foreign-born to raise and command troops, favoring any that promised to bring much-valued experience and volunteers to the cause.¹⁵⁸ Secretary of State Seward took a special interest in encouraging immigrant involvement, sponsoring a German-American regiment called the Seward Infantry and recommending to Morgan and Cameron that they appoint a Prussian prince and several other

¹⁵⁵ 79th New York Regimental Descriptive, Letter, and Order Book, RG 94, NARA-DC.

¹⁵⁶ See, for instance, *Buffalo Daily Republic*, April 26, 1861.

¹⁵⁷ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 43-51, 58, 62; William Burton, *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 10-11, 17; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Military Record*, 305.

¹⁵⁸ See for instance Lincoln to Carl Schurz, n.d., and Lincoln to Cameron, May 20, 1861, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4: 368, 374; Benjamin F. Angell to Morgan, May 12, reel 31, Benjamin P. Johnson to Morgan, November 22, box 6, and George Opdyke to Morgan, June 20, box 10, all 1861, EDM Papers, NYSL; John Ewen to Morgan, May 15, 1861, box 1, Military Officers Correspondence, Records of the State Adjutant General's Office, NYSA.

distinguished foreigners who offered to help secure troops.¹⁵⁹ (Seward even motivated Cameron to act by warning that foreign military professionals would go over to the enemy if the Union did not hire them.)¹⁶⁰ In 1861, when immigration flagged in response to the war's outbreak, there was a minor push to encourage migrants from Europe and therefore offset the loss of agrarian and industrial workers who enlisted.¹⁶¹ The Secretary of State would go further in August 1862 by using the Homestead Act to entice foreign recruits, an example of the exploitation and controversy characterizing immigrant and native-born relations throughout the war.¹⁶² Inquiries by the British Parliament into American targeting of the Irish began in the war's first year and did nothing to relieve tensions between Britain and the United States.¹⁶³ Nor were Irish the only immigrants ensnared. "As soon as you set foot in the country," said a native of Schwerin who arrived in New York City in July 1861, "the recruiters come at you from all sides. Since I didn't know the slightest thing about American recruiting tricks, I did the same thing as so many others;" he enlisted into a regiment of "Americans and Irishmen" where he felt unwelcome. Within a few months, he deserted and joined a German-American artillery battery.¹⁶⁴

This volunteer's story exemplifies the complications undergirding immigrant roles in the war. The onset of war weariness after the Bull Run disaster affected immigrant communities just as it did others. Meagher quickly organized a new Sixty-Ninth for his Irish Brigade that fall, but the brigade's two other regiments took much longer to fill. In Rochester, Father Daniel Moore of

¹⁵⁹ Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations*, 158, 161-162, 176; Seward to Morgan, September 13, 1861 and February 20, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 729; Henry Sand to "My Dear Father," December 25, 1861, in Sand, *Crossing Antietam*, 28, 40-41.

¹⁶⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 729.

¹⁶¹ Cohn, *Mass Migration under Sail*, 88; F. A. Benjamin to UDC, n.d., UDC Records, Ebscohost; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 359. See also John Charles Bodger, "The Immigrant Press and the Union Army" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1951), 62-88.

¹⁶² Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations*, 177-179.

¹⁶³ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 197.

¹⁶⁴ Wilhelm Albrecht quoted in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 103.

St. Mary's Church and other leading citizens attempted to create their own Irish brigade but could enlist only three companies.¹⁶⁵ Such difficulties may have resulted from ethnic divisions, which did not disappear but arguably swelled under the stresses of mobilization. On July 19, 1861, the War Department directed: "In the future no volunteer will be mustered into the service who is unable to speak the English language." The extensive immigrant press across the North, particularly that representing German-Americans, led an immediate fight against an order they perceived as motivated by nativist prejudice. The War Department repealed the directive on August 7 but counseled prospective recruits to "enlist under officers whose language they speak and understand."¹⁶⁶ The next February, however, the Adjutant General turned down Meagher's request that all Irish regiments be brought together under his command, fearing that it would undermine unity in the army.¹⁶⁷ Whatever unity existed between nationalities was already weak. An officer in New York's Lincoln Cavalry testified that German and native-born men in the regiment had their own officers by agreement and recruited separately in the summer of 1861 due to the "bad feeling between us." Relations between German and Austrian-born officers in another New York cavalry command were similarly bitter.¹⁶⁸ Two German historians conclude that "in the Union army general fraternization across ethnic lines simply did not happen." Scholars of the German and Irish-American experience in the war have demonstrated that nativist contempt increased as the conflict went on, prompted by growing Irish opposition to recruitment and rumors of German cowardice in battle.¹⁶⁹ However, it is clear that the roughly

¹⁶⁵ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 87-88; Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 22.

¹⁶⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 339, 391 (quotes); Engle, "A Raised Consciousness," 11.

¹⁶⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 895.

¹⁶⁸ Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 72-73 (quote), 79, 81, 102, 111.

¹⁶⁹ Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 30-33 (quote p. 32); Dale T. Knobel, *Paddy and the Republic: Ethnicity and Nationality in Antebellum America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), 171-172. See also Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*; Christian B. Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007). Jordan Ross analyzes Union

half-million men of foreign birth who fought for the Union contributed vitally to the war effort and helped make it “an international struggle,” as Doyle notes.¹⁷⁰

Among the masses of New Yorkers who answered their country’s call in the second half of 1862, immigrants figured prominently. Once again, foreign officers applying for commands found audiences in Albany and Washington, while dozens of ethnically themed regiments formed. From New York City, Mayor Opdyke informed Morgan that the cousin of Italian patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi wished to raise a regiment; the power of the Garibaldi name might bring forth many immigrants who would not otherwise volunteer. (Nothing, however, came of this offer.)¹⁷¹ Opdyke also alerted Albany officials to what may have been the most outlandish plan of all. In early December, the suitably named General De La Guerra proposed to bring ten thousand Cuban ex-soldiers to New York City disguised as immigrants; there, they could be turned over as recruits to fill the city’s quota. De la Guerra’s reward was to be a generalship and a bounty for supplying each man. The state judge advocate general rejected the offer as improper and potentially disastrous.¹⁷² The War Department, wary of scandals like that over Canadian recruitment, turned down a similar plan involving Swedes coming to New York.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, tens of thousands of the foreign-born helped to meet state and local quotas. While the Union benefited substantially from their commitment, inefficiency and ethnic tensions swelled thanks to prejudice and simple cultural differences.¹⁷⁴ Most immigrant soldiers did not serve in exclusively

soldiers’ keen sense of their army’s diversity in Ross, “Uncommon Union: Diversity and Motivation among Civil War Soldiers,” *American Nineteenth Century History* 3 (2002): 17-44.

¹⁷⁰ Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations*, 160.

¹⁷¹ George Opdyke to Morgan, July 31, 1862, box 9, EDM Papers, NYSL. See also C. A. Arthur to “Dear Major,” November 7, 1862, box 1, *ibid.*, for a similar offer.

¹⁷² George Opdyke to William Henry Anthon, December 3, 1862, box 10, and Anthon to Morgan, December 4, 1862, box 1, *ibid.*

¹⁷³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 657-658.

¹⁷⁴ See for instance Dodge, *On Campaign with the Army of the Potomac*, 96.

foreign-born or ethnic regiments, but they drew attention—much of it increasingly and unfairly negative—wherever they went.

From the war's beginning, Irish-Americans had enjoyed a high profile as warriors for the Union cause. By mid-1862, however, their attitudes toward the war and military service were souring, which in turn threatened to exacerbate native hostility. On July 25, General Meagher gave a characteristically passionate speech in New York City to raise replacements for his battered Irish Brigade. Listeners reportedly were moved, but few volunteered. Slackening Irish enlistment rates had begun earlier in the Midwest and now appeared in the nation's largest Irish-American community.¹⁷⁵ Several factors were at play. Irish soldiers' complaints in letters home discouraged further recruitment in their neighborhoods, as did Democratic opposition, according to Meagher and Daniel Sickles. An improved economy meant that fewer men of all backgrounds sought army employment. Most troublesome of all for Meagher particularly was Corcoran's return from enemy captivity and his determination to raise a new brigade of his countrymen. With messages of Irish and American patriotism—messages enjoying excellent press and attention from the city's recruiting committees—Corcoran's Irish Legion drew off over two thousand fresh volunteers who could have been put to better use in Meagher's veteran brigade.¹⁷⁶ But most Irish-American men refused to enlist in any command. Colonel Silas W. Burt, Morgan's Assistant Inspector General, toured the mountainous mining country of Essex County in August and warned the governor that "scarcely a single Irishman, citizen or alien, has been enlisted since July 1st ... in spite of every inducement and appliance." Burt explained that

¹⁷⁵ Wylie, *The Irish General*, 158-161; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 103-106. The *Brooklyn Evening Star* of July 26 portrayed Meagher's rally in a positive light, failing to note the small number of recruits secured.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 106-107, 108, 110-112. Corcoran's brigade also labored under recruiting difficulties, however. See John L. Garland, "Michael Corcoran and the Formation of His Irish Legion," *Irish Sword* 17 (1987): 26-40; Kathleen Cochrane Kean, "George Tipping, the Corcoran Irish Legion, and the Civil War," *Niagara Frontier* 27 (1977), 54-55.

“powerful” voices discouraged Irish volunteering with a variety of arguments, including threats of looming economic competition with freed slaves. That nearly all local Irishmen should be so influenced at a time when other immigrants enlisted in great numbers was “mysterious and alarming.” What was more, the Irish miners were said to be threatening violent opposition to conscription. All the signs pointed to a secret, organized opposition movement, Burt believed.¹⁷⁷ Events in the following months raised Irish opposition to the war to an unprecedented level, particularly the release of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, McClellan’s removal from command of the Army of the Potomac, what they perceived as unfair targeting of Irish in state drafts, and a bloody Union defeat in the Battle of Fredericksburg. Irish-Americans traced most of their people’s wartime woes back to mobilization and emancipation; their understanding of the connection between these movements was seen when an Irish mob attacked the home of James Sloan Gibbons, noted abolitionist and author of “Three Hundred Thousand More.”¹⁷⁸

The outrage and opposition to recruitment exhibited by many New York Irish in 1862 was a highly visible instance of a nationwide movement among Democratic sympathizers. But the Irish were no more a monolithic bloc than any other people, as the success of Corcoran’s Legion showed. German-Americans also voiced exasperation at the lack of progress in the war while continuing to send forth volunteers.¹⁷⁹ The determined, widespread response to Lincoln and Morgan’s calls showed that the spirit of 1861 survived—albeit in modified form—among immigrants and the native-born alike. As a new regiment organized in Buffalo in September 1862, a German-born member marveled at the great extent of support for the cause and how the

¹⁷⁷ Silas W. Burt to Morgan, August 21, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷⁸ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 112, 121, 137, 143-149.

¹⁷⁹ Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 26.

city's elite families cared for the men of his unit. He resolved to fight for America out of gratitude for taking him in.¹⁸⁰

Ironically, given the Union's eagerness to employ new Americans in the war effort, descendants of the first Americans received little encouragement until mid-1862. In this era, American Indian nations in New York were shadows of what they had once been. After long years of exploitation and epidemics, New York's recognized nations survived on far-flung reservations across the state. Amid the population boom of the mid-century years, New York Indians barely grew in numbers at all, while disease, land loss to railroads, and outward movement continued to exact heavy tolls.¹⁸¹ Some, particularly Oneidas and Mohawks, migrated in search of economic opportunity, while others eked out precarious lives on small patches of farmland. Men from Long Island's Shinnecock Reservation went to sea as whalers.¹⁸² Members of the once-powerful Six Nations of the Iroquois exemplified the unsure position of New York's native population in the sectional crisis of 1860 and 1861. Continually beset by land loss, isolated from larger society, denied citizenship (a status most did not desire anyway), and unaffected by slavery or secession, Iroquois nevertheless followed national events keenly. The breakup of the Union seemed to leave the future of federal and state Indian agencies in doubt; moreover, some Six Nations people considered themselves patriotic Americans and allies of the Great Father in Washington, their protector against rapacious New York officials and land magnates. Young Iroquois men, motivated by warrior traditions, expressed the same eagerness to enlist as did Indians (and people of other races, for that matter) throughout the northern states.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Albert Krause to "Most dearly beloved parents," September 11, 1862, in *ibid.*, 197-198.

¹⁸¹ Laurence M. Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War: From Battlefield to Reservation* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 11-13, 117.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 140; Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, 601-602.

¹⁸³ Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 5, 12-15, 16, 108, 145; Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army: The Civil War Letters of Sergeant Isaac Newton Parker 1861-1865* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing, 1997), 31-33. On the Iroquois in the nineteenth century, see also Hauptman, *Conspiracy of Interests:*

In the war's first year, white prejudice stalled New York Indians' willingness to serve the Union. Within days of the war's outbreak, Chippewas nominated one of their chiefs, George Copway, to go to Washington and offer the services of 250 Chippewa volunteers. Copway received an endorsement from Hiram Barney, Collector of the Port of New York and the most powerful patronage holder in the state.¹⁸⁴ In an action matched by communities of all ethnicities, residents of the Cattaraugus Reservation organized a war meeting on April 18 and, in the words of a newspaper, "resolved themselves ready to raise a full regiment to defend our flag and our country." The next month, the Union Defense Committee heard a proposal to recruit Indians.¹⁸⁵ But Secretary of War Cameron curtly rejected enlistment of "savages," and Indian recruitment received no better encouragement in Albany.¹⁸⁶ Those who enlisted received prompt discharges; according to a frustrated Isaac Newton Parker, an Iroquois of the Seneca Nation and brother to Sachem Ely S. Parker, mustering officers "could not accept *me* because there is no regulation, that is no law for accepting the 'red man'" in the military.¹⁸⁷ Prohibitions on Indian service were not so strictly enforced outside New York. After seeing regiments from other states with Indians in the ranks pass near their Western New York reservation—and despite a highly discouraging December 23 order from New York's Adjutant General forbidding the practice—the Parkers and other leading Senecas persisted in efforts to recruit Indians. Their relentless campaign gathered support from prominent whites, and in April 1862 the War Department finally authorized

Iroquois Dispossession and the Rise of New York State (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), and Hauptman, *Seven Generations of Iroquois Leadership: The Six Nations since 1800* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008).

¹⁸⁴ George Copway to John A. Dix, April 27, 1861, and Hiram Barney to John E. Wool, same date, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁸⁵ *Ithaca Journal*, May 8, 1861 (quote); Minutes of General Committee, 2: 33-34, UDC Records, Ebscohost.

¹⁸⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 1, 140, 184 (quote); Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 16-17.

¹⁸⁷ C. C. Jemison to Isaac N. Parker, August 5, 1862, Miscellaneous Civil War Papers, NYSL; Newt Parker to "Affectionate Dear," October 9, 1861, Ely S. Parker Correspondence, Buffalo History Museum (quote). See also Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army*, for a published edition of Parker's letters.

acceptance of up to three hundred Native volunteers in Buffalo.¹⁸⁸ Yet this did not end the saga, as the government soon went back on its word and Seneca recruitment was further set back by infighting of the sort that plagued white officials as well.¹⁸⁹

Not until the call for “three hundred thousand more” in July 1862 did the Parkers and other New York Indians finally get a real chance to fight for the Union. From that point on, Indian volunteers increasingly saw the same exploitation as men of other ethnicities, possibly worsened by Indians’ poverty and vulnerability. The recruiting committee for Buffalo’s senatorial district convinced Seneca community leader Chauncey C. Jemison to attach his “Indian Company” to their regiment. But Jemison soon learned that a “*Tuscarora rascal*,” a chief named Cornelius C. Cusick, had colluded with whites to have Jemison’s men mustered in under his name and thus gain a commission. These twenty-five Native soldiers were joined by Parker as sergeant and integrated into a company of German-Americans from Brooklyn. Jemison, angered by this scheming and integration, asked Parker, “When will we Indians cease to be tools for these white devils?” and determined to recruit another company of his people.¹⁹⁰ Despite its inauspicious beginning, Cusick’s “Tuscarora Company” distinguished itself in the field and enjoyed unusually harmonious relations with white comrades.¹⁹¹ As recruiters continued exploiting Indians and families suffered at home, Native communities would call for the discharge and return of their men at the front.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 16-19; Parker to “My Dear Wife,” November 12, and Parker to “My Beloved Dear,” December 28, 1861, in Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army*, 49, 55; John Fisk to Ely S. Parker, April 4, 1862, Parker Correspondence, Buffalo History Museum.

¹⁸⁹ Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 165-168; Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army*, 28-30.

¹⁹⁰ Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army*, 28-30, 57-58; Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 11-12; C. C. Jemison to Isaac N. Parker, August 5, 1862, Miscellaneous Civil War Papers, NYSL (quote).

¹⁹¹ Hauptman, ed., *A Seneca Indian in the Union Army*, 29-30; Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 11-12, 23.

¹⁹² Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 108-109, 145, 147-148

By late November, loosening of restrictions and standards, along with patriotism, bounties, and draft wariness, had helped New York raise over 86,000 troops toward its summer quotas.¹⁹³ As the year ended, Morgan prepared to turn the governorship over to Horatio Seymour, whose tensions with the Lincoln administration promised to inject new complications into mobilization. The considerable achievements of Morgan and his military staff in the war's first two years could not have occurred without the support and sacrifice of New Yorkers of all classes, who understood keenly that the Union's survival rested on raising large forces with greater efficiency than seen in the heady days after Fort Sumter. Volunteering had fallen short despite the numbers secured, however, and New Yorkers finally faced long-feared conscription.

¹⁹³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 881.

CHAPTER FIVE

“THE MEN WILL DO ANYTHING RATHER THAN GO TO WAR”:

CONSCRIPTION AND EVOLVING WARTIME COMMITMENT

In June 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia, recently triumphant at Chancellorsville, crossed the border into Maryland. Northern officers and politicians sent frantic messages across the Northeast calling for troops to counter the raid. At Camp Sprague outside Rochester, New York, Colonel William B. Barnes had spent six months raising men for his new regiment, the Eleventh New York Heavy Artillery, with promises of easy and safe duty in the forts guarding New York Harbor. On the night of June 15, however, State Adjutant General John T. Sprague sent the ambitious officer an unexpected telegram: “Colonel Barnes will have his regiment mustered at once; will proceed immediately to Harrisburg, Pa., and await orders.”¹ This stunning order, combined with poor discipline in camp, caused the outraged men of the Eleventh to mutiny. Only with great difficulty did Barnes and his officers assemble their men and leave for the front.² In Pennsylvania, the Eleventh mutinied again when ordered to face the enemy, earning a poor reputation for themselves and their commander.³ “The experience with the 11th artillery should serve as a warning against future deception in recruiting men,” a Rochester newspaper noted. “The insubordination of that regiment did not arise directly from the fact that it was sent to ‘defend the State of Pennsylvania from invasion,’ but from the promises made its members

¹ Quoted in Hyland C. Kirk, *Heavy Guns and Light: A History of the 4th N.Y. Heavy Artillery* (New York: C.T. Dillingham, 1890), 92.

² *Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser*, June 22; *Rochester Daily Democrat and American*, June 23; *Rochester Evening Express*, June 25; all 1863.

³ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 27, pt. 3, 476; Seward F. Gould to mother, July 1, 1863, Seward F. Gould Letters, Gould Family Papers, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester; William H. Martin to unknown recipient, n.d., William H. Martin Letters, Papers of the 126th Regiment, New York Volunteers, Ontario County Historical Society Museum and Research Center. Although his letters are filed in a collection of 126th New York material, Miller served in the 11th Heavy Artillery.

that they were to be employed exclusively in garrisoning forts and upon no other duty.”⁴ The unfortunate story of Barnes and his regiment played out during the advent of federal conscription, a time when self-interest overtook sacrifice in northern rhetoric. This philosophy embraced, according to historian Joan E. Cashin, “beliefs more durable than the appeal of public duty,” including family loyalty and “the self.”⁵ Thanks to its widespread unpopularity, federal draft legislation succeeded by encouraging volunteering. In 1863, Union supporters largely gave up on trying to make the war effort a total commitment. New Yorkers, from Governor Horatio Seymour down to privates reluctantly shouldering muskets in the Eleventh, participated in a culture of reckless promises and uneven results, designed to spare the state and its communities from a feared draft and forced service.

It is frequently noted that the Enrollment Act of March 1863 instituted America’s first national draft, but precedence had existed at the state level for many years. Compulsory service had deep roots in New York and elsewhere.⁶ In the late seventeenth century, laws in the colony required militia service by males age fifteen to sixty and storage of arms and ammunition in houses, but also provided for substitution. Militia and volunteer laws were frequently revised in times of emergency, especially quotas, lengths of service (never more than one year for volunteers), and taxes for meeting expenses. In 1701, New York officials doubled down on compulsory militia duty in the wake of widespread evasion.⁷ The pressures of the Revolutionary War prompted large-scale conscription in several of the newly formed states, including New York, which enacted a law drafting every fifteenth militiaman for nine months’ duty in the

⁴ “11th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/11thArtHvy/11thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed April 20, 2012).

⁵ Joan E. Cashin, “Deserters, Civilians, and Draft Resistance in the North,” in Cashin, ed., *The War Was You and Me*, 279 (quote).

⁶ Jackson and Vollmer, *Backgrounds of Selective Service*, 1: 32, 47-49.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pt. 9, 2-3, 4, 5, 10, 13-20, 21, 25, 31, 38, 44-45, 60.

Continental Army and made further drafts for state defense. Those exempt from service, such as Quakers, must contribute to military expenses, and each class of militiamen had to furnish a soldier or face a fine. A host of related legislation provided for bounties and substitution and permitted militia courts martial to sentence deserters to Continental service.⁸ Throughout the long, wearying years of the struggle for independence, privileged men in New York and elsewhere increasingly avoided service by paying fines or providing substitutes, while communities sometimes resorted to illegal methods in compelling others to join the Continentals.⁹ Incentives also grew as the volunteering rate declined; a 1782 New York law granted six hundred acres of land for every militia class providing a man for three years' Continental service and 350 acres for a two-year recruit. While European powers had come to depend on regular armies, Americans continued to rely on short-term citizen soldiers raised largely through the states. In the last year of the war, New York passed an act limiting the governor's power to call up the state militia to six hundred men for no longer than eight months.¹⁰ As the Old World tore itself apart in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and several nations instituted severe conscription, the United States remained a bastion of federalism where the principle of universal service continued its slide into archaism.¹¹ As we have seen, the militia acts of 1792 and 1795 and the experience of the War of 1812 only reinforced reliance on volunteer state forces over regular national forces or obligatory service.

⁸ Ibid., vol. 2, pt. 9, 263, 266, 269, 271, 289-290, 292, 295. See also Arthur J. Alexander, "Exemptions from Militia Service in New York State during the Revolutionary War," *New York History* 27 (1946): 204-212.

⁹ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 37-38; Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), 392-393.

¹⁰ Jackson and Vollmer, *Backgrounds of Selective Service*, vol. 1: 55; *ibid.*, vol. 2: 303, 326. On early American conscription, see also Meyer Kestnbaum, "Citizenship and Compulsory Military Service: The Revolutionary Origins of Conscription in the United States," *Armed Forces & Society* 27 (2000): 7-36.

¹¹ Jackson and Vollmer, *Backgrounds of Selective Service*, 1: 19-20, 21, 58-59, 106-107, 113-115.

The special challenges of the vast war that broke out in 1861 inspired new consideration for drastic measures. Beginning that fall, politicians and editors made increasingly strident calls for conscription, and the State of Ohio started planning for a possible draft.¹² Even as Lincoln's administration led a new push for volunteers in the face of battlefield setbacks the following summer, drafting looked harder to avoid than ever. In early July 1862, Henry Wilson, as chair of the Senate Military Committee, introduced a bill in the Senate authorizing a national draft.¹³ Remarkably, this game-changing proposal was not the most controversial aspect of the bill. With Wilson's support, two senators, including Preston King of New York, suggested amendments providing for African American military service and freeing black service members and their families. These amendments, which reflected Wilson's original goal of emancipation, caused uproar and sustained debate in the halls of Congress. The emancipation portions of the act advanced the antislavery cause and indicated a path toward black service, in time a decisive weapon in the Union's favor.¹⁴ Another reason for the relative lack of controversy regarding the conscription portions of the bill (which Lincoln signed into law on July 17) was their limits: while the Militia Act authorized enrollment of military-age male citizens and gave the president power to call on state militias for up to nine months, it did not permit him to compel governors' cooperation.¹⁵ This law hearkened back to the centuries-old principle of universal military duty but echoed American (and, in the context of 1862, specifically northern) fears of the consequences of switching to conscription and centralized control.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the time was ripe in the summer of 1862 to adopt sterner measures than seen to date. Morgan and many other

¹² (*Delhi*) *Delaware Gazette*, July 17, 1861; Donald Fisher, "The Civil War Draft in Rochester: Part One," *Rochester History*, vol. 53, no. 1 (Winter 1991), 14; Geary, *We Need Men*, 187n41.

¹³ Geary, *We Need Men*, 8, 10, 12, 22, 32.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 23, 27, 28-29, 30-31.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 27-28, 30-31.

¹⁶ Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 233, 235-236.

influential New Yorkers supported federal provision for a draft, hoping it would not be needed.¹⁷ Seward “feared a draft might be found indispensable” but believed “we must first prove that it is so, by trying the old way.”¹⁸

The Militia Act made volunteering (“the old way”) attractive as a method for avoiding conscription. For the first time in the war, federally assigned quotas had teeth, since citizens would be motivated to fill quotas with volunteers rather than enforce a draft. In a year full of turning points, the North had reached yet another. War Department General Order 99 of August 9 laid out regulations for the looming draft in states that did not have their own conscription mechanisms, including appointment of commissioners and enrolling officials in each county, exemptions for certain federal employees, and allowing drafted men to send substitutes. Yet these draft orders—products of the Militia Act—adhered to custom as well, for they gave wide responsibility and latitude to the states. Governors and their staffs were enjoined to select draft officials who would conduct an enrollment of all their eligible citizens; Stanton’s department would also work with them in appointing provost marshals to enforce conscription, and states could determine their own standards for additional exemptions.¹⁹ With one foot planted in the future and one in the past, federal authorities counted on states and communities to continue shouldering the main burden of mobilization through the old tactics of appealing to patriotism, community spirit, and self-interest, now with the added wrinkle of threatened conscription. The Militia Act increased the scope of federal authority, but it was a reluctant, halting, limited development.²⁰

¹⁷ Geary, *We Need Men*, 10, 33; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 176-177; Marsh, “A History of Rochester’s Part in the Civil War,” 30; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, July 11, 1862.

¹⁸ Quoted in John Whiteclay Chambers II, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 47.

¹⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 333-335.

²⁰ Weber, *Copperheads*, 51, 53.

That summer, New Yorkers across the state regarded an impending draft with either dread or guarded optimism.²¹ “Everybody thinks that the Government will have to draft,” an Albany County woman wrote to her soldier husband in August. “The newspapers is all for drafting. If the drafting comes, there will be a great many go off to Canada. ... I tell you, the men will do anything rather than go to war.” She worried that her brothers would be drafted.²² This woman was far from alone in fearing conscription, and her prediction of widespread flight across the northern border was echoed by others in a position to know. Lincoln and Stanton both anticipated an exodus of military-eligible men to Canada or overseas. On August 8, the war secretary instituted strict regulation and detention for military-age male citizens wishing to leave their counties and states of residence—an order that had to be dropped due to a lack of authority to enforce it.²³ The Executive Committee of the Sanitary Commission exemplified public unease when it argued against the draft in a letter to Lincoln; conceding that all citizens were soldiers in theory, committee members nevertheless maintained that conscripting three hundred thousand unwilling men would not solve the army’s crippling attrition problem. Instead, they proposed the creation of a national militia, one million strong, to be called up as needed to fill gaps in old regiments.²⁴ This inspired if impractical plan failed to gain traction but anticipated in some ways the Selective Service program adopted fifty-five years later. At a September 8 meeting of the National War Committee of the Citizens of New York, John Austin Stevens, Jr., expressed wariness of the Pandora’s Box of draft enrollment. When another member proposed the committee advance the city funds to complete the local enrollment then underway, Stevens

²¹ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 209.

²² Ellie Goldwaite to “My Dear Husband,” August 7, 1862, in Skipper and Taylor, eds., *A Handful of Providence*, 143.

²³ *Watertown Daily News and Reformer*, August 12, 1862; Winks, *The Civil War Years*, 202; Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 246; Geary, *We Need Men*, 39.

²⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 297-300.

argued that promoting a draft was not the committee's mission; while he personally supported conscription, the National War Committee had been created to help secure enough volunteers to avoid it. The original motion was withdrawn.²⁵ But numerous Union supporters of all classes pushed for a draft, believing it would bring much-needed forces into the field and deal the rebels a knockout blow.²⁶

Conscription loomed whether New Yorkers welcomed it or not. Hillhouse confidently told Stanton on August 5 that New York's militia enrollment under the state legislation passed months earlier would be finished in ten days.²⁷ But this painstaking project had already proved too slow and inaccurate to aid in meeting quotas, prompting Morgan to drop it in favor of War Department draft guidelines, to be implemented alongside his senatorial-district program for promoting volunteering. A state general order announced this new enrollment on August 13.²⁸

From top to bottom and across the state and nation, draft registration was onerous and divisive. Inevitably, officials and citizens complained about assigned quotas. Four New England governors, for instance, protested to Lincoln that their quotas were unfair, not accounting for thousands of naval personnel enlisted in those states.²⁹ The size and expense of this new endeavor proved equally if not more demanding than quotas. Manhattan banker and lawyer William Henry Anthon, in his role as provost marshal of New York and Kings Counties, reported to Morgan on August 23 that the "Enrollment officers of New York and Brooklyn are now thoroughly organized and in active operation." He went on to warn the governor that the means on hand could not meet ambitions. Morgan's administration had determined to canvass

²⁵ Minutes book, NWCCNY.

²⁶ *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, August 13, 1862.

²⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 296.

²⁸ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 33-34; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, August 14, 1862.

²⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 542; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 177-178.

one quarter of state households so that no family would be overlooked; following this policy in Anthon's area, however, required a great deal of money that he did not feel authorized to raise through his bank. Anthon thus found himself in the "extremely unpleasant position" of paying some of his four hundred enrollment staffers out of his own pocket while the rest went unpaid. "What then is to be done?" Anthon asked. "The work in which I am employed is novel and the amount of labor unprecedented." Anthon, it is worth noting, had additional responsibilities as the State Judge Advocate General.³⁰

Later, the Albany City Bank partially aided Anthon with small loans for enrollment expenses in his districts, but these did not suffice. Reports that the War Department would refund his costs went unfounded, and as late as the following January, Anthon complained of constant harassment from his clerks over missing pay.³¹ Underscoring the lack of infrastructure, Anthon even felt compelled to personally request the governor's authorization to sell rubber bands no longer needed for bundling draft tickets. Simultaneously with enrollment, provost marshals had to investigate numerous reports of fraud and possible insurrection should a draft be ordered. Despite such hindrances, enrollment in New York's two largest cities was complete by late September, with the names of those registered filling nearly six hundred ledgers.³² The metropolitan area remained additionally important as a gathering place for New York and New England troops. As noted earlier, the War Department instituted the office of the Provost Marshal General on September 24. First appointed to the role was Simeon Draper—formerly a leading member of the Union Defense Committee—who, like Anthon, held a dual appointment,

³⁰ Anthon to Morgan, August 23, (first and second quote), same to same, August 26 (third quote), both 1862, box 1, EDM Papers, NYSL.

³¹ Note marked "Albany September 1st 1862," and Anthon to Morgan, September 13, November 24, December 8, all 1862, and January 12, 1863, *ibid.* See also George Opdyke to Morgan, November 24, 1862, box 10, *ibid.*

³² Anthon to Morgan, November 17, September 27, October 7, deposition of Sergeant Alexander Johnson Finlayson, September 20, and John A. Kennedy to Morgan, September 22, all 1862, box 1, *ibid.*

in Draper's case as provost marshal of New York State. Draper's time was so consumed with appointments, desertions, and fraud cases in the nation's largest city that his office in Manhattan essentially functioned as a second Provost Marshal General headquarters.³³

The matter of exemptions introduced still more controversy into enrollment. Exemption by means of paying a fee (commutation) or belonging to a protected class was a long-running American institution, and in 1862 figures ranging from Henry Wilson to James Gordon Bennett advocated its inclusion in draft legislation. War Department draft instructions in August gave some latitude to states having enrollment laws in place to draw up their own exemption guidelines in addition to exemptions for congressmen and some other federal employees.³⁴ New York was one such state, and its list of exempt groups was long and varied. Unsurprisingly, representatives, state workers, current and honorably discharged members of the U. S. military, and those unfit because of physical or mental infirmity, being habitual drunks or paupers, or having serious criminal convictions, were all exempt. But Albany officials took the extra steps of exempting Quakers and Shakers, educators and students in all types of school except private institutions, ministers and preachers, physicians and nurses in public hospitals, members of the organized militia, and discharged officers, all without requiring exemption fees.³⁵ These allowances cut deeply into available manpower but allowed New York to escape the kind of bitter protests erupting in other states where several of these groups were subject to fees or not exempt at all.³⁶ (Exempting uniformed militiamen also benefited the state, as their units must be kept intact in case of call-up.) If volunteering ultimately would not stave off conscription, Empire State leaders clearly reckoned, this necessary evil should be made as painless as possible.

³³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 936, 938, 939.

³⁴ Geary, *We Need Men*, 20-21, 34-35.

³⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 668-669; *Watertown Northern New York Journal*, August 19, 1862.

³⁶ Geary, *We Need Men*, 36-37.

Limits existed to the spirit of generosity, however; firemen were exempt from ordinary militia duty according to state law but enjoyed no such protection from the new enrollment.³⁷

Exemption, while necessary, spawned complications. For months before the new exemption guidelines were released, newspapers printed constant discussions about what classes would be exempt and how citizens could obtain the coveted status.³⁸ Before it became widely known that New York was authorized to widen the field of exemptions, some draft supporters confidently predicted that all military-age, able-bodied male citizens would “be run through the crucible of this draft,” a prospect alarming to other people.³⁹ When the truth was revealed, a Buffalo newspaper opposed Morgan’s plan for “sweeping exemptions.”⁴⁰ In Brooklyn, persons who had gotten themselves appointed enrollment commissioners placed advertisements for exemption certificates in the military columns of local journals alongside recruiting notices for Corcoran and Spinola’s brigades.⁴¹ Morgan and other officials received countless letters whose writers sought exemption for themselves or others. Administrators of New York Hospital wanted to know how conscription of doctors might be avoided. From New York City, George Opdyke asserted to the governor that men who furnished a volunteer should be exempted, while one hundred Jewish men offered to recruit one hundred volunteers by paying an extra premium, their condition being that they themselves be exempt from the draft.⁴² A deputation of city firemen traveled to Albany to make a similar offer.⁴³ These petitions reached Morgan during the same

³⁷ *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, July 23, 1862.

³⁸ See *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 22, October 15, October 28; *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8; *Brooklyn Evening Star*, August 5; *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, August 7; *New York Times*, August 9; *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, September 1; all 1862.

³⁹ *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, August 7, 1862 (quote); *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1862.

⁴⁰ Clipping from *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, August 19, 1862, reel 12, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁴¹ See for instance *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 24, 1862.

⁴² Samuel Willets to Morgan, August 12, and Elias Peissner to Morgan, August 19, reel 32, George Opdyke to Morgan, August 18, box 10, all 1862, EDM Papers, NYSL. See also L. P. Hickok to Morgan, August 23, 1862, reel 32, *ibid*.

⁴³ *New York Times*, August 31, 1862.

late August days when Silas W. Burt reported on the alarming rise in competitive bounties and Irish opposition to recruitment and conscription.

Additionally, possibilities for fraud and avoidance abounded. Hearings for New York's potential "exempts" began in mid-October.⁴⁴ After learning that many men sought to bribe doctors into awarding them disability certificates, the state surgeon general advised Morgan that the duties of enrollment surgeons were different from those of their recruiting service colleagues; they should be selected from among the "*representative* men of the profession in each locality," reputable physicians with both the public and the public good on their side.⁴⁵ As anticipated, hordes of citizens and naturalized immigrants (who were subject to conscription), known as "skedaddlers," fled their neighborhoods for fear of the draft. In August, steamships leaving New York Harbor filled with stowaways avoiding enrollment.⁴⁶ Countless deserters and draft evaders from New York and other bordering states wrought havoc in Canada by lowering wages, committing crimes, and inviting the disgust of locals already wary of American recruiters.⁴⁷ Draft resistance, along with volunteering opposition, inspired Lincoln's highly controversial suspension of habeas corpus and ordering of tribunals for suspected enemies of the war effort in September.⁴⁸

Many New Yorkers feared enrollment as the first step to conscription. As we have seen, however, others welcomed it as a potentially war-winning measure; still others viewed enrollment and the draft as a personal opportunity. Numerous individuals wrote to Morgan

⁴⁴ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 36.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Kneeland to S. O. Vanderpool, August 11, 1862, and Vanderpool to Morgan, August 25, 1862 (quote; emphasis in original), box 13, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁴⁶ McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 148-149; *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, August 15, 1862; *Troy Weekly Times*, August 16, 1862; *New York Times*, February 22, 1863.

⁴⁷ Winks, *The Civil War Years*, 203; Damien-Claude Bélanger, *French Canadians and Franco-Americans in the Civil War Era* (Montreal: Marianopolis College, 2001), 28.

⁴⁸ Weber, *Copperheads*, 65.

seeking positions in the large enrollment bureaucracy.⁴⁹ More importantly, the threat of a disgraceful draft in 1862 and afterward provided powerful impetus to support volunteering efforts, particularly after the War Department agreed to count excess volunteers under the July 2 order toward the August militia call.⁵⁰ Watertown's *Northern New York Journal*, like numerous newspapers, filled its columns throughout the summer and fall with items on state and local quotas, volunteering, and the coming draft. On August 19, an editorial noted that Massachusetts and Illinois were about to meet their quotas through volunteering while the possibility of conscription haunted large, "unwieldy" New York. "The Empire State ought to avoid a draft," the journal declared; the state's honor, history, sons serving in the field, and importance as an example to the nation and the world all meant that "[s]he must answer the demand upon her patriotism without compulsion." The Union must demonstrate to the rebels that northern resolve, including that of the most populous state, could answer the calls for six hundred thousand men with willing patriots. Jefferson County, the *Journal* concluded, had its own part to play by filling the local town quotas.⁵¹ For the remainder of the war, fear of conscription would motivate members of nearly all communities to aid voluntary enlistment.

On October 14, a state general order proclaimed enrollment nearly complete, identified draft officials, and announced a draft for November 10 to fill quotas.⁵² Two weeks later, however, volunteering remained so high that conscription began to look unnecessary, at least in the Empire State. Morgan predicted to Stanton that five-sixths of New York's combined quota would be met by November 10; at that point, he continued, high demand for agricultural labor

⁴⁹ See reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL, for several such letters.

⁵⁰ F. A. Conkling to Morgan, August 13, 1862, *ibid.*; newspaper clippings in Scrapbook, p. 18, Albany Zouave Cadets Collection, NYSL; Patrick Farrington to "Dear Father," April 5, 1863, in Farrington, *The Civil War Letters of Patrick Farrington*, 79.

⁵¹ *Watertown Northern New York Journal*, August 19, 1862. See also *Brooklyn Evening Star*, August 23, 1862.

⁵² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 666-669.

would have ended and even bounties would not be needed to secure volunteers. Should the nation still require a draft by the time Congress reconvened in December, it would be wise to amend the Militia Act “to conform to the habits of our people and to systems of conscription in other countries.” Most importantly, the term length should be doubled to eighteen months.⁵³ In a season marked by the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Confederate invasions of the Border States, and Lincoln’s suspension of habeas corpus, the governor of New York encapsulated national anxiety over yet another turning point.

Countless New Yorkers had demonstrated such anxiety during the enrollment process as they feared an impending draft. In New York City, a Prussian who had left his native land to avoid military service reported to his parents that Gotham’s residents were extremely opposed to conscription and would probably riot should it be implemented.⁵⁴ Adjutant General Hillhouse, citing problems in obtaining accurate returns of county enlistments in order to determine draft quotas, indefinitely suspended the draft on November 9.⁵⁵ According to Hillhouse, enrollment, at least, was highly successful, with three quarters of a million men enrolled—judging by census figures, a ratio of nearly one in every five state residents. Deducting those exempt, five hundred and fifty thousand New Yorkers were now registered as subject to military duty. This was a far larger figure than the state militia enrollment had achieved.⁵⁶ But sheer numbers did not tell the whole story, especially in the seven Provost Marshal districts of New York City, where the figures gathered were riddled with discrepancies.⁵⁷ Nationally, turmoil over numbers and quotas

⁵³ Morgan to Stanton, October 28, 1862, box 12, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁵⁴ Julius Wesslau to “Dear parents,” October 26, 1862, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 63.

⁵⁵ *New York Times*, November 9, 1862.

⁵⁶ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 33-34; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 177.

⁵⁷ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 39.

lasted into the fall.⁵⁸ Though enrollment officials had achieved much, the semi-organized chaos of their undertaking foreshadowed even greater difficulties in 1863.

Since the late summer, Morgan had continued to address manpower needs with energy and initiative. He had refused to attend a conference of loyal governors at Altoona, Pennsylvania, on September 24—where those present issued public support for the Emancipation Proclamation and called for the creation of an “army of reserve”—maintaining that states’ first duty was to supply the six hundred thousand men called for.⁵⁹ The governor had also discouraged recruitment of nine-month volunteers under the August 4 militia call-up until mid-September, by which point he had helped convince the War Department to put excess three-year men toward nine-month quotas and to accept nine-month volunteers in lieu of conscripts.⁶⁰ New York thus secured more long-service soldiers for the war effort and avoided the situation in Pennsylvania, where whole regiments were formed of unreliable, short-term conscripts. Fewer than four thousand nine-month men mustered in New York (exclusive of those unfortunate three-year volunteers who mistakenly thought they owed only nine months), mainly for these reasons but also because volunteering of militiamen had so drained the National Guard that few of its regiments were available for call-up.⁶¹ The governor had also encouraged arrests of enrollees fleeing to Canada and, as his term of office ended in late December, authorized bounties for volunteers not meeting the criteria of his July 17 order so that the men would not “suffer.”⁶²

⁵⁸ Geary, *We Need Men*, 34-35.

⁵⁹ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 181; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 582-584.

⁶⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 354, 543; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 179-180; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 20.

⁶¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 881; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 29-30. For public opinion on the “costly and disastrous experiment” of enlisting nine-month troops, see *New York Daily Tribune*, May 28, 1863.

⁶² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 329; George Bliss, Jr., to Morgan, December 31, 1862, in entry no. 1253, Documentation Relating to the Cost of Raising Troops, Comptroller’s Office Records, NYSA (quote).

Much had occurred in the months leading up to that December order that would make it one of Morgan's last acts as governor. That fall, Democrats and Republicans squared off in contentious elections across the North, including gubernatorial and senatorial contests in New York. Morgan ran for and won a Senate seat instead of campaigning for reelection.⁶³ Results were much less successful for many other Republicans, however, as the fall elections turned on bad news from the battlefield and the highly controversial policies of Lincoln's party. The Democratic challenger for governor was Horatio Seymour, who had served a previous term in the office and now ran on the slogan: "Restore the Union as it was, and maintain the Constitution as it is."⁶⁴ New York Republicans attacked Democrats (unfairly in many cases) for not heartily supporting recruitment, and officials postponed drafting in order to avoid political fallout.⁶⁵ Morgan's continued haste in sending troops to the front caused Republicans to complain that he was removing supporters of their own party.⁶⁶ At least one recruiter in New York City blamed his lack of success that fall on "the politicians of both parties [who] were hindering enlistments for fear some of their followers might get off to the war before election."⁶⁷ The final results gave Seymour a narrow victory over his Radical Republican challenger, General James S. Wadsworth, though Seymour's party failed to seize the state assembly or senate.⁶⁸ Democratic victories stemmed not only from grim war news but also from the simple fact that so many Republicans were away with the army and unable to vote; as Silas W. Burt had pointed out earlier, one of the

⁶³ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 44; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 182.

⁶⁴ Weber, *Copperheads*, 67.

⁶⁵ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 232; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 180-181.

⁶⁶ Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 182-183.

⁶⁷ "The Politicians and the War," *Scientific American*, vol. 7, no. 18 (November 2, 1862): 282.

⁶⁸ Stewart Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 255.

war's unfortunate effects was drawing supporters of the administration out of the state.⁶⁹ The elections from first to last had hinged on issues and effects of mass mobilization.

By December, New York had not fully met its quotas despite earlier indications that volunteering would prove sufficient. Administrators cautiously revived plans for a draft. Major Sprague, superintendent of the General Recruiting Service in the state, appointed officers on December 3 to take charge of conscripts at the various recruit rendezvous.⁷⁰ As Hillhouse later pointed out, drafting was a dicey proposition not only because of its inevitable social disruption but because New York—like many northern states—could register people but had no law to draft them; legal authority would have to rest with federal statutes alone.⁷¹ On December 9, as Morgan prepared to hand his office over to Seymour, he suggested to the Governor-Elect that the state draft be postponed until after the new year. Ironically, the man soon to become the standard bearer of northern draft opposition refused to take this responsibility. “I do not know what the wants of Government are with respect to men,” Seymour explained, “neither am I sufficiently familiar with the subject to know how much delay will grow out of a postponement.”⁷² Seymour had long vocally supported enlistment and may have hoped that fear of a draft would soon bring in enough volunteers to meet state quotas. At any rate, Albany suspended the state draft yet again later that month.⁷³ Unlike several other northern states (or the entire Confederacy), New York did not draft in 1862 and would continue to rely on volunteering for the time being.

⁶⁹ Silas W. Burt to Morgan, August 21, 1862, reel 32, EDM Papers, NYSL. On the “drain on population” in 1862 New York, see also *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 44.

⁷⁰ Entry no. 2494, Special Orders Issued by the Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General and the Superintendent of Volunteer Recruiting Service, NARA-NY, p. 276.

⁷¹ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 40, 49, 64; Geary, *We Need Men*, 47-48.

⁷² Horatio Seymour to Morgan, December 10, 1862, box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL.

⁷³ Entry no. 2494, Special Orders Issued by the Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General and the Superintendent of Volunteer Recruiting Service, NARA-NY, p. 297; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 40.

As Morgan had indicated in his October letter to Stanton advising modifications to the Militia Act, federal and state draft policies were limited, imperfect instruments. Moreover, the spirit of cooperation and support for drafting among Democrats and Republicans during the July crisis had disappeared soon afterward, never to reemerge during the war. Large troop calls combined with threats of conscription failed to produce the numbers sought and did not prove the decisive, war-winning factors in 1862 that many Union supporters had hoped.⁷⁴

The experiences and rhetoric of New Yorkers during the introduction of enrollment and conscription indicate that Union supporters—except, notably, most soldiers—dropped the philosophy of all-out mobilization that had colored their language since April 1861. Their acceptance of bounty culture and generous enrollment exemptions along with widespread fears of conscription meant that the majority of eligible men who did not enlist, along with their communities, essentially agreed to let others do the fighting for them. The National Guard, meanwhile, remained a slightly tarnished but mostly acceptable alternative to national service. In July, an Oneida County militia colonel confidently believed young men would have “too much pride” to be drafted and would volunteer for the organized National Guard instead. “In these days,” he went on, “no young man who can possibly join a military organization, should be longer ignorant of the use of arms. Those who cannot join our armies in the field, should at least prepare themselves to defend their homes.”⁷⁵ Even during this grave moment for the nation, New Yorkers commonly expected some level of commitment to the war but continued to cast it in voluntary terms. Notions of total mobilization would almost completely fall by the wayside in 1863. None of this, however, diminishes the widespread and continuing loyalty to the cause in the face of adversity that most people felt. And as ever, New Yorkers relied on their communities

⁷⁴ Geary, *We Need Men*, 81.

⁷⁵ L. G. Gray, July 20, 1862, in unidentified newspaper clipping, box 4A, folder 9, Horatio Seymour Papers, NYSL.

and close networks to survive the war's hardships. When a breadwinner enlisted, for example, family members left at home sometimes moved in with neighbors or extended family.⁷⁶

In his New Year's Eve report on the previous year's operations, New York State Adjutant General Hillhouse captured the emerging consensus among war supporters. Hillhouse noted that Governor Morgan's "wise use" of discretionary powers had greatly aided volunteering. But the population of those liable to volunteer had mostly been drained, causing "scarcity of labor in the field and workshop" and consequent wage increases. Hillhouse reported that old regiments needed a better replacement plan, predicted that the burden of enlistment would now fall on middle-class citizens with little interest in serving, and hinted that only through drafting could the state meet any future manpower calls.⁷⁷ War disrupted society, Hillhouse continued, "but this is an additional reason why its effects in these directions should be avoided as far as possible and its ravages confined to the narrowest circle." Citing policies in several European nations, the adjutant general suggested that compulsory service be made easier to bear through age classifications, exemptions, and substitutions that would keep family heads and valuable members of society out of uniform. Moreover, the lack of state authority to draft meant that conscription would have to be federal.⁷⁸ At the same time, *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, published in New York City, made a bit more extreme argument for federal conscription by urging the country to "do away with the elective principle, and to make the army national," because the Union was fighting for its life against an excess of state-centered democracy.⁷⁹ Hillhouse and Brownson's words support the argument of historians Herman Hattaway and

⁷⁶ Ellie Goldwaite to "My Dear Husband," August 20, 1862, in Skipper and Taylor, *A Handful of Providence*, 148.

⁷⁷ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature, January 27, 1863*, 41 (first quote), 45 (second quote).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 61-62, 63, 64 (quote), 65.

⁷⁹ "Conscription and Volunteering as Means of Recruiting National Armies," *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, vol. 4, no. 1 (January 1, 1863): 55.

Archer Jones that the draft failed in 1862 thanks to Washington's policy of leaving it in states' hands.⁸⁰ But even as the war's scope grew in 1863 to include federal conscription, New Yorkers finally abandoned the heroic ideal of total, if voluntary, commitment.

Eighteen Sixty-Three opened with another season of gloom and uncertainty for Union loyalists. A stunning year of highs and lows in the war effort had been capped by the terrible defeat at Fredericksburg and bitter controversy over the direction of the war effort. In response to grim news from the battlefield, recruitment once again slowed to a trickle across the North.⁸¹ Meanwhile, opposition to the Lincoln administration's policies increased among both Copperheads and other Democrats inspired by Seymour, Representative Clement Vallandigham of Ohio, and Ben Wood's *New York Daily News*.⁸² In the sharply divided Empire State, Republicans saw their champion, Edwin D. Morgan, leave to take up his senator's seat in Washington as Seymour assumed the governorship. As Hillhouse had indicated, drafting seemed the only answer to the Union's manpower needs. In late January, during the last session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress, Henry Wilson put forth a new draft bill to address manpower needs. Precisely who crafted the enormously consequential Enrollment Act that passed in March 1863, and how they determined its provisions, is lost to history. What is clear is that Secretary of War Stanton and other influential figures pushed for a bill that would place drafting firmly in federal hands, quickly fill the ranks of old regiments, replace many thousands of soldiers whose terms would expire that spring and summer, and capitalize on the authorization of black service that Lincoln had made in his revolutionary decree.⁸³ Over the course of a month of congressional

⁸⁰ Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 275.

⁸¹ Weber, *Copperheads*, 86.

⁸² McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 584-585, 591; Weber, *Copperheads*, 76-80; Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 41; *New York Times*, February 12, 1863.

⁸³ Geary, *We Need Men*, 50-52, 200-201n6; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 888.

wrangling, Democratic representatives secured three crucial modifications to Wilson’s bill: the legislation provided for calling out the “national forces” rather than militias, authorized commutation payments, and subjected only conscripts who failed to report to military discipline before enlistment.⁸⁴ The House and Senate passed the bill and Lincoln signed it into law on March 3.⁸⁵ Federal enrollment and conscription were now the law of the land.

The Enrollment Act was an awkward, mainly “symbolic” instrument for compelling service, in the words of one historian.⁸⁶ Despite its familiar rhetoric that “all persons ought willingly to contribute” to national defense, the act’s provisions reflected northerners’ emergent desire to compartmentalize mobilization. The Provost Marshal General’s Bureau would conduct a new enrollment in every congressional district. Able-bodied male citizens and foreigners who had declared intent to become citizens, age twenty to forty-five, now belonged to the “national forces” and were subject to call-up by the president. They were divided into two classes: first, married and single men up to the age of thirty-five and single men thirty-five to forty-five, who were to be drafted first; the second class, composed of married men age thirty-six to forty-five, was not to be called up until after the first class had been exhausted. The law allowed for commutation, substitution, and certain exemptions. If a district could not meet its quota with volunteers within fifty days, it must make up the difference by holding a draft in the form of choosing lots among enrollees.⁸⁷ The new legislation granted federal authorities more drafting power than ever before; like the militia laws it replaced, however—and unlike the Selective Service Act of 1917—the Enrollment Act operated under the old assumption that compulsory

⁸⁴ Geary, *We Need Men*, 53-56.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 62-65.

⁸⁶ Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 51.

⁸⁷ Chap. 75, “An Act for Enrolling and Calling Out the National Forces, and for Other Purposes,” Statutes at Large: 37th Cong., 3rd sess., 731-737, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/37th-congress/session-3/c37s3ch75.pdf> (accessed July 9, 2017); Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 51-52.

service was a discreditable, necessary evil and it made no allowance for civilian defense work.⁸⁸ In granting districts time to fill quotas with volunteers and authorizing exemptions, commutation, and substitution, the system put in place by the Enrollment Act “was not conscription at all, but a clumsy carrot and stick device to stimulate volunteering,” in the words of historian James M. McPherson.⁸⁹ Crucially, the law’s wording made no mention of race, meaning that African Americans were subject to enrollment and drafting and less burden need be placed on whites in each district. The law also sanctioned federal bounties and furloughs for all enlistees, offered amnesty for returning deserters, and ordered consolidation of weak regiments.⁹⁰ The Enrollment Act embodied the paradox of northern attitudes in the war’s third year: it was a draft law designed to avoid drafting, and it widened options for filling the ranks so that many could avoid having to join those ranks.

Carrying out the Enrollment Act revealed several counterproductive flaws in the legislation and the Provost Marshal General’s policies. Men could not claim exemption until they were drafted; when drafting did occur, so many of those called up gained exemption that districts were subjected to extra-large quotas and supplemental drafts, which inevitably caused local resentment toward draft officials and the system. Less excusable was the act’s neglect of the United States Navy. Neither naval personnel nor Navy Department clerks were exempted. In some cases, staffers of the Provost Marshal General’s Bureau removed sailors from United States vessels because their names had been drawn for army service.⁹¹ Nor were credits awarded for navy volunteers; since many thousands of enlistments occurred at naval rendezvous in New York, the state’s residents naturally were dismayed to receive no credits for these men on their

⁸⁸ Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 234-235.

⁸⁹ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 605.

⁹⁰ Chap. 75, “An Act for Enrolling and Calling Out the National Forces, and for Other Purposes.”

⁹¹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 67; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 1166; Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 4.

local or state quotas. Commutation (finally set at three hundred dollars on June 30) and substitution invited charges that Lincoln's administration targeted Democrats and the poor, while the method of apportioning quotas to districts seemed to satisfy almost no one and brought endless abuse upon Provost Marshal General James B. Fry and his agents.⁹² Enrollment and drafting inspired waves of defiance from a variety of Americans, and this resistance often put the Empire State at center stage in the struggle over who would fight for the Union. Congress amended the Enrollment Act three times during the remainder of the war; necessary as several of these changes were, they caused widespread confusion and further hurt the law's effectiveness.⁹³ States and smaller communities, especially those like New York boasting large populations, continued to guide mobilization as the war grew in scale, and Union efforts rested on their desire and ability to carry out the orders of the Provost Marshal General.

Another paradox in federal conscription involved Governor Seymour, its leading opponent. Seymour was a man of contradictions who—despite bitterly rejecting several Republican policies, sometimes at inopportune moments for the Union cause—enjoyed excellent relations with Edwin D. Morgan and had long supported the war effort, militia reform, and government troop calls. He had even helmed Oneida County's recruiting committee, and after his election appointed Major Sprague as state adjutant general in order to maintain dialogue with Lincoln's administration.⁹⁴ During his term of office, Seymour's strenuous efforts to secure

⁹² Murdock, *One Million Men*, 7; Geary, *We Need Men*, 69-71; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 602-603; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 427.

⁹³ Geary, *We Need Men*, 73.

⁹⁴ Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 38-39; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 189; Horatio Seymour, "Public Meeting at Utica, N. Y., July 14, 1862, to Aid Enlistments," in Seymour, *Public Record: Including Speeches, Messages, Proclamations, Official Correspondence, and Other Public Utterances of Horatio Seymour; From the Campaign of 1856 to the Present Time*, ed. Thomas M. Cook and Thomas W. Knox (New York: I. W. England, 1868), 43-45; Alexander J. Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886: With a Detailed Account of His Administration as Governor of the State of New York during the War of 1861-1865* (New York: Privately printed, 1929), 23; Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 235, 242, 257, 275.

volunteers in order to avoid the draft he hated helped to lessen the draft burden on his state and thus fit into one of the main goals of the Enrollment Act's architects.

The new governor made his views clear in an inaugural address to the legislature in January, taking a hard line against the draft, emancipation, and Lincoln's crackdown on dissent. Noting that the Empire State had sent more than two hundred thousand of its citizens to the field, Seymour said he owed it to these men to ensure their liberties survived when they returned home. The governor also criticized inequities in the state's militia law and its quotas under the Enrollment Act.⁹⁵ The address received wide attention; despite their disagreements with Seymour on national affairs, many Republicans applauded his demands for reform and fair treatment for their state.⁹⁶ Seymour interpreted his election victory as a mandate and believed federal officials owed more respect and deference to him and his state in exchange for New York's contributions. (He incorrectly claimed that New York had more than met its quotas and that "the State had sent off a greater number of three-years' regiments in proportion to her population than any other State in the Union.")⁹⁷ He missed an opportunity for smooth working relations with the president early in his administration, however. Lincoln wrote to the governor asking for his cooperation in the war effort; Seymour rebuffed this overture with what even a fawning biographer called a "cold, guarded letter."⁹⁸ As in his opposition to African American recruitment, Seymour's behavior toward Lincoln's government demonstrated that the war effort was not always a priority for him. Like his predecessor, however, Seymour worked tirelessly for

⁹⁵ Horatio Seymour, "Annual Message," in Lincoln, ed., *Messages from the Governors*, 5: 445-520.

⁹⁶ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 258; Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 268-271; *Albany Morning Express*, January 12, 1863.

⁹⁷ William Henry Aspinwall to Edwin D. Morgan, n. d. (early to mid-1863), box 1, EDM Papers, NYSL; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 210 (quote); Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 278.

⁹⁸ Lincoln to Seymour, March 23, 1863, in Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 6: 145-146, and Seymour to Lincoln, April 14, 1863, in *ibid.*, 145n1; Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 29 (quote); Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 273-278.

the welfare of his state; in this, he had bipartisan support from Senator Morgan and Albany lawmakers. Beginning in February, the legislature legalized all county bounty laws; in April, it passed an act offering veterans reenlistment bounties and authorized allotment commissioners to inspire volunteering and ensure New York soldiers got all monies due them.⁹⁹ Thinking “injustice had been done to New York” in the matter of its quotas, Seymour asked Morgan to investigate how they had been fixed. The ex-governor’s work on the issue adjusted New York’s credits for the time being.¹⁰⁰ Seymour met every subsequent troop call with efforts to get state and county quotas and credits “fixed,” which would mean a lessened burden on his constituents. On two separate occasions in 1864, New York City officials passed resolutions thanking the governor for getting their quotas and expenses reduced. Seymour believed the draft was unconstitutional, promoted volunteering as an alternative, and considered New York’s manpower contributions one of his greatest achievements in office.¹⁰¹

Better efforts to promote enlistments were direly needed in the spring of 1863. In Albany, lawmakers cooperated on bounty bills but little else, prompting a later historian to call the 1863 legislature “perhaps the most disorderly in the history of the state.”¹⁰² Copperheads, who had been on the rise ever since the advent of conscription, vehemently opposed the Enrollment Act as an attack on the liberty of working-class whites. Led by Vallandigham and Fernando Wood, Copperheads specifically protested the three-hundred-dollar commutation clause as class legislation by Republicans wanting to get rid of poor Democrats who could not afford the fee;

⁹⁹ Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 73-74; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 284; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864* (Albany: Comstock & Cassidy, 1864), 1: 7; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 320; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 29-30.

¹⁰⁰ Seymour to Morgan, March 28, 1863 (quote), box 11, EDM Papers, NYSL; Rawley, *Edwin D. Morgan 1811-1883*, 189-190.

¹⁰¹ Resolutions of New York County Board of Supervisors, March 8, 1864, box 7, Seymour Papers, NYSL; Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 54-55.

¹⁰² Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 284 (quote), 292-295.

they also expressed alarm at the prospect of black enlistment and portrayed the array of provost marshals and enrollment officials as an emerging police state.¹⁰³ When federal troops arrested Vallandigham in May on charges of aiding the enemy, Democrats held a protest in Albany and Seymour became an outspoken critic of the government's action. Across the North, enrollment so alarmed many people that violent resistance seemed likely to follow any announcement of a draft.¹⁰⁴ Volunteering had stagnated and New York's thirty-eight two-year regiments were due to be discharged between April and June.¹⁰⁵ General Meagher attempted to rebuild his battered Irish Brigade, but the War Department rejected his requests to bring the brigade home to New York City to refit and recruit; this was a factor in Meagher's decision to resign his command. It is unlikely that Meagher's efforts would have found a receptive audience among Irish-Americans at home.¹⁰⁶

In response to lagging recruitment, communities in New York and elsewhere launched new efforts in the spring of 1863 to take advantage of bounty laws and other encouraging legislation and avoid the draft. A glimmer of the mass war enthusiasm that had colored earlier trying periods began in early spring with the rise of Union Leagues. In a movement that began in Illinois and quickly spread through the North, leading Republicans organized political societies that promoted the Lincoln administration's policies and attacked dissent as treason. Union League members took on troop raising as one of their primary missions.¹⁰⁷ A Loyal Union

¹⁰³ Ibid., 304-306; Weber, *Copperheads*, 5, 56, 86-87, 88-89, 103; *New York Times*, March 10, March 26, 1863.

¹⁰⁴ Weber, *Copperheads*, 97, 103-104; Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 293-295; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 217-218; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 312-314.

¹⁰⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 6-7.

¹⁰⁶ Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 151-153, 156; Wylie, *The Irish General*, 190.

¹⁰⁷ On wartime Union League activities, see Lawson, *Patriot Fires*, 98-128; Adam I. P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 67-84; Bahde, "'Our Cause Is a Common One;'" Andrew W. Tremel, "The Union League, Black Leaders, and the Recruitment of Philadelphia's African American Civil War Regiments," *Pennsylvania History* 80 (2013): 13-36; Henry W. Bellows, *Historical*

League formed in New York City in March, quickly followed by a Loyal National League and similar clubs across the state.¹⁰⁸ Union Leagues frequently held rallies reminiscent of the mass meetings of April 1861 and July 1862.¹⁰⁹ The Union League movement demonstrated the vitality of northerners' voluntarism and community spirit to mobilization.

Idealism melded with self-interest to an unprecedented degree in 1863 as communities and recruiters strove to fill their quotas. State governments challenged the War Department's quota and credit figures, localities offered increasingly high bounties and undercut neighboring towns and counties in efforts to draw recruits, and recruiters made extravagant promises to potential volunteers while overlooking disqualifying defects in many cases. The focus overwhelmingly was on achieving credits rather than providing fighting men for the cause.¹¹⁰ A tendency developed to accept men and boys of any background and condition so long as they counted toward the local quota. In March, as northerners reacted to impending enrollment, the *Albany Morning Express* summarized the attitudes of Republicans and War Democrats by praising commutation and substitution and urging readers to help catch deserters. "For every deserter returned to the army," the paper noted, "there will be one less citizen to be drafted." Reenlisting veterans were also expected to help mitigate conscription's effects on the city.¹¹¹ After a deserter who had seized the lucrative opportunity to return to the front as a substitute was recognized and arrested, a Western New York paper printed a letter from a local soldier advising any deserter who "intends to come again as a soldier, to enlist [in a new regiment] and receive

Sketch of the Union League Club of New York: Its Origin, Organization, and Work, 1863-1879 (New York: Club House, 1879), 53-84.

¹⁰⁸ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 295, 298, 299; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 17, 1863; *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, March 25, 1863.

¹⁰⁹ See for instance the description of a Union League meeting in Poughkeepsie in "Dutchess County, New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/counties/dutchess/dutchess_CWN.htm (accessed February 10, 2016).

¹¹⁰ Geary, *We Need Men*, 65; Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 56-57.

¹¹¹ *Albany Morning Express*, March 21, 1863.

the big bounties rather than come as a substitute, for it has been clearly illustrated that it is dangerous ...”¹¹² This soldier’s philosophy captured the pervasive dishonesty of recruitment across the North in 1863. Fraud and minimal oversight had been evident since the war’s beginning but approached crisis in 1863 and afterward. Citizens and officers took in whoever was willing to enlist (and some who were unwilling) in order to gain credits and save themselves, family members, and neighbors from service. This caused an influx of unreliable manpower that downgraded the army’s effectiveness and jeopardized the Union cause.

A War Department general order on May 1 placed the Provost Marshal General’s Bureau in charge of volunteering in addition to its enrollment and policing responsibilities.¹¹³ Fry and his staff certainly had their hands full. Fraud, for instance, was endemic, as a government investigator had shown in a report released in late December. The agent estimated that more than half of the six million dollars the federal government had spent on boarding and lodging recruits in New York City had been wasted on dishonest contractors and speculators, who numbered some one thousand and growing.¹¹⁴ Recruiting officers and civilians seeking to fill local quotas frequently employed three main strategies in the spring and summer of 1863: attempting to reenlist veterans, enticing prospective volunteers with promises of high bounties and appealing duty, and accepting recruits who were not fit for service. “Very liberal bounties will be given to those who will engage in the national service,” Governor Seymour told the Secretary of War on May 20, adding that he was “organizing a vigorous system for recruiting, which I hope will do away with the necessity for making any draft in New York.” Seymour and his military staff

¹¹² “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatLCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016).

¹¹³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 179.

¹¹⁴ *New York Observer and Chronicle*, January 1, 1863.

planned to attract veterans by using three million dollars that the state legislature had appropriated for bounties.¹¹⁵ Earlier in the year, as Congress deliberated over federal reenlistment incentives, officers of the veteran 30th New York Infantry had signaled to the War Department their men's willingness to reenlist if permitted to return home before their first enlistment expired. They also expressed an attachment to their regimental number and wanted no other organization to bear it. Stanton denied these proposals but his department eventually adopted a version of them for all troops eligible for reenlistment.¹¹⁶ Most men in two-year regiments did not intend reenlistment, at least not without seeing home again for a time. "Even though I will never regret having been a soldier," a veteran of New York City's First German Rifles told a relative, "nothing in the world could make me want to go through what I experienced again, and when a friend of mine says he wants to go, I advise against it as strongly as I can ..."¹¹⁷

The previous chapter described how recruiters in the summer and fall of 1862 had reinforced the two-year regiments by promising new volunteers they would only have to serve the remainder of their unit's term. As the armies prepared for campaigning in the spring of 1863, these regiments were abuzz with speculation about whether newer men would be permitted to return home with their veteran comrades.¹¹⁸ The War Department, it developed, had other ideas, ordering the retention of these men for their full three-year enlistments, while veterans had to

¹¹⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 210, 214 (quote).

¹¹⁶ *Albany Morning Express*, March 18, 1863.

¹¹⁷ Robert Rossi to "Dear Elise," June 19, 1863, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 82. See also Robert Goldwaite to "My Dear Ellie," January 24, 1863, in Skipper and Taylor, *A Handful of Providence*, 185-186; "Prono" to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, June 8, 1863, in Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 194-195.

¹¹⁸ Charles Brandege to family, n. d., in Charles Brandege Livingstone, ed., *Charlie's Civil War: A Private's Trial by Fire in the 5th New York Volunteers—Duryée Zouaves and 146th New York Volunteer Infantry* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1997), 135; Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 170, 175; Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 465, 468-469, 474-479.

remain in the field until their muster-out date or even later. Some members of the elite Fifth New York Zouaves mutinied when ordered to fight at Chancellorsville while awaiting discharge.¹¹⁹ Outrage among veterans over the army's actions in May 1863 persisted for decades.¹²⁰ After the two-year regiments were discharged, the army transferred their three-year members to other units. These men seethed and often refused to perform duty, but most eventually accepted the situation and agreed to serve their full terms.¹²¹ The words of one New York soldier indicate the frustration many felt at the cynical turn in mobilization: "The keeping of three-years' men belonging to two-year regiments, was a great blunder of the War Department and about as mean a piece of business as the National Government has been guilty of. ... [It is] enough to extinguish all the patriotism that a man is capable of holding."¹²²

Stanton's department acted decisively on June 25 with a general order offering an incentive package for reenlistment, including furloughs, \$300 bounties, and the title of "veteran volunteer" for any soldier who signed on for another three years. Provost marshals had already received instructions to facilitate reenlistments, while recruiting officers published posters and newspaper advertisements calling on two-year veterans to join new commands and secure a handsome profit.¹²³ Within weeks, old soldiers encouraged by state and federal incentives began reenlisting in large numbers.¹²⁴ Given that men from working-class families—the army's largest

¹¹⁹ Pohanka, *Vortex of Hell*, 503-506.

¹²⁰ William B. Westervelt, *Lights and Shadows of Army Life: From Bull Run to Bentonville*, ed. George S. Maharay (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1998), 124-125.

¹²¹ William Rimmel to "My Dear Parents," May 1, 1863, in Rimmel, *Like Grass Before the Scythe*, 41; Charles Brandegee to "Dr Father," May 9, 1863, in Livingstone, ed., *Charlie's Civil War*, 147-149; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1865), 1: 9-10; report of General John A. Dix, May 27, 1863, box 4, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹²² "Typo" to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, December 28, 1863, in Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 231.

¹²³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 414-415; Robert Nugent to "Captain," June 1, 1863, in entry no. 1377, Orders and Circulars, May 1863-March 1864, RG 110, NARA-NY; *Watertown Daily Reformer*, June 22, 1863.

¹²⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 414-415; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 1: 8.

source of manpower—survived on an average yearly income of \$600, and that most northerners saw their standard of living drop during the war, the attractiveness of bounties is understandable.¹²⁵

Eighteen sixty-three also witnessed the flowering of another recruiting tactic that almost amounted to a media blitzkrieg: innumerable appeals to the male population of the North offering them safe and easy service by joining particular regiments or service branches. Heavy artillery service was attractive to many, for instance, due to the belief that such soldiers spent their tours manning cannon, building fortifications, and performing guard duty instead of marching and fighting. Those prospective recruits, including many veterans of the two-year infantry regiments, who were not averse to fighting often chose the cavalry because riding to battle on horseback seemed more pleasant than slogging on foot under a heavy knapsack. By 1863, infantry officers returning home to organize new units typically chose the more popular cavalry or heavy artillery. As the survivors of the two-year Thirteenth New York Infantry returned to Rochester that May, a newspaper noted that many of the veterans wished to reenlist. But there was “some doubt whether a regiment of infantry could be organized here now,” and the writer opined that the men, who were “after their gallant service entitled to the most favorable positions the government can offer,” should have the choice of joining the heavy artillery.¹²⁶ That year, recruiters in New York created fourteen new volunteer regiments of cavalry, five of heavy artillery, and only one of infantry.¹²⁷ (The infantry did, however, receive some benefit from ongoing efforts to strengthen old regiments.)¹²⁸ The branch of service suffering the heaviest

¹²⁵ Wilson, *The Business of Civil War*, 227; Paludan, “*A People’s Contest*,” 182.

¹²⁶ *Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser*, May 14, 1863.

¹²⁷ Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*. The histories and muster-in dates of each unit are printed throughout the six volumes.

¹²⁸ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 1: 10.

losses in the field was receiving the smallest reinforcement, and this concession to recruits' preference over military need would have dire effects when the 1864 fighting caused enormous casualties.

In Rochester, Colonel William B. Barnes exemplified this new trend and its malign consequences. Barnes—locally renowned for his recruiting abilities—had been given sixty days to form a new regiment, the Eleventh New York Heavy Artillery, in the area. Rochester residents expressed delight with these developments, for having a regimental headquarters in town was good business. “It is very greatly for the interests of the city that the regiment shall be retained here until filled up,” the *Evening Express* pointed out. Government contracts for “the feeding and supporting of so large a number of soldiers will bring a great amount of trade to our dealers and business men,” whose city was mired in a recession.¹²⁹ Barnes attracted volunteers by claiming Adjutant General Sprague had promised the regiment “would not go out of the State, but as soon as organized would be sent to the Forts in New York Harbor for the defense of that place,” thus avoiding service at the front.¹³⁰ Barnes, his officers, and the city press all collaborated in extolling the benefits of joining the Eleventh. Lieutenant James B. Root, for instance, advertised his “crack company” in a notice offering a range of promises:

His experience fits him for the position; and those wishing to enter a branch of the service where picket duty and carrying a heavy knapsack is unknown, had better call upon him. He affords all the bounties or emoluments to be found in any other service; while the regiment is not to go outside of the State. Avoid the draft and enrol [sic] your name with Lieut. Root.¹³¹

¹²⁹ *Rochester Evening Express*, April 10, 1863.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, March 13, 1863.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, April 11, 1863. See also *Rochester Daily Democrat and American*, Jan. 20, 1863; *Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser*, Feb. 12, 1863; *Rochester Evening Express*, March 9, 1863; “11th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), New

Such claims benefitted civilians as well as recruiters, for they attracted large numbers of volunteers and thus made a local draft less likely. The reality of garrison life had less appeal than writers claimed. Barnes and Root had served together in a heavy artillery regiment that often performed dangerous, uncomfortable picket duty outside the Washington defenses.¹³² In addition, what was missing amid all the appeals to self-interest in this and countless other notices was anything about emancipation or preserving the Union—the causes for which northerners were ostensibly fighting the war. Indeed, scores of men joined regiments such as the 11th to avoid having to fight at all. Heedless promises of comfort and safety were not unique to New York’s enlistment efforts, but the large quotas needing to be met made such tactics especially prevalent in the Empire State.¹³³ When a Rochester newspaper predicted the men of the Eleventh New York would “give a good account of themselves by the time they reach ‘the forts in New York Harbor,’” the quotation marks around the promised duty station indicated that it had become a cliché.¹³⁴ Most officers could not promise state service but made similar claims of easy duty in their organizations.¹³⁵

Barnes and his officers embraced another common, yet reckless tactic: enlisting virtually anyone who offered himself, whether fit or not. As described earlier, lax recruitment and inspection standards had harmed the volunteer force from the war’s first weeks as many too old,

York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <http://dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/11thArtHvy/11thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed 20 April 2012).

¹³² Seward Forbes Gould, “Reminiscences of the Civil War,” in Gould Family Papers, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, p. 1. Gould, who served with Barnes and Root, added that this duty, performed “no matter whether the night was dark, rainy and cold,” made the men of the Fourth “hardened”—something that Root and other recruiters failed to mention.

¹³³ For examples of recruiters making misleading promises in Dubuque, Iowa, see Johnson, *Warriors into Workers*, 75-76.

¹³⁴ *Rochester Daily Democrat and American*, June 17, 1863.

¹³⁵ The commander of another heavy artillery regiment chastised one of his lieutenants for making an identical claim of permanent New York Harbor duty in his recruiting handbills. A. Piper to Lieut. Hoyle, April 12, 1863, in 10th New York Heavy Artillery Regimental Letter, Order, and Casualty Book, RG 94, NARA-DC.

too young, or otherwise outside the Union Army's standards found themselves in the ranks. By August 1862, examinations in New York's recruiting stations had become so perfunctory, the *American Medical Times* noted, "that the most obvious defects are overlooked. The army is being filled with old men and boys," while other recruits were getting through with serious disabilities.¹³⁶ The War Department and affiliated authors published updated guides for recruiters and inspectors in 1863.¹³⁷ Despite ostensibly greater oversight, the problem of unfit recruits worsened that year and negatively affected operations, as the rivalry between Barnes and a fellow colonel illustrates.

In June, Colonel Elisha G. Marshall arrived in Rochester to serve as mustering and disbursing officer for the area; additionally, Marshall had orders to form his own heavy artillery regiment. After inspecting Barnes's men prior to mustering in, Marshall reported to the army adjutant general in Washington that Barnes's regimental surgeon was passing as fit for service men with various disabilities, along with underage boys. Marshall also informed the authorities that Barnes and his officers were bringing men into the Eleventh under the false understanding that they would not have to serve outside the state. One of the men Marshall inspected turned out to be a deserter and was missing "all the toes of both feet—also having had one of his legs broken & still extensively ulcerated."¹³⁸ In mid-June, Barnes's regiment received unexpected orders to report for field duty in Pennsylvania. Marshall arrived to inspect them prior to mustering-in and rejected several hundred men he identified as too old, too young, or physically

¹³⁶ "Medical Inspection of Recruits," *American Medical Times*, August 30, 1862: 123-124.

¹³⁷ Roberts Barthalow, *A Manual of Instructions for Enlisting and Discharging Soldiers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1863); John Ordranax, *Manual of Instructions for Military Surgeons, on the Examination of Recruits and Discharge of Soldiers* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1863); *Regulations for the Recruiting Service of the Army of the United States, Both Regular and Volunteer* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863).

¹³⁸ Marshall to Adjutant General U.S. Army, June 6, 1863, in entry no. 2067, Letters Sent by the U.S. Mustering and Disbursing Officer at Rochester, NY, RG110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 4-5 (quote); same to same, June 9, in *ibid.*, 13-15; Marshall to Adjutant General State of New York, June 9, in *ibid.*, 15; Marshall to Captain De Witt Clinton, Aug. 18, 1863, in *ibid.*, 126.

unfit. The whittled-down battalion of accepted men soon left for the front, with Barnes and his officers under a cloud of suspicion.¹³⁹

Marshall's next move exemplified one of the major shortcomings in mobilization. "Feeling certain that the proofs I have sent concerning the Battalion of the 11th Heavy Artillery will cause the dismissal of Major Barnes & Staff," he wrote a general, "I hope you will intercede with the Secretary of War and have that Battalion assigned to my command the 14th NY Heavy Artillery, now forming."¹⁴⁰ This conflict of interest did the career officer little good. The Eleventh was not assigned to Marshall's command; what was more, his own officers indulged in the same offenses that caused his rival's downfall. Recruiters for the Fourteenth made identical promises of safe, comfortable duty in New York Harbor—while they had orders from the army high command backing them up, making such claims to secure enlistments violated regulations—pledged bounties not available to new recruits, and accepted numerous underage, overage, and unfit volunteers.¹⁴¹ The situation in the regiment was worthy of scandal. Before mustering in, Company G, 143 men strong, lost thirty-seven to desertion. When the company was mustered in that December, examiners rejected a total of fifty-seven privates for a range of conditions:

Too feeble, under age, over age, rupture, excision chord instep, loss of teeth, disability, too old & feeble, loss of fingers, tremor & debility, hernia, lame & feeble, injury tendon Achilles, too slight, blind right eye, deformed hand,

¹³⁹ *Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser*, June 17, June 18, 1863; Marshall to Adjutant General U.S.A., June 26, 1863, in Entry no. 2067, RG 110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 49; Kirk, *Heavy Guns and Light*, 90-91.

¹⁴⁰ Marshall to Gen. Canby, August 20, 1863, entry no. 2067, RG 110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 132-134.

¹⁴¹ "14th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/14thArtHvy/14thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed April 20, 2012); *Utica Morning Herald and Daily Gazette*, September 14, 1863; Chauncey M. Reeve to Marshall, November 9, 1863, 14th NYHA Regimental Letter Book, RG 94, NARA-DC; Marshall to Provost Marshal General U. S. A., November 14, 1863, entry no. 2067, RG 110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 364.

secondary syphilis, epilepsy, inveterate disease of skin, defective vision, varicose leg, injury of knee, chronic ophthalmia, appearance of imbecility, worthlessness.¹⁴²

Other companies were similarly afflicted, but replacements poured in. The Fourteenth proved popular with volunteers in New York and neighboring Pennsylvania thanks to the attractive benefits it advertised, and Marshall and his officers were so overwhelmed with recruits that he asked the Provost Marshal General to transfer out over twelve hundred surplus men.¹⁴³ Marshall declared that he had “successfully raised as fine a command of 1800 men which has ever left the State,” but the Fourteenth was destined to see hard times when abruptly transferred to frontline duty.¹⁴⁴

The irresponsibility of officers in the Eleventh and Fourteenth when raising troops was far from exceptional. Deceit on the part of brokers and recruiters only grew after the summer’s draft as communities winked at such activity and honed strategies for increasing their credits; additionally, mustering officers were spread too thin and had difficulty monitoring conditions in their districts.¹⁴⁵ In October, Provost Marshal General Fry estimated that officials across the country had enlisted or drafted one hundred thousand unfit recruits since the war’s beginning; these men had to be discharged and cost the government some forty million dollars.¹⁴⁶ Later, a board of medical officers charged with overhauling enrollment and fitness standards studied

¹⁴² 14th NYHA Regimental Descriptive Book Companies G to M, RG 94, NARA-DC. (The reasons for rejection of each recruit are quoted here as written but have been compiled into one sentence for ease of reading.) Examining surgeons in the metropolitan area encountered a similar variety of conditions among recruits. See entry no. 1429, Register of Recruits Rejected by the U. S. Examining Surgeon, Jan.-Dec. 1863, and entry no. 1430, Register of Recruits Examined in Brooklyn, N. Y., Jan.-Apr. 1864, RG 110, NARA-NYC.

¹⁴³ Marshall to Provost Marshal General U.S.A., February 21, 1864, 14th NYHA Regimental Letter Book.

¹⁴⁴ Marshall to Erastus Corning, January 1, 1864, *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Geary, *We Need Men*, 111; Marshall to Adjutant General U.S. Army, June 9, 1863, entry no. 2067, RG 110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 13-15.

¹⁴⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 894.

exemption and rejection in the French military, concluding that stringent physical requirements were best—something that regular army officers had long known. The Provost Marshal General’s Bureau adopted modified height and weight standards for enrollment and recruiting, but they had little effect.¹⁴⁷

The growth in such heedless behavior on the part of authorities and communities in 1863 occurred in the context of federal enrollment and conscription, which produced one of the most anxious periods in New York history. Provost Marshal General Fry planned for nationwide enrollment soon after his appointment in March.¹⁴⁸ Due to New York’s large size and population, Fry’s bureau divided the state into a Southern, a Northern, and a Western Division, each of them headed by an Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General.¹⁴⁹ Fry made two of his most important appointments when he assigned former State Adjutant General Frederick Townsend as AAPMG of the Northern Division and Colonel Robert Nugent, a veteran of the 69th, as AAPMG of the Southern Division. Fry asked Seymour to cooperate with these “officers of superior ability and gentlemen of attainments,” as he called Townsend and Nugent, and directed them to do all they could to gain trust and acceptance from the state government and the people. The two would find themselves in the center of a maelstrom when drafting commenced.¹⁵⁰

Before a draft could be ordered, provost marshals had to carry out the daunting task of enrollment in New York’s thirty-one districts and elsewhere in the Union. This involved establishment of enrollment boards in each district, followed by registration conducted by enrolling officers journeying through sub-districts and noting names and physical details of every

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 1063, 1064.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 74.

¹⁴⁹ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 8-9, 42-43; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 12.

¹⁵⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 166 (quote), 167-168.

military-age male resident.¹⁵¹ This dangerous, frustrating work was made particularly so in areas such as the nine districts under Nugent's responsibility, where he dealt with innumerable cases of men enrolled twice and others resisting registration. Provost marshals had authorization to arrest those who refused to comply; the U. S. district attorney in New York City, however, "declines to prosecute" those arrested, Nugent reported, because they had not violated the draft law.¹⁵²

Simultaneously, enrollment officials had to contend with widespread mistrust and hostility from the public and state lawmakers, a situation not helped by the law's confusing provisions and Fry's inability to clarify them or determine accurate credits and deficiencies.¹⁵³ Chief among the bureau's opponents was Governor Seymour, who told New York's division chiefs he would continue to push volunteering but considered the Enrollment Act unconstitutional; he also sent the state adjutant general on an unsuccessful mission to get the draft suspended in New York.¹⁵⁴

State leaders embraced the veteran volunteer program, as previously noted, and anxiously stepped up support for recruitment of African Americans; these efforts were not enough to prevent conscription.¹⁵⁵ At the federal level, the newly formed Invalid Corps—a highly professional command of disabled veterans charged with noncombat duties—aided provost marshals in enforcing enrollment and the draft and apprehending deserters.¹⁵⁶ Despite the uphill

¹⁵¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 133-136; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 31-32; Geary, *We Need Men*, 72-73.

¹⁵² Nugent to Fry, June 27 and June 30, 1863, entry no. 1360, Letters Sent, Southern Div. AAPMG, Jun-Sept. 1863, RG 110, NARA-NY, p. 22; Nugent to "Captain," May 30, 1863, entry no. 1377, Orders and Circulars, May 1863-Mar. 1864, RG 110, NARA-NY, p. 2-3; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 241 (quote), 348-350; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 31-35; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 11.

¹⁵³ F. A. Conkling to Edwin D. Morgan, April 28, and George Dawson to Morgan, February 28, box 3, and Horatio Seymour to Morgan, March 28, box 11, all 1863, EDM Papers, NYSL; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 45; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 33; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 1: 13-14. Fry initially told his AAPMGs in New York that the state had deficiencies under the summer 1862 troop calls. One week later, however, he asserted to Stanton that New York had exceeded its quotas by over three thousand and should be exempted from the first draft. *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 168, 186.

¹⁵⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 210, 217-218; Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 36-37.

¹⁵⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 424-425; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 157, 158.

¹⁵⁶ On the Invalid, later Veteran Reserve, Corps, see *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 225-227, 360, 368; Charles M. Suplick, Jr., "The United States Invalid Corps / Veteran Reserve Corps," (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1969); Fred Pelka, Introduction, in *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Charles F. Johnson, Invalid Corps*, ed. Fred Pelka (Amherst

battle they waged and the imperfect figures yielded, provost marshals had completed enrollment in New York City by mid-June—though the process stretched on in other locales—and drafting was set to begin almost immediately afterward. In Nugent’s Southern Division alone, enrollment resulted in 291,526 names registered for the draft.¹⁵⁷

By this point, stunning news had already reached New Yorkers that the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had invaded the North. Seymour and his military staff acted decisively upon requests of Lincoln’s administration and Governor Andrew G. Curtin of Pennsylvania to dispatch troops for the defense of that state. For the third instance in as many years, Empire State militiamen rallied to the call and hastily departed, this time confidently expecting exemption from the draft. Twelve thousand ill-equipped men, mostly from New York City, left for Pennsylvania within ten days and nearly fourteen thousand by July 3, along with over eighteen hundred volunteer troops.¹⁵⁸ Seymour received thanks from Lincoln as a result, while Curtin praised the New York National Guard.¹⁵⁹ This large-scale deployment drained the city of organized troops just before they became desperately needed. In the meantime, however, Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg suddenly filled northerners with hope, and the *Herald* and many other journals called for the impending draft of three hundred thousand men to go forward as planned in order to demonstrate northern resolve and finish the war that year.¹⁶⁰

and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 1-40; Paul A. Cimbala, “Soldiering on the Home Front: The Veteran Reserve Corps and the Northern People,” in Cimbala and Miller, eds., *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front*, 182-218.

¹⁵⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 360; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 48; Nugent to Fry, June 27, 1863, entry no. 1360, RG 110, NARA-NY, p. 22.

¹⁵⁸ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 1: 12, 20, 23, 24, 51, 317; telegrams dated June 15, 1863, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL; notes on 56th New York National Guard, in “Historical Inquiries in Regard to Regiments, Batteries and Companies, Organized in, or from, the County of Kings, State of New York,” CW-BHS.

¹⁵⁹ Telegram from unknown sender to Seymour, conveying the President’s thanks, June 15, 1863, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL; Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 34.

¹⁶⁰ *New York Herald*, July 9; *New York Times*, July 10; *New York Evening Post*, June 9; all 1863.

Editors speculated that more decisive victories were imminent and conscripts would not have to go to the field. But many leading Democratic voices deplored drafting methods and the commutation clause as unjust and dangerous provocations.¹⁶¹

On July 6, New York's three division heads received orders to begin the draft. Rendezvous for conscripts were established at Buffalo, Elmira, and Riker's Island in New York Harbor, details from regiments in the field sent parties to collect men at these points, and Fry made certain the draft would be "highly public," with names of conscripts and exempted men to be printed in their local newspapers.¹⁶² As reports of impending violence by the Irish and other enemies of the draft reached him on all sides, Nugent ordered his provost marshals to quickly begin drafting in the most hostile New York City districts first, in hopes of containing any opposition before it could spread.¹⁶³ The city superintendent of police warned the secretary of war against marching a black Massachusetts regiment through the streets on its way south; officers already had their hands full protecting the city's African Americans from assault. Far to the west, race riots in Buffalo on July 6 left two black men dead and others injured.¹⁶⁴

Most New York City residents did not believe a draft would really happen until the first names were pulled on July 11. Despite warning signs, they were caught off guard by the intensity of the violence that began two days later.¹⁶⁵ The four-day orgy of destruction and bloodshed that rocked the metropolis in mid-July has symbolized Civil War-era draft resistance ever since. Scholarship long ago evolved past the once-popular idea that objection to universal service and

¹⁶¹ *New York Times*, July 13; *Watertown Daily Reformer*, July 14; *Carthage Republican*, July 28; all 1863; Donald Fisher, "The Civil War Draft in Rochester: Part Two," *Rochester History*, vol. 53, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 7-8.

¹⁶² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 463, 465, 478-479, 484-485 (quote), 486.

¹⁶³ Nugent to Capt. S. B. Gregory, July 9, and Nugent to Fry, July 9, both 1863, entry no. 1360, RG 110, NARA-NY.

¹⁶⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 473; *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, July 7, 1863.

¹⁶⁵ *New York Daily Tribune*, July 11, 1863; *New York Times*, July 12, 1863; Wall, *A Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour 1810-1886*, 35; Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 11-13.

the commutation clause were the main motivations for rioters.¹⁶⁶ Iver Bernstein, the leading historian of the New York City Draft Riots, demonstrates that the draft commencing on July 11 was the immediate instigation but not the only or even largest cause. The riots grew out of “three explosive issues” among Gotham’s population: rich versus poor, black versus white, and the city versus federal authorities. This was an “era of politicized social conflict” when communities, especially in urban areas, were deeply divided along ethnic, religious, and political lines and jockeyed for power and opportunity. When unpopular agents of Lincoln’s government carried out long-feared conscription, members of the white working class rioted against what they saw as a Republican plot to take their liberty, weaken local (Democratic) government, and empower African Americans over them.¹⁶⁷ While Irish-Americans conspicuously participated in the violence and received most of the blame, many different communities of working-class New Yorkers with “a multiplicity of grievances against Republican rule” took part.¹⁶⁸ As other scholars have shown, unstable economic conditions and endless exploitation during the war years inspired greater organization among labor across the North even as military service drew off a large portion of workers.¹⁶⁹ Draft resistance was far from confined to New York City. It occurred on a smaller scale in Rondout—a village on the Hudson where Irishwomen instigated violence and “hurrahed for Jeff. Davis and Lee”—and in Albany, Troy, Glens Falls, and a host of downstate towns and villages. Rumors of an Irish anti-draft meeting caused anxiety in Binghamton, while Townsend reported from Albany that the remaining local militia was “unreliable” due to sympathy with the mob. Disorder also broke out in Boston and elsewhere

¹⁶⁶ Geary, *We Need Men*, 106-108.

¹⁶⁷ Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 7-8 (quotes), 9-10.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 17. For reasons behind Irish-American draft resistance, see Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 173-175, 177-178.

¹⁶⁹ See Mark A. Lause, *Free Labor: The Civil War and the Making of an American Working Class* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

across the North.¹⁷⁰ With the National Guard severely depleted thanks to the Pennsylvania campaign, order was only restored in New York days later by remaining militiamen, small units of volunteer recruits, and veterans from the front.¹⁷¹ Citizens in towns and cities organized temporary organizations to protect their neighborhoods.¹⁷² Fry's suspension of drafting in New York City, Buffalo, and Brooklyn also gradually helped restore peace to the streets.¹⁷³

The summer draft riots had many effects other than widespread fear, loss of life, and property destruction. The violence temporarily halted drafting in key areas but proved a public-relations disaster for Democrats, particularly because of Seymour's sometimes tone-deaf attempts to placate draft opponents and the unfair Republican perception that he sympathized with rioters.¹⁷⁴ A New York City soldier voiced a common theme in the ranks when he likened draft opponents, violent and otherwise, to southern rebels and hoped they would be drafted, "with Seymour and the Woods in the first rank."¹⁷⁵ New Yorkers in uniform expressed shame for hailing from the state that now symbolized anti-draft violence.¹⁷⁶ Shocking attacks on African American communities in New York during the disorder made fledgling black recruitment more difficult, part of an overall culture of discouragement for potential black volunteers.¹⁷⁷ Riots formed only the most extreme in a long array of methods, legal and illegal, for groups and

¹⁷⁰ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 27, pt. 2, 875; *ibid.*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 490 (first quote), 515-517, 518 (second quote), 531; Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 30-31; Weber, *Copperheads*, 112.

¹⁷¹ *Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser*, July 16, 1863; report in 14th NYHA Regimental Letter, Passes, Order, and Furlough Book, RG 94, NARA-DC; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 527.

¹⁷² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 552-553; Cora Beach Benton to husband, July 19, 1863, in Benton, *Hard Breathing Days: The Civil War Letters of Cora Beach Benton*, ed. Thomas R. Taber (Albion, NY: Almeron Press, 2003), 207; Clarke, *Back Home in Oneida*, 95.

¹⁷³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 489, 530; Nugent to Fry, July 15, 1863, entry no. 1360, RG 110, NARA-NY.

¹⁷⁴ Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 41-42; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 181; Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 324-328.

¹⁷⁵ George W. Whitman to "Dear Mother," October 16, 1863, in Whitman, *Civil War Letters of George Washington Whitman*, ed. Jerome M. Loving (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1975), 108-109.

¹⁷⁶ See for example "10th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/10thArtHvy/10thArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016).

¹⁷⁷ Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 166-167.

individuals to resist conscription. The most common illegal means of resistance among drafted men of all backgrounds was evasion—fleeing or otherwise declining to present themselves to the local provost marshal’s office after receiving a draft notice.¹⁷⁸ Western Division AAPMG Alexander S. Diven had warned Fry that unless guards were stationed along New York’s long Canadian border, “there will be a great accession to her Britannic Majesty’s subjects about the time of the draft,” a natural prediction to make since about half of New York deserters were already in Canada.¹⁷⁹ Once enrollment, the first draft, and widespread opposition revealed the weaknesses in the Enrollment Act and the offices enforcing it, communities honed tactics for avoiding drafting and disorder, such as paying commutation for drafted residents and offering increasingly large volunteer bounties.¹⁸⁰ (As the Enrollment Act was meant to encourage volunteering and thus avoid conscription, these local actions did not really constitute draft resistance.) In its various shapes, opposition to the federal draft demonstrated a situation seen throughout the war: New Yorkers and other northerners approached wartime mobilization as members of communities and worked within them to achieve and preserve their desired level of participation.

Draft-inspired riots were dramatic but generally localized affairs, and most towns and villages did not witness violence. Except in major cities like Buffalo and Albany, where anticipated trouble had prompted Fry to suspend it, initial drafting had proceeded well in predominantly Republican Northern and Western New York.¹⁸¹ But New York City, with its large, diverse population, functioned as a barometer and lodestar for conscription across the state

¹⁷⁸ Peter Levine, “Draft Evasion in the North during the Civil War, 1863-1865,” *Journal of American History* 67 (1981): 816-834.

¹⁷⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 425-426.

¹⁸⁰ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 325-327; Geary, *We Need Men*, 113-114.

¹⁸¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 556.

and beyond. “The enforcement of the draft throughout the country depends upon its enforcement in New York City,” the governor of Iowa telegraphed Secretary of War Stanton. From Elmira, Diven concurred, telling the Provost Marshal General that if the government yielded to the rioters, resistance and claims for local exemption would spread across the Union. On July 18, Nugent reported all districts in the Southern Division except the Ninth ready for a resumption of the draft. Officers decided to restart the process there, then move westward across the state.¹⁸²

Soon, however, the New York Democracy made their continual opposition known, and subsequent events illustrated persistent political divisions in mobilization and the draft. Early August was another anxious period of slow progress at recruiting stations and in the field, which contributed to falling gold prices.¹⁸³ On August 1, Seymour formally asked Lincoln and Stanton for a delay of the draft.¹⁸⁴ He then initiated a lengthy correspondence with the president and other officials, essentially refusing to cooperate with the draft. To those inclined to doubt Seymour, a general lack of support seemed to emanate from the state government.¹⁸⁵ Fry complained that New Yorkers erred in thinking their problems with quotas, credits, and other draft-related matters were egregious compared to other states, but under Seymour and Lincoln’s influence his bureau agreed to improve recordkeeping and communication with governors, and the Adjutant General’s Office closely monitored recruiting and mustering in New York.¹⁸⁶ On August 19, the draft began anew in New York City; with thousands of troops on standby and the

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 494-495 (quote), 496-497, 530, 539, 546-547.

¹⁸³ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 470.

¹⁸⁴ Lincoln to Seymour, August 1, 1863, in Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 6: 361-362; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 607.

¹⁸⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 607, 608-610, 612-619, 627-628, 635-636, 639-640, 640-651, 652-654, 662, 681-682, 703-706, 755-756; correspondence between Lincoln and Seymour, August 1863, in Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 6: 361-417; Seymour, *Public Record*, 145-159; Lincoln to Seymour, August 7, 1863, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL.

¹⁸⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 720-721, 728-729, 765, 856-858; J. B. Stonehouse to Seymour, August 25, August 27, 1863, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL.

governor reluctantly urging compliance, the renewed draft went as smoothly in Gotham as it did throughout the state.¹⁸⁷ When each name was pulled and read aloud in Poughkeepsie, the assembled citizens applauded. That evening the conscripts paraded through town and enjoyed a supper courtesy of the commissioner of the enrollment board.¹⁸⁸

Localities made strenuous efforts to avoid drafting, however. In Syracuse, the mayor had won election on a promise of getting previous volunteers credited so that the city would be spared conscription. Syracusans donated funds for a cash prize to the first one hundred local volunteers for the Fifteenth New York Cavalry and sought to convince Diven that a draft would be unnecessary.¹⁸⁹ Providing conscripts with funds with which to purchase commutation or a substitute became common practice by late summer, with churches and commutation clubs pooling their resources, women working to earn the necessary money for drafted relatives, and towns raising funds through bonds and real estate taxes.¹⁹⁰ New York became second only to Pennsylvania in the amount of commutation paid, totaling nearly five and a half million dollars.¹⁹¹ To many, public provision for drafted men belonged to the same movement as supporting soldier's families. When Brooklyn aldermen voted for a three million-dollar appropriation for conscripted residents, they sought to "assist the poor man who may be drafted, that he would not be taken from his home, family and friends against his will." Others echoed this notion and protested late in the year when federal authorities proposed abolishing commutation.¹⁹² Opponents of Lincoln's government, however, often opposed both the draft and

¹⁸⁷ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 72; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 633, 671-674

¹⁸⁸ "Dutchess County, New York Civil War Newspaper Clippings."

¹⁸⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 693-694, 714-718; "15th Regiment Cavalry, NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/cavalry/15thCav/15thCavCWN.htm> (accessed January 12, 2017).

¹⁹⁰ Geary, *We Need Men*, 113-115.

¹⁹¹ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 21-23, 31.

¹⁹² "Stated Session: Board of Aldermen, August 31, 1863," Andrew D. Baird Papers, BHS, p. 293 (quote); J. Watts de Peyster to Edwin D. Morgan, December 10, 1863, and same to same, May 30, 1864, box 4, EDM Papers, NYSL.

any efforts to work within the system through commutation and taxation for local bounties.¹⁹³

Scholars have demonstrated how the Enrollment Act represented a leap forward in centralization of power, but actions of local governments and communities to minimize the law's effects showed their continued, even increased influence in mobilization in the war's third year.

Conscription was a complicated issue for soldiers just as it was for civilians, but often for different reasons. Servicemen's opinions on the draft paralleled how they felt about volunteering. Having long believed that winning the war was a matter of securing large and constant reinforcements, soldiers closely followed draft news from home and mostly supported the draft and bringing their regiments up to strength with conscripts.¹⁹⁴ Yet many of these same men approved of friends and loved ones avoiding conscription through commutation or securing substitutes.¹⁹⁵ The fewer than fifty thousand men who actually entered service as conscripts

¹⁹³ Fisher, "The Civil War Draft in Rochester: Part Two," 46-47; Geary, *We Need Men*, 104-105. This attitude was far from universal among Democrats. The anti-Lincoln, pro-war *New York Sunday Mercury* argued drafting was unnecessary because large bounties and generous family support could bring in sufficient volunteers. Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 202-203.

¹⁹⁴ John Tidd to "Friend Amelia," February 20, and same to same, March 12, both 1863, in Tidd, *Dear Friend Amelia: The Civil War Letters of Private John Tidd*, ed. Mary Jordan and Joyce Hatch, (Ithaca, NY: Six Mile Creek Press, 2011), 68, 69; Richard Gould to "Dear Brother Marvin," April 7, 1863, in Robert F. Harris and John Niflot, *Dear Sister: The Civil War Letters of the Brothers Gould* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 73; Francis C. Barlow to Edwin D. Morgan, November 11, 1863, box 2, EDM Papers, NYSL; "50th Regiment Engineers New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/other/50thEng/50thEngCWN.htm>; "17th Independent Battery New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/17thIndBat/17thIndBatCWN.htm>; "10th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings," <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghistm/civil/artillery/10thArtHvy/10thArtHvyCWN.htm>; all *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center* (accessed January 10, 2016); Hermon Clarke to "My Dear Father," April 11, November 7, 1863, in Clarke, *Back Home in Oneida*, 66, 114; J. J. to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, March 18, 1863, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 174; George Breck to "Dear Union," May 15, 1863, in "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L, George Breck Columns: Chapter XIX: "A Willingness to Tarry;" A Break In The Action May 15, 1863 – June 10, 1863," ed. Bob Marcotte, *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatLBreckChap19Tarry.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016); William Rammel to "My Dear Parents," January 10, 1864, in Rammel, *Like Grass Before the Scythe*, 81.

¹⁹⁵ George W. Whitman to "Dear Mother," September 7, 1863, and same to same, August 30, 1864, in Whitman, *Civil War Letters of George Washington Whitman*, 104, 130; Edward K. Wightman to "Dear Brother," September 14, 1863, in Wightman, *From Antietam to Fort Fisher*, 153; Richard Gould to "Dear Brother Marvin," September 21, 1863, in Harris and Niflot, *Dear Sister*, 104; C. B. Tenure to "Dear Brother," September 12, 1864, in Larry H. Whiteaker and W. Calvin Dickinson, eds., *Civil War Letters of the Tenure Family, Rockland County, N. Y. 1862-1865* (New City, NY: Historical Society of Rockland County, 1990), 76; George Breck to "My Dear Ellen,"

under the federal draft (three thousand of whom came from New York) were destined for a very difficult experience.¹⁹⁶ “If the boys of Oneida know their biz they will never go into the Army as conscripts,” wrote a soldier from that county in December 1863, for volunteers subjected draftees to suspicion and abuse. (This attitude, however, was not universal among soldiers.)¹⁹⁷ New York regiments in the field received large reinforcement from the draft depots in the late summer and fall. So many of these substitutes and conscripts were unfit, however, that many underwent another medical inspection.¹⁹⁸ After many more went absent from their regiments, the Army of the Potomac executed five deserters—all of them recently arrived from draft depots—to serve as an example to conscripts and substitutes.¹⁹⁹ Some drafted men thought they only had to serve nine months; feeling betrayed when told they would have to serve full three-year terms, many deserted, or at least threatened to, rather than be “misused like dogs.”²⁰⁰ The relative handful of New Yorkers who joined the army as conscripts usually did so voluntarily, deciding not to take advantage of commutation or substitution, and guarded their liberty with the same spirit of other American soldiers.

July 1862 had seen the debut of a thirteen-month period packed with events, many of them driven by controversies over the draft. Despite—even because of—common anxieties about conscription, residents of New York and their fellow northerners found ways to mitigate its

February 19, 1865, in Breck, “George Breck’s Civil War Letters from the ‘Reynolds Battery,’” *Rochester in the Civil War*, 149; Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers*, 84-85

¹⁹⁶ Figure on New York conscripts in Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 210.

¹⁹⁷ Hermon Clarke to “My dear Father,” December 7, 1863, in Clarke, *Back Home in Oneida*, 117-118 (quote); Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 164-166. See also John Tidd to “Dear Friend Amelia,” January 18, 1864, in Tidd, *Dear Friend Amelia*, 100.

¹⁹⁸ William Jones to “Dear Sister,” November 11, 1863, in Trimble, ed., *Brothers ‘Til Death*, 63; “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings.”

¹⁹⁹ Special Order no. 226, August 21, 1863, 145th NY Regimental Order Book, RG 94, NARA-DC; Robert Nugent, Circular no. 5, September 17, 1863, entry no. 1377, RG 110, NARA-NY, p. 28; “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings.”

²⁰⁰ Charles Biddlecom to “Dear Esther,” April 22, 1864, in Biddlecom, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 133-134.

effects and preserve social stability. The Enrollment Act was designed to function as motivation for volunteering and to deploy the draft as a last resort should communities fail to meet their quotas. Faced with a draft law and its potentially dangerous effects, citizens worked through their communities to meet the challenge and ensure that very few of their sons and neighbors would serve under duress. Fewer than one quarter of enrollees had their names drawn; of that group, fewer still—amounting to one in forty-seven among New York enrollees—entered the army as conscripts. Just one resident of Manhattan’s infamously poor Five Points neighborhood did so.²⁰¹ In 1863, northerners largely came to accept the world of recruitment fraud and skyrocketing bounties as a price that must be paid to keep mobilization voluntary.

²⁰¹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 82; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 210; Anbinder, “Which Poor Man’s Fight?” 344.

CHAPTER SIX

“IF THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK WANT THE WAR TO CLOSE,
THEY MUST FILL UP THE RANKS OF OUR REGIMENT”:

BITTERNESS AND RELIEF, 1863-1865

By late January 1864, Thomas and Robert Hamilton, abolitionists and editors of the leading African American newspaper in New York City, had received many reports of black soldiers cheated of their pay and otherwise abused. On January 30, the *Anglo-African* printed a letter from a member of the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts Infantry who, like his comrades in the regiment, had refused to accept anything less than full compensation. “We did not enlist for the pay. Any man would be foolish to risk his life for from \$13 to \$21 per month,” he explained. “We enlisted because we considered it our duty, and all we ask is to be treated as men should be.”¹ In commentary on the letter titled “There’s Money in It,” the editors praised soldiers of the Fifty-Fourth and Fifty-Fifth—many of whom hailed from New York State—for standing up for their rights. “Two grand passions have grown up in our present war,” they declared, “the passion of patriotism, and the passion of making money,” with the latter now strongest. Whereas men had rushed to the colors in 1861 with no thought of payment, now recruits expected bounties in “colossal sums ...” But members of the Massachusetts black regiments were different: “They are fighting for rights, not for money, they are soldiers of the United States, not mercenaries.”² While soldiers had expected proper benefits from the war’s beginning, the Hamiltons articulated a rising concern among northerners over corruption in mobilization—something especially familiar to black soldiers and their supporters. Two weeks later, a recruiter responded to the

¹ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, January 30, 1864. On the importance of this journal, see Debra Jackson, “‘A Cultural Stronghold’: The *Anglo-African* Newspaper and the Black Community of New York,” *New York History* 85 (2004): 331-357.

² *Ibid.*, January 30, 1864.

editorial with a letter admitting that while just compensation was important, enlistment carried many other advantages as well, including the privilege of serving the nation.³

These three pieces of writing exemplified the complications of wartime mobilization and tensions between individuals' wants and those of state and nation. By recruiting men and then failing to pay them, Union authorities demonstrated that the war effort did not necessarily improve in efficiency as they organized a force of United States Colored Troops and took on other large responsibilities. To a considerable degree, mobilization remained a localized and state-run affair, and tensions between citizens and all levels of government worsened even as Union forces drove onward to victory in late 1864 and early 1865. Together, however, the war's final grim years saw federal and state governments attract enough men with the sort of benefits discussed in the *Anglo-African* to eventually prevail.

In the late summer of 1863, war supporters agreed that recruiting had stalled and the armies needed a large influx of men to make decisive progress. Many veteran regiments were due for discharge in the coming year, which caused additional concern. On September 3, the state Republican convention in Utica attacked Governor Seymour for obstructing the draft and supposedly encouraging the Draft Riots.⁴ As the draft continued in several New York City and Brooklyn districts, even the Democratic *Herald*—calling for “a few blows more, and the bogus confederacy will fall into ruins”—blamed Seymour for New York's failure to meet its quotas without drafting, even as the paper endorsed his party's platform.⁵ Such accusations were not entirely fair to Seymour but reflected war supporters' frustrations with hardline Democrats. Leaders of the latter faction tried to spark outrage by claiming New York would not be properly

³ Ibid., February 13, 1864.

⁴ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 338. See *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 755-756, for similar claims against Seymour by General John A. Dix, who monitored the draft in New York City.

⁵ *New York Herald*, September 11, 1863.

credited for draftees who commuted and that a new draft impended. Provost Marshal General Fry ordered his three division chiefs in the state to address these falsehoods publicly.⁶ Democrats also interpreted Lincoln's call for troops in October as a sign of failure.⁷ Nevertheless, the Union Party—as the Republicans had renamed themselves—swept the fall elections in New York and across the North.⁸

Meanwhile, federal and state officials launched new efforts to reform mobilization practices and bring in troops. Lincoln, aware of Seymour's sensitivity to perceived slights toward New York, ordered a new enrollment for certain problematic districts and invited the governor to monitor it.⁹ Noting that the Enrollment Act was meant to reinforce the armies, Fry deplored the “system of raising new and disbanding old regiments . . . calculated to keep us forever at disadvantage with an enemy who pursues the opposite and wiser policy.” On October 17, Lincoln called on the governors to supply three hundred thousand men for units in the field. States and districts failing to meet their new quotas would face a draft beginning January 5, 1864. New York's quota was 60,378, and the state still had deficiencies to meet under the summer draft.¹⁰ Seymour issued a proclamation calling on New Yorkers to obey their “duty” and give generously for the large bounties needed to meet the call with volunteers and avoid a tyrannical draft.¹¹ In November, Fry told his officers it was “the desire of this Bureau that Governors of States from which troops are required shall take the leading part in the work.” Seymour had recently made several campaign speeches denouncing manpower calls as wastes of

⁶ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 82; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 981.

⁷ Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 350-351.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 352; Weber, *Copperheads*, 121-123.

⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 866, 884; Col. Robert Nugent, Circular no. 13, October 12, 1863, entry no. 1377, RG 110, NARA-NY.

¹⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 888 (quote), 892, 930; Seymour, “Governor Seymour at a Democratic Meeting Held at Utica, N.Y., Oct. 29, 1863,” in Seymour, *Public Record*, 178.

¹¹ Seymour, “Governor Seymour's Proclamation Promulgating the Call for Recruits,” in Seymour, *Public Record*, 147-148.

life, but now he endorsed a state plan to offer bounties for veterans and recruits, assign quotas to towns, and fill old regiments. Gratified, Fry ordered provost marshals in other states to adopt a version of this program and agreed to consider revising New York's ever-controversial quotas.¹²

New Yorkers farther down the chain matched these endeavors. For months before Lincoln issued his October troop call, communities had sought to meet their quotas by providing local conscripts with money for commutation or finding substitutes.¹³ They generally switched back to concentrating on securing volunteers after October 17 as commutation became more controversial.¹⁴ Community bounties combined with state and federal offers soon bore fruit in the form of rapid volunteering.¹⁵ Localities continued these efforts into December, driven by what Adjutant General Sprague called "a growing energy and a determination to fill the quota" of the state and escape the "iron yokes" of conscription.¹⁶ The village of Turin in Lewis County voted to pay each recruit a \$200 bounty, while Monroe County offered \$300. One of many enterprises in New York City involved a committee of the Union League, which published a notice (endorsed by black abolitionist Henry Hyland Garnet among others) seeking honest white and black recruiters to go among their neighborhoods promoting special family relief and the \$300 county bounty.¹⁷ Soldiers at the front, angered by what they considered small-mindedness

¹² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 916, 1012 (quote), 1016, 1100-1101, 1108-1109, 1116-1117; Seymour, *Public Record*, 160-197; Geary, *We Need Men*, 69-70.

¹³ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 21-23; *The First Draft in Otsego County*, undated, box 2, Civil War Collection, New York State Historical Association.

¹⁴ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 24-25.

¹⁵ "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery H Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatHCWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016); Geary, *We Need Men*, 111.

¹⁶ John T. Sprague to Edwin D. Morgan, December 15, 1863, box 12, EDM Papers, NYSL. For an example of community efforts during this period, involving public subscriptions to fund bounties, see *Watertown Daily Reformer*, December 16, 1863.

¹⁷ Franklin B. Hough, *History of Lewis County, New York: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Syracuse: D. Mason and Co., 1883), 517; Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 56-57; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, December 26, 1863. For other such efforts in New York City and Brooklyn, see George Opdyke to Edwin D. Morgan, December 15, 1863, box 10, EDM Papers, NYSL;

among civilians, reminded those back home they must either send more troops or sign on themselves. A member of New York City's renowned Fifty-First noted: "[I]f the people of New York want the war to close, they must fill up the ranks of our regiment, and that will be doing a share toward it."¹⁸ As 1863 ended, the state adjutant general estimated the Empire State had secured over sixty-nine thousand enlistments during the year, including ten thousand reenlistments, for a total of nearly 292,000 since the war's beginning. One policy improvement involved forming infantry companies to be embedded in veteran regiments rather than creating new regiments, though the latter system unfortunately continued for artillery and cavalry.¹⁹ Federal authorities pushed back the January 5 volunteering deadline, but citizens soon faced additional quotas.²⁰

The period from late 1863 to early 1864 saw the full implementation of several initiatives meant to increase Union forces without conscription. That fall and winter, army camps hummed with the reenlistment question.²¹ With more than two hundred thousand battle-tested veterans eligible for discharge within one year, federal and state authorities acted decisively late in 1863 to retain their valuable services. The commander of the famous Mozart Regiment told Seymour that permission to bring his entire unit home to recruit "would be a greater inducement to the old soldiers who have been so long in the field than any other." Other veterans maintained that

"Men to Whom the County Bounty was Paid by the Comm. From Nov. 1st 1863 to May [13th or 18th], 1864," and officers of 14th New York State Militia to S. B. Chittenden, n. d. (January or February 1864), both CW-BHS.

¹⁸ "Uno" to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, December 30, 1863, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 230. See also Hermon Clarke to "My dear Father," November 7, and same to same, December 7, both 1863, in Clarke, *Back Home in Oneida*, 114, 116-117.

¹⁹ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 10, 11-12.

²⁰ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 11.

²¹ Joseph Hopkins Twitchell to "Dear Boy," October 4, 1863, in Twitchell, *The Civil War Letters of Joseph Hopkins Twitchell*, 266; "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings."

furloughs to visit home would be a far more attractive incentive than bounties or anything else.²² In November, the War Department announced that, in addition to existing benefits, reenlisting soldiers would be awarded four-hundred-dollar bounties and furloughs of at least thirty days. Furthermore, units in which three-quarters of members reenlisted could go home in a body “to reorganize and recruit,” and these commands would have “Veteran Volunteer” added to their titles; regiments failing to secure the minimum three-quarters would cease to exist at the end of their terms and the remaining men transferred elsewhere. Reenlisted regiments would be credited to the states and, where possible, to the districts and sub-districts they came from.²³ That winter, the Union high command worked hard to encourage reenlistments.²⁴ Results were uneven, with some regiments meeting the three-quarters reenlistment mark and others failing. “In our regiment re-enlisting goes on very slowly at present,” wrote a soldier in Sickles’s old Excelsior Brigade. “All we want is some patriot from New York to come out here and make a stirring speech.” An artilleryman noted that many soldiers refused to reenlist when promised benefits failed to materialize. Some infantrymen wanted transfers to different service branches, while other men simply had no desire to serve another three years. These attitudes reflected the challenges of a nation in its third year of war.²⁵ Yet in the end, government incentives, combined with the

²² Col. Thomas W. Egan to Horatio Seymour, October 31, 1863, in 40th NY Letter and Order Book, RG 94, NARA-DC (quote); “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings;” “Prono” to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, June 8, and “Gladiator” to editors, December 18, both 1863, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 194-195, 229.

²³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 899, 1084 (quote); Geary, *We Need Men*, 112; McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 173.

²⁴ “18th Independent Battery New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/18thIndBat/18thIndBatCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016); Circular, February 4, 1864, 52nd NY Regimental Letter, Order, and Miscellaneous Book, RG 94, NARA-DC.

²⁵ “Guardian” to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, December 28, 1863, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 230 (quote); “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings;” *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 86. See also Henry Suydam to “Dear Mother,” April 7, 1864, in Suydam, *A Lincoln Cavalryman: The Civil War Letters of Henry Suydam, 1st New York Cavalry*, ed. Daniel P. Black (Hampstead, MD: Old Line Publishing, 2011), 151-152; Simon Bolivar Hulbert to “Sister Libbie,” February 26, 1864, in Hulbert, *One Battle Too Many: The Writings of Simon Bolivar Hulbert, Private, Company E, 100th Regiment, New York State Volunteers, 1861-1864*, ed. Richard P. Galloway (Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, 1987), 290; Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle*, 89-90.

patriotism of many veterans and their sense that one more effort would crush the rebels, had great effect: in the Union Army as a whole over half of eligible men reenlisted, securing credits for their localities and their services for the nation. New York's 20,518 veterans reenlisting in 1864 constituted about half of those eligible.²⁶ Historians identify this renewed commitment as a great inspiration and practical benefit to the Union, as well as further proof that ordinary northern fighting men were devoted to their country's cause.²⁷ A Yates County soldier sent the names of the reenlisted in his regiment home to be printed in a local newspaper and promote volunteering.²⁸

The long process of opening the Union ranks to African American men was finally underway in the northern states by late 1863, and it ultimately had an even greater impact than reenlistment efforts. Soon after the Emancipation Proclamation had authorized black service, their recruitment began in earnest.²⁹ Initially, however—and despite strident support from Rochester resident Frederick Douglass—the War Department did not include New York among states permitted to organize black troops; this was no doubt due at least partially to Seymour's opposition.³⁰ That the Empire State did not lead in black recruitment was a matter of shame and regret to Douglass, who nevertheless stepped up his efforts.³¹ Though black recruitment remained controversial among whites until war's end, in early 1863 more and more in New York of both major political parties supported the policy, often for hard-nosed reasons. A pro-war

²⁶ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1865), 1: 8.

²⁷ McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 173; Tristan Edward Jolivet, "Continuing the Cause: Union Soldier Reenlistments of 1864," (master's thesis, University of California, Fullerton, 1999), 103-105, 116-117, 123-125.

²⁸ "50th Regiment Engineers New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings." For the inspiration afforded by the reenlistment movement, see also Joseph Hopkins Twitchell to "Dear Ned," January 3, 1864, in Twitchell, *The Civil War Letters of Joseph Hopkins Twitchell*, 291.

²⁹ Smith, "Let Us All Be Grateful That We Have Colored Troops That Will Fight," 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 156; Mitchell, *Horatio Seymour of New York*, 300.

³¹ Sernett, *North Star Country*, 238-239.

Democratic paper in New York City claimed society would be seriously damaged should any more whites leave for the army and that drafting them would be “preposterous” when so many blacks stood available.³² Abolitionists such as Douglass and Henry Highland Garnett had more idealistic motivations as they strove to find recruits in New York for the first black regiments formed in the northeastern United States, the Fifty-Fourth and Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts. Douglass’s widely known address “Men of Color, to Arms”—released one day before the Enrollment Act became law—linked loyalty to the nation with social revolution, told readers this was no longer exclusively a “white man’s war,” and advised them to join the Bay State’s regiments.³³ In an essay published the following month, Douglass answered the common question “Why Should a Colored Man Enlist?” Chief among reasons, he asserted, were the obligation of every man to serve his country no matter his race; additionally, in fighting for their own freedom blacks would ensure their citizenship and dignity in American society.³⁴

Douglass, Garnett, and their allies faced an uphill battle in New York. The war had brought improved economic opportunities that discouraged volunteering among the state’s estimated nine thousand military-age black men. Unequal practices in the military and outright hostility from many whites repelled potential enlistees as well. The War Department authorized black troops a lower payrate than whites, no enlistment bounty, and no opportunity for officer

³² Smith, “Let Us All Be Grateful That We Have Colored Troops That Will Fight,” 6; Weber, *Copperheads*, 86-87; Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 291, 313; *New York Sunday Mercury*, February 8, 1863, in Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 161-162 (quote). See also Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 157. For a message of opposition, see “Beecher Blasphemy and Negro Patriotism,” *The Old Guard*, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1863): 18.

³³ Frederick Douglass, “Men of Color, to Arms!” in Douglass, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, ed. Philip S. Foner (New York: International Publishers, 1950-1955), 3: 317-319; Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 157; Egerton, *Thunder at the Gates*, 75-76.

³⁴ Douglass, “Why Should a Colored Man Enlist?” in Douglass, *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, 3: 340-343; Blight, *Frederick Douglass’ Civil War*, 160.

commissions.³⁵ Beginning in May and stretching into the autumn, two committees of leading New Yorkers, one made up of African Americans and the other of whites, petitioned Lincoln and Seymour to authorize a New York black regiment. Lincoln, ever careful to retain the governor's support, deferred to him on the matter, while the bigoted Seymour ignored it.³⁶ This lack of federal and state support, combined with the chilling message of the Draft Riots, made Douglass' promises ring hollow to both his audiences and himself. The great activist gave up his northern recruiting mission in August, though he later promoted efforts in the South.³⁷ Writers in the *Anglo-African* expressed frustration both with Douglass and their state government. When Douglass and other prominent African Americans signed their names to a recruiting call in Philadelphia, a letter writer attacked them for exhorting other men to fight while failing to go themselves—a criticism white abolitionists like Horace Greeley knew all too well. Douglass protested that his work at home was too important to abandon, while his two sons serving in the Fifty-Fourth gave him adequate representation at the front.³⁸ On September 26, the paper carried news of "Colored Men Drafted in Herkimer and Otsego Counties." Noting the hypocrisy of Albany officials who allowed conscription of black citizens while denying them equal terms of enlistment, the editors advised their male readers to forget state pride and enlist for Rhode Island, which offered its black recruits bounties, family support, and good officers.³⁹ African American

³⁵ Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 26-29; Seraile, "The Struggle to Raise Black Regiments in New York State, 1861-1864," 230-231; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 159.

³⁶ Henry O'Rielly, *First Organization of Colored Troops in the State of New York, to Aid in Suppressing the Slaveholders' Rebellion* (New York: Baker and Godwin, 1864), 1-6; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 128; Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 33; Seraile, "The Struggle to Raise Black Regiments in New York State, 1861-1864," 221-226.

³⁷ Sernett, *North Star Country*, 240-241; Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 31; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 161, 164-165, 166-167.

³⁸ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, July 25, August 1, August 22, all 1863; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 169-173.

³⁹ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, August 15, September 26 (quote), both 1863.

New Yorkers, like people of other races, expected elites to provide leadership and just benefits in exchange for their involvement in mobilization.

Ventures to improve and expand black recruitment were already underway. Under pressure from industrialists seeking to preserve their white labor force, the federal government assumed a guiding hand. In May, the War Department established the Bureau of Colored Troops and issued strict regulations for selecting qualified white officers to command them.⁴⁰ Gallant fighting by black regiments in the field inspired and increased their supporters.⁴¹ On July 15 and 16, while the Draft Riots raged to the south, a large convention of black citizens met at Poughkeepsie to plan Colored Troops recruitment and ensure they received excellent leadership and “the remuneration and *protection* which belongs to a Citizen Soldier of the Union.”⁴² In November, after Seymour refused to authorize a black regiment, sixty-six leading New York whites—among them Daniel Sickles, Peter Cooper, P. T. Barnum, and William Cullen Bryant—formed the New York Association for Colored Volunteers to make “a prompt and vigorous movement” securing the services of black New Yorkers; this would ensure their state gained the credits instead of others. “Our country’s interest and self-interest here unite,” read their published appeal.⁴³ After Stanton approved their request to raise Colored Troops, Seymour changed his tune somewhat, refusing to have anything to do with the project but not blocking it, as the men so raised would be credited to New York.⁴⁴ The Volunteering Committee of New

⁴⁰ Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 35-60, 63-65; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 215-216.

⁴¹ “Negro Troops,” *Harper’s Weekly*, vol. 7, no. 338 (June 20, 1863): 386; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 695-696; Egerton, *Thunder at the Gates*, 140-145.

⁴² *Record of Action of the Convention Held at Poughkeepsie, N.Y., July 15th and 16th, 1863, for the Purpose of Facilitating the Introduction of Colored Troops into the Service of the United States* (New York: Francis and Loutrel, 1863), 3, online at *Colored Conventions*, <http://coloredconventions.org/items/show/587> (accessed August 18, 2016).

⁴³ O’Rielly, *First Organization of Colored Troops in the State of New York*, 6-7; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 1081-1083.

⁴⁴ O’Rielly, *First Organization of Colored Troops in the State of New York*, 8.

York City's Union League Club, headquartered on Wall Street, switched its efforts to black recruiting and united with the association in raising a regiment.⁴⁵ Considerable doubt existed in the War Department and elsewhere that a city which had seen vicious attacks on black people mere months earlier could organize a black regiment, and many whites in that city disapproved of the effort.⁴⁶ By early January 1864, however, a month of determined recruiting, state and local bounties, and new willingness among black New Yorkers to enlist had brought some seven hundred recruits to the regiment's camp on Riker's Island.⁴⁷ George Bliss, Jr., a leading architect of the project, predicted this would be "the best officered regiment that ever left the State of New York," adding: "The men are physically equal to any, and manifest great intelligence in learning their duties."⁴⁸ The presentation of colors to the Twentieth United States Colored Troops by local white ladies and its departure from New York City on March 5, 1864, were spectacles rivaling the march of the Seventh Regiment through the same streets nearly three years before. "NEW YORK REDEEMED!" declared the *Anglo-African*, and many other witnesses also remarked on the dramatic shift in white perception toward black troops.⁴⁹

Even before the Twentieth mustered into service, so successful was the Union League in creating the first black regiment from the Empire State that the club obtained authorization from the Bureau of Colored Troops to raise two more regiments.⁵⁰ In mid-1864, the main effort of recruiting African American soldiers shifted from northerners at home to officers and civilian

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 13-14; Bliss, "Autobiography of George Bliss," 1: 161-162.

⁴⁶ Bliss, "Autobiography of George Bliss," 1: 166-171; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 240.

⁴⁷ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, December 26, 1863; *Colored Citizens, to Arms!* broadside, ca. 1863, BHS; Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 33, 92-93; *New York Times*, December 28, 1863; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 10.

⁴⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 10.

⁴⁹ O'Rielly, *First Organization of Colored Troops in the State of New York*, 15-20; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 128-131; William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2011), 309-310; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, March 12, 1864 (quote).

⁵⁰ Seraile, "The Struggle to Raise Black Regiments in New York State, 1861-1864," 230-231; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 4, 55; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, February 6, 1864.

agents in the occupied South.⁵¹ New York ultimately received credit for 4,125 of the nearly 180,000 U. S. Colored Troops raised during the war.⁵² Their recruitment highlighted the continued importance of associations and determined citizens as prime movers in the war effort. “Without the constant political agitation from influential whites, the Department of War would probably never have consented to authorize the recruitment of New York’s Afro-Americans,” historian William Seraile reflects. “Yet all of their efforts would have been for nothing if blacks had not been willing and even eager to confront the slaveholder’s wrath on the battlefield.”⁵³ From 1864 on, however, black enlistment in New York and other northern states suffered from the same inefficiency and corruption marring recruitment in general—with the added element of pervasive white enmity, even among those who accepted black recruitment. Support among whites for the ceremonies honoring the Twentieth was far from universal.⁵⁴ Irish-American officer Charles G. Halpine’s popular poem “Sambo’s Right to be Kilt” used familiar racist language to convince northern whites to accept black troops willing to put their lives on the line, no matter how repugnant that idea might be to whites.⁵⁵ Despite such tensions, black communities in the North took to volunteering with gusto in late 1863. Drawing on their tight-knit communities and desire to achieve emancipation, demonstrate manhood and independence, and prove their fitness for equal rights, black northerners enlisted at a higher rate than whites and exhibited more discipline in service.⁵⁶ Thirty-six out of thirty-nine men from a black

⁵¹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 64.

⁵² Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 1: 62.

⁵³ Seraile, “The Struggle to Raise Black Regiments in New York State, 1861-1864,” 233.

⁵⁴ Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword*, 309-310; McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 240; Allan Nevins, ed., *A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Colonel Charles S. Wainwright 1861-1865* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 328-329.

⁵⁵ “Sambo’s Right to be Kilt,” in Charles G. Halpine, *The Life and Adventures, Songs, Services, and Speeches of Private Myles O’Reilly* (New York: Carleton, 1864), 55-56; William Hanchett, *Irish: Charles G. Halpine in Civil War America* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1970), 70-71, 84.

⁵⁶ On black motivations and enthusiasm for service, see for instance Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 4-5, 9, 10, 38-42; Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, 223-250; Glatthaar, 71, 79.

neighborhood in Westchester County volunteered within a three-month period, and so many enlisted in Ithaca that a resident felt “lonely.”⁵⁷ Remarkably, not one among two thousand black recruits encamped on Riker’s Island deserted.⁵⁸ The Navy had a long history of black service, and staffing problems during the war prompted the service to drop its five percent black enlistment cap and to hire recruiting agents in the South. By 1865, one in five sailors was African American.⁵⁹

Blacks were not uniformly enthusiastic about serving the Union, however, and their recruitment soon suffered from the government’s failure to sustain its promises.⁶⁰ Historian Joseph T. Glatthaar asserts that “the conduct of recruiters affected every other officer and man in the USCT.”⁶¹ White soldiers, recruiters, and provost marshals insulted black men, accepted some who were in poor physical condition, and robbed many of their bounties, leaving the men and their families destitute. Even the renowned Twentieth regiment was partially filled through fraud tolerated by General Francis B. Spinola, who headed recruitment in New York City; the regimental recruiting committee reimbursed those affected. The vigilant *Anglo-African* frequently warned its readers about such abuse and assisted black soldiers by helping them secure their full payments and printing the recruiting regulations.⁶² Just as damaging was official

⁵⁷ Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 33; “Franklin” to “Dear Editor,” January 6, in *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, January 23, 1864 (quote).

⁵⁸ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 80.

⁵⁹ Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 12; Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy*, 11-12, 14. See also Steven J. Ramold, *Slaves, Sailors, Citizens: African Americans in the Union Navy* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002); Barbara Brooks Tomblin, *Bluejackets and Contrabands: African Americans and the Union Navy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009).

⁶⁰ On the complexities in blacks’ motivations and service, see Gary Kynoch, “Terrible Dilemmas: Black Enlistment in the Union Army during the American Civil War,” *Slavery and Abolition* 18 (1997): 104-127; Carole Emberton, “‘Only Murder Makes Men’: Reconsidering the Black Military Experience,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 2 (2012): 362-393; Brian Taylor, “A Politics of Service: Black Northerners’ Debates over Enlistment in the Civil War,” *Civil War History* 58 (2012): 451-480.

⁶¹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 63.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 76; Quinn, *Freedom Journey*, 89-91; Bliss, “Autobiography of George Bliss,” 1: 172-173; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, November 28, December 26, 1863, January 9, January 23, January 30, February 6, March 12, April 23, September 10, 1864.

contempt in the form of unequal pay and no provision for federal bounties. Black and white editors alike agitated for reforming these outrages, which discouraged black enlistment and thus hurt the war effort.⁶³ On July 15, 1864, the Secretary of War finally authorized equal benefits for United States Colored Troops.⁶⁴ But back pay was slow to arrive, and conditions for recruits remained deplorable in many instances. In January 1865, an officer lured a southern freedman to a Chenango County town with promises of farm employment, then sold him to a substitute broker for \$900; the black man received none of it. In reporting the incident, the *Anglo-African* remarked: "If we are to be bought and sold in New York it seems useless to abolish slavery in Maryland."⁶⁵ Challenges for the state's black communities in wartime often were more extreme than those for whites, but they, too, relied on family and group support networks and participated in sanitary relief fairs.⁶⁶

These quandaries of black recruitment belonged to larger, disturbing trends in mobilization. In a classic work, Fred A. Shannon identified 1863 as the year when a "mercenary factor" overtook efforts, especially in New York and New England, where communities concentrated on meeting their quotas through ever-higher bounties and the system attracted men motivated only by money.⁶⁷ While historians sometimes overlook the importance of financial reward in recruitment from the war's earliest days, it is true that bounties came to dominate northern mobilization to an unprecedented and damaging degree. The War Department increased its own bounties but sought to mitigate desertions by paying out bounties in regular installments over the length of a soldier's enlistment. The original \$100 enlistment bounty grew to \$300 for

⁶³ "A Gross Injustice," *Harper's Weekly*, vol. 8, no. 372 (February 13, 1864): 98; *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, January 30, February 13, May 7, 1864; *New York Sunday Mercury*, February 14, 1864, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 238-239; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 248.

⁶⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 489-493.

⁶⁵ *New York Weekly Anglo-African*, February 18, 1865. See also *ibid.*, October 15, 1864.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, March 5, March 12, November 5, 1864, February 11, 1865.

⁶⁷ Shannon, *The Organization and Administration of the Union Army*, 2: 49, 60-63, 80.

new recruits and \$400 for veterans in 1863, then dropped thereafter.⁶⁸ In the four troop calls from the midpoint of 1863 to war's end, provost marshals in New York City's First District enlisted 6,061 men and paid out bounties totaling nearly three million dollars. The average bounty awarded rose with each call, beginning at \$276.53 and reaching \$746.18 by the final call.⁶⁹ Congress did not authorize bounties for naval service until February 1864; until then, the Navy enticed men with a slippery tradition of awarding prize money for captured property like ships and cotton bales. For sailors, the wait for prize money due them could be long and aggravating.⁷⁰ James W. Geary has questioned why the government did not simply raise pay rates to make service more attractive during the first manpower crisis in 1862 and suggests the answer lay in the "dire straits of the federal treasury." (Total U. S. bounty payments of three hundred million dollars were "as much as the pay of the entire Union army and five times the cost of its ordnance," Hattaway and Jones point out.) Another, related reason probably lies in national authorities' desires to leave the heaviest burdens of mobilization in state hands.⁷¹ The War Department did not control state and local bounty policy. When Governor Andrew and Senator Wilson of Massachusetts led a push to set up advance payments in May 1862, they opened the floodgates to cynicism on a grand scale.⁷²

By early 1864, northern community efforts to meet troop quotas were tinged with more desperation, resentment, and tolerance of corruption than ever before, particularly after Lincoln made two additional calls for a total of seven hundred thousand men. Counties and towns tackled their quotas either through the old method of holding town meetings, where those present usually

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 62-63; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 828, 831; Geary, *We Need Men*, 16.

⁶⁹ "Report of the Exact or Average Amount of Bounty (other than the U. S.) Paid for Men Put into the Service in the 1st District, N. Y. under All Calls," entry no. 2511, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Reports, and Lists for Various New York Districts, RG 110, NARA-NY.

⁷⁰ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, April 4, 1864, CW-BHS; Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 17-19, 65.

⁷¹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 15 (first quote), 16; Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 437 (second quote).

⁷² Geary, *We Need Men*, 12, 16-18; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 31-33.

voted to raise subscriptions for a bounty, or by appointing bounty committees to handle the work. Committees also paid sums, usually \$300, to draftees who found substitutes.⁷³ “Every man joining his company is one the less to be taken from our midst by a draft,” ran a typical notice for a recruiter in a Lewis County paper. “The bounties are munificent, enough to purchase a farm.”⁷⁴ Local bounties skyrocketed throughout the war’s final two years as communities indebted themselves and competed with one another for available manpower, while brokers plied their schemes and advance payments encouraged bounty jumping. As with family and soldier relief efforts, war supporters believed their bounties reflected large and sustained devotion to the war effort.⁷⁵ While this may be accurate, most citizens did not have to contribute much. In New York, money was largely raised through real estate taxes. Moreover, many New Yorkers resented being taxed to provide bounties, while public interest in bounty loans and bonds dropped sharply once quotas were met. In the winter of 1864-1865, even generous interest rates and projected state reimbursement often failed to attract enough loan subscribers.⁷⁶ Bounty committees and the larger public did little to promote enlistments when there was no threat of a draft and recruit brokers saw their business suffer at such times, while veteran volunteers felt slighted when they did not receive the local bounties awarded to new recruits.⁷⁷ After receiving many queries about whether the local quota could be filled, a Queens County newspaper in early

⁷³ Three undated clippings (May 1864 and January 1865), CW-BHS; “Minutes of a Town Meeting held at Highland (N.Y.), Signed by Stephen St. John Gardiner and dated Aug. 4, 1864,” Stephen St. John Gardiner Collection, N-YHS (accessed online via EBSCOhost); *Lowville Journal and Republican*, December 16, 1863.

⁷⁴ *Lowville Journal and Republican*, December 2, 1863.

⁷⁵ Marion H. Brophy, *The Town of Otsego: Home Front, 1861-1865, Compiled from the Freeman’s Journal and Otsego Town Records*, <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyotsego/cwotsego.htm> (accessed March 21, 2016).

⁷⁶ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 33, 36-37; “76th Regiment New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/76thInf/76thInfCWN.htm> (accessed March 10, 2017).

⁷⁷ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, September 6, 1864, January 21, 1865, CW-BHS; “2nd Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghistn/civil/artillery/2ndArtHvy/2ndArtHvyCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016).

1865 admitted that “the efforts of the Town Officers are not met with that cheerful alacrity by our monied men, that characterized them on previous occasions. The Board, for the want of necessary funds, are literally doing nothing towards providing recruits.” Unless the rich took the county bonds to provide bounties, a draft would occur and every local man might “have to shoulder arms and go to the front.”⁷⁸ Americans had addressed wartime manpower needs with bounties ever since the seventeenth century, but the system was not designed for the strain of mass mobilization.

Of all the groups involved in Civil War mobilization and bounty culture, none have attracted more notoriety than recruiting agents—better known as brokers—who made it their business to entice other people into service as volunteers and substitutes. Eugene C. Murdock, the leading historian of the brokerage system, called it “a disgraceful method to raise an army.”⁷⁹ Brokers, who were widely despised as unprincipled opportunists, became prominent during the summer 1862 volunteer movement and grew in numbers and influence thereafter. They advertised in newspapers and operated under a patina of honesty, but their criminality was widely known and harmed countless lives. In March 1864, a gang in Watertown plied a fourteen-year-old boy with liquor and cigars until he was intoxicated, then convinced him to sign an enlistment form.⁸⁰ Other brokers kept large portions of recruits’ advance bounties and enlisted many who were unfit to serve.⁸¹ Numerous government employees worked in league with dishonest brokers. A policeman at the Brooklyn Navy Yard formed two “rings” with other men,

⁷⁸ Undated clipping (early 1865), CW-BHS.

⁷⁹ Murdock, *One Million Men*, 255 (quote); *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 28, 1863.

⁸⁰ Edward C. James to Major Frederick Townsend, March 31, 1864, entry no. 2001, Letters and Endorsements Sent by the Provost Marshal 20th Dist., 1863-64, RG 110, NARA-NY.

⁸¹ See statements of cases in entry no. 2445, Register of Persons Investigated Concerning Circumstances of their Enlistment, and entry no. 2495, Miscellaneous Reports and Returns, RG 110, NARA-NY. See “Look Out for Broakers [sic],” *Watertown Daily Reformer*, January 12, 1864, for an example of dishonest brokers passing themselves off as honest and warning readers to avoid other brokers.

one of which involved shoddy supplies and the other “buying and selling substitutes for the Army and Navy and collecting prize money.” The men stole the bounties of volunteers they had secured for the military and sold their enlistment forms to numerous other brokers, who in turn sold these “paper credits” to upstate towns. Those involved were investigated but released, and reaped fortunes. This was far from the only incident of corrupt recruitment at New York’s naval rendezvous, which seethed with iniquity and intimidated potential volunteers.⁸² The most famous victim of fraudulent recruitment in New York was nineteen-year-old Cornelius Garvin of Troy, known as the “Idiot Boy” after his mother publicized his case. The supervisor of the Rensselaer County Poor House abducted the mentally challenged Garvin and sold him into service in September 1863. After he went missing, Garvin’s mother, Catherine, launched a tireless campaign to find him and became a familiar sight in Washington and the camps of the Army of the Potomac. Cornelius was never located and was believed to have died in battle.⁸³

Shocking as such cases are in their details and sheer number, it was the widespread tolerance and collusion among the populace that really made the brokerage system “disgraceful.” For most of the war there were no federal or state laws regulating brokerage. Many bounty committees and draftees desiring substitutes relied on brokers despite their unsavory methods and came to resent federal crackdowns. The chief recruiting officer in Brooklyn received praise from some quarters and criticism from others “because he refused to accept and muster in thieves and drunkards brought to his office by policemen,” and members of New York County’s volunteering committee claimed their honest practices in 1864 hurt recruiting, as brokers would

⁸² Statements and evidence in the case of Richard Dalton and John Fay, and statement of Dr. John Mattison, entry no. 2511, RG 110, NARA-NY; statement of Edward Williams, entry no. 2495, *ibid.* For criminality at naval rendezvous and receiving ships and among navy recruiters, see Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy*, 19-20; Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 2-4, 28-29; Negus, “Conduct Unbecoming of an Officer.”

⁸³ Statements on the Cornelius Garvin case, Civil War Miscellaneous Collection, NYSL. Damian Shiels made the most extensive study of the Garvin case. Shiels, *The Forgotten Irish: Irish Immigrant Experiences in America* (Dublin: History Press Ireland, 2016), 18-30.

not work with them. The previous year, however, General John A. Dix had to intercede with this committee after it allowed brokers to take full bounties off recruits' hands.⁸⁴ When Dix heard in March 1864 that several Southern New York towns were offering recruits a three-hundred-dollar bounty but letting brokers manipulate them into giving up most of it, he ordered that provost marshals not accept recruits from such towns unless they received full payment directly into their hands. Dix later extended this instruction to Connecticut. But Provost Marshal General Fry had the order countermanded, observing that "though it prevents frauds, it stops recruiting—it cures the disease by killing the patient." Securing volunteers had become nearly impossible without brokers.⁸⁵

Established agents did not have a monopoly on such practices, however, for officials and civilians of all types engaged in questionable tactics. During the war, several hundred thousand boys under eighteen joined the Union military, often under the influence of guardians and other adults. Exercising the law of *in loco parentis*, reform schools frequently enlisted their inmates into the army and sometimes kept the bounties. Colonel William B. Barnes's Eleventh New York Heavy Artillery gained several recruits from the Western House of Refuge in Rochester.⁸⁶ Officers of the Fourteenth Heavy Artillery found themselves embroiled in scandal late in 1863 when parents complained of underage sons enlisted into the regiment thanks to falsified signatures of consent on the enlistment forms.⁸⁷ The provost marshal of the 28th Congressional

⁸⁴ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, April 1, 1864, CW-BHS (quote); New York County Board of Supervisors, *Report of Special Committee on Volunteering, Embracing a Complete Statement of Operations in Filling the Quota of the County of New York under the Call of the President, Dated July 18, 1864, for 500,000 Men* (New York: Wm. L. S. Harrison, 1864), 11; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 109.

⁸⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 203-204; 439-440 (quote).

⁸⁶ Rosen, *Child Soldiers in the Western Imagination*, 15-16, 55, 57; *Rochester Daily Democrat and American*, June 26; *Rochester Evening Express*, June 26; both 1863.

⁸⁷ Elisha G. Marshall to Asst Adj Gen Department of the East, Nov. 3, 1863, entry no. 2067, RG 110, NARA-NY, vol. 3: 124-125, 298, 299; Job C. Hedges to William W. Treadwell, November 2, 1863, 14th NYHA Regimental Letter Book, RG 94, NARA-DC. See also Geary, *We Need Men*, 76.

District reported “many cases of hardship” in his area due to families losing their underage boys to the army. After Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus in September 1863, parents had little chance of prosecuting those responsible.⁸⁸ A July 1864 amendment to the Enrollment Act forbade enlistment of anyone under sixteen, with or without parental consent, but the ban had little practical effect.⁸⁹ Native Americans often entered the army as substitutes—they were not citizens and thus not eligible for the draft—only to be cheated by brokers. Chief Samuel George of the Onondaga took up the cause of underage and swindled Iroquois in service after forty-three requested discharge; George obtained Lincoln’s influence to get his people released from service.⁹⁰ While many soldiers gained through the brokerage system served creditably, the concentration on speed and quantity over quality of manpower undermined both the Union’s war effort and its ideals of freedom, patriotism, and self-sacrifice.⁹¹ In the spring of 1864, the Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery was taken from its New York Harbor forts and assigned to infantry duty—much to the men’s shock—and suffered severe casualties during the relentless Overland Campaign.⁹² After the failure of an assault on Petersburg, Virginia, their corps commander blamed the several artillery-turned-infantry regiments under his leadership, calling them “worthless ... they didn’t enlist to fight and it is unreasonable to expect it from them.”⁹³ This characterization, while somewhat unfair, spoke to unhealthy mobilization practices and the anxieties they bred.

⁸⁸ Capt. Roswell Hart to Maj. A. S. Diven, November 11, 1863, entry no. 2233, Letters Sent by the PM of 28th Cong. Dist, May 1863-Sept. 1864, RG 110, NARA-NY; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 912.

⁸⁹ *Oswego Commercial Times*, July 6, 1864.

⁹⁰ List of St. Regis Indians in service, September 5, 1864, Bureau of Military Statistics Records, NYSL; Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 108-109.

⁹¹ For perceptions that the quality of recruits dropped in 1863 and 1864, see for example Adams, *The Story of a Trooper*, 28-29, 34, 37-38; John Tidd to “Dear Friend Amelia,” January 18, and same to same, March 5, 1864, in Tidd, *Dear Friend Amelia*, 100, 107.

⁹² *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 33, 913.

⁹³ Quoted in Theodore Lyman, *Meade’s Army: The Private Notebooks of Lt. Col. Theodore Lyman*, ed. David W. Lowe (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2007), 211.

In an era when mass media was in its infancy, provost marshals needed assistance in recruiting. They tried to hire only honest and efficient agents and investigated cases of fraud. Public outrage against bounty jumpers and corrupt brokers intensified in the war's final two years. Some bounty committees and individuals remained honest, and newspapers frequently called for justice and advised potential enlistees on where they could expect fair treatment.⁹⁴ The government punished bounty jumpers with much greater severity than brokers, as they were subject to military law and widely regarded as cowards. Michael Thomas Smith cites harsh treatment of these reprobates to argue that for northerners, fraud in mobilization, especially by the largely city-bred bounty jumpers, summarized their fears of urbanization, commercialization, and threats to morality and manhood.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, governments and community groups tolerated, even relied on brokers because they brought in manpower, and relatively few faced prosecution despite their reputation as con artists and human traffickers. Many people at the time recognized the brokerage system as one element in a vast culture of corruption in mobilization, but neither government power nor the public will were sufficient for reform. New Yorkers and their fellow northerners treasured their independence and localism too much to permit a total-war commitment. Brokers, bounty jumpers, and dishonest recruiting officers thrived as a result.

In early 1864, Union supporters prepared for what they hoped would be a final, war-winning campaign with measures for strengthening the armies. On advice from Fry and Stanton that recruiting was going well and should be maintained, Lincoln on February 1 ordered a draft for half a million men to begin on March 10; this draft was suspended when requests came in to

⁹⁴ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, August 27, 1864, CW-BHS; Circular no. 23, October 31, 1864, entry no. 1377, RG 110, NARA-NY, p. 41; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 275.

⁹⁵ Michael Thomas Smith, "The Most Desperate Scoundrels Unhung: Bounty Jumpers and Recruitment Fraud in the Civil War North," *American Nineteenth Century History* 6 (2005): 149-172. See also Smith, *The Enemy Within: Fears of Corruption in the Civil War North* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

allow additional time for volunteering. In mid-March, the president ordered another draft for April 15, with the deadline for federal bounties extended once again so that quotas might be filled with volunteers.⁹⁶ Congress, meanwhile, passed a sweeping set of amendments to the Enrollment Act meant to reform many of its worst provisions, and Lincoln signed it into law on February 24.⁹⁷ Citizens had their part to play as well. The Provost Marshal General authorized the commanders of the Second and Ninth Army Corps—famous, battle-tested organizations—to recruit up to fifty thousand men each in the northeastern states, concentrating on filling old regiments first and cooperating with governors and local recruiting officers.⁹⁸ General Winfield S. Hancock, a Democrat, established Second Corps headquarters at Tammany Hall, which hosted a “great war meeting” of party members on March 7. Hancock and other Democratic speakers employed familiar language to argue a quick victory would be achieved if New Yorkers filled the Union ranks.⁹⁹ The Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps was formed of city leaders with primarily Republican sympathies, including George Opdyke, John Austin Stevens, Jr., and other familiar names from the days of the Union Defense and National War Committees. A large list of subscribers contributed to the Ninth Corps recruiting fund; by August, they had secured 667 men for the Ninth’s New York regiments and earned the gratitude of corps officers.¹⁰⁰ Conscious that Confederates were preparing for a desperate fight by putting all their available men in the field, Union authorities under the influence of newly appointed General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant ordered garrisons in New York City and elsewhere combed out for heavy artillerymen and other soldiers to send to the front—part of Grant’s strategy of concentrating

⁹⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 26, 57, 59, 154.

⁹⁷ Geary, *We Need Men*, 130-131.

⁹⁸ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 14, 16, 78-79; Fry to Seymour, February 4, 1864, Telegram Book, box 16, Horatio Seymour Papers, NYSL.

⁹⁹ *New York Herald*, March 8 (quote); *New York Daily Tribune*, March 8; both 1864.

¹⁰⁰ *Report of Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps: February to August, 1864* (New York: John W. Amerman, 1866). See also Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps Records, N-YHS.

resources for a coordinated, decisive campaign.¹⁰¹ Recruits poured into the Army of the Potomac's camps that spring to join the ranks alongside veterans. While this reinforcement raised hopes for success, lack of training and discipline among new men in the Ninth Corps and other units boded ill for the army's efforts.¹⁰² The painful lessons of the Antietam campaign in this regard had not been absorbed.

On the home front, manpower quotas caused endless disquiet. New Yorkers and other northerners expected political leaders to get local requirements reduced wherever possible.¹⁰³ Seymour, who hoped to secure the Democratic nomination for the 1864 presidential election, never ceased protesting to Lincoln and Fry that New York's quotas and credits unfairly targeted Democratic districts.¹⁰⁴ This irritated War Department officials who were nevertheless mindful of needing to maintain the support of Seymour's state. In December, Stanton had agreed to appoint a special commission to study and revise New York's enrollment and quotas.¹⁰⁵ After two months of investigation, the commission delivered a report that lambasted the state's enrollment and provost marshals' methods of determining it. New York City and Brooklyn in particular, with their "large floating population" of immigrants and others, had prompted enrolling officers to copy election poll lists and pull from other outdated sources. The effect was to drive up the city and state's enrollment of first-class men to an excessive, inaccurate

¹⁰¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 58, 121, 127, 145, 221, 237, 240; ser. 1, vol. 46, pt. 1, 11-15, *ibid.*; William N. Odell to "My Dear Wife," March 21, 1864, Odell Letters, Helen A. Ganser Library, Millersville University; James S. Davis to "Dear parents," April 30, 1864, Davis Letters, U. S. Army Heritage and Education Center; Augustus C. Brown, *The Diary of a Line Officer* (New York: privately printed, 1906), 4-5.

¹⁰² "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery L Civil War Newspaper Clippings;" "50th Regiment Engineers New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings;" Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 195, 209; Charles J. Mills to "Dear Mother," April 27, 1864, in Mills, *Through Blood and Fire: The Civil War Letters of Major Charles J. Mills 1862-1865*, ed. Gregory A. Coco (Gettysburg: G. A. Coco, 1982), 68-69; Stephen Minot Weld, *War Diary and Letters of Stephen Minot Weld, 1861-1865* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1912), 267, 269.

¹⁰³ Geary, *We Need Men*, 226n38.

¹⁰⁴ Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 100-101.

¹⁰⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 3, 1108-1109, 1139; *ibid.*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 80-83.

percentage compared with other states; small wonder that these were the districts where “the results of the draft were the least favorable to the government [and] the fewest men were obtained ...” The commission concluded that enrollment by draft eligibility and classes was inherently erroneous and recommended that future quotas be determined by population.¹⁰⁶ Fry admitted that current enrollment methods were not ideal but strenuously rejected claims that New York’s quotas were unfair or that enrollment needed a drastic change in methodology. The Provost Marshal General was coming around to the notion that leaving recruitment in the hands of states was bad policy and that the actions of his bureau proved the necessity of federal control. Lincoln, too, disliked the commission’s findings—“Not going forth to find men at all, they have proceeded altogether upon paper examinations and mental processes,” he remarked—but still found the report valuable and worth considering.¹⁰⁷ Disputes between Albany and Washington over numbers and policy never subsided for the remainder of the war, yet New York managed to meet and even exceed its February, March, and July quotas.¹⁰⁸

New regulations for counting naval enlistments afforded some relief for quota and credit anxieties. States and localities originally received no credits for recruitment of sailors, which gave citizens little incentive to promote it and left the Navy starved of manpower. In response to agitation from Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, the February 1864 Amendatory Act authorized naval credits, bounties for enlistment, and transfers for soldiers desiring sea service.¹⁰⁹ New Yorkers—especially those living in districts with seaports—expressed relief that some of their draft burden would now be lifted. One month later, however, a War Department

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 102-112.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 110-118, 217, 139 (quote).

¹⁰⁸ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 8.

¹⁰⁹ Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy*, 21-22; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 129-130.

solicitor added complications by determining that since the Navy enlisted men for one year's service, it would take three naval enlistments to equal one draft credit. Furthermore, only residents of a district who shipped (joined the Navy) in that district could be counted toward its quota, a strange and disappointing rule considering sailors' well-known tendency to lead peripatetic lives. Policies like these increased New Yorkers' frustrations with their national government and its drafting mechanism.¹¹⁰ Some town councils appropriated large sums for local naval bounties, while the Navy Department continued to attract volunteers with promises of prize money.¹¹¹ The enrollment amendment did, however, go far toward addressing the navy's manpower shortage by late 1864. Over the course of the war, some thirty-five thousand men joined the navy in New York, accounting for more than one third of the service's enlistments.¹¹²

Events in the spring and summer of 1864 reiterated the fact that issues of mobilization affected military campaigns, and vice versa, just as they did political contests. In May, Union forces launched coordinated, relentless offensives that Grant intended to tie down and deplete the Confederacy. But endless fighting, particularly that taking place around the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, revealed flaws in the commanding general's strategy of attrition. While the North's population and other resources outmatched those of the rebels, this could not compensate for inferior tactics and mobilization.¹¹³ By June, weeks of incessant movement and combat had cost the Army of the Potomac terrible casualties and exhausted its survivors. "I am very sorry to say I have seen but little generalship during the campaign," reflected a brigade commander from Western New York after another fruitless assault, adding: "Twenty thousand of our killed and wounded should to-day be in our ranks ..." Yet he held out hope "that mere

¹¹⁰ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, April 4, 1864, CW-BHS.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*; *Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic*, November 7, 1863; Bennett, *Union Jacks*, 65.

¹¹² Ringle, *Life in Mr. Lincoln's Navy*, 23-24.

¹¹³ Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won*, 592.

numbers will yet enable us to enter Richmond.”¹¹⁴ As the Virginia campaign transitioned into siege warfare that summer, the strain told seriously on an army reeling from heavy losses and largely composed of recent recruits. Officers in the Army of the Potomac reacted to breakdowns in discipline with milder punishments than the traditional discharge or confinement; this impulse partly came about “in view of the interests of the service which requires the service of every man in the ranks,” as a division commander explained.¹¹⁵

The summer of 1864 saw northerners adopt a variety of schemes for replenishing shockingly high casualties and winning the war without conscription, but class and political controversies dogged these efforts. Ever since the advent of the Enrollment Act, opponents had deplored its commutation or exemption clause as class warfare—“three hundred dollars or your life,” as Vallandigham defined it. Others criticized commutation for discouraging the raising of troops. Exemption, however, had a strong basis in American and European custom as a measure by which employers, family men, and the unfit could be protected and social cohesion preserved. The three-hundred-dollar commutation clause kept down the price of substitutes and thus gave the non-wealthy a chance to avoid service, especially in communities that awarded this sum to drafted men.¹¹⁶ Congress endlessly debated the issue from late 1863 to early 1864. The February amendments to enrollment retained exemption but shortened it to one year.¹¹⁷ As sustained

¹¹⁴ Emory Upton to “My Dear Sister,” June 5, 1864, in Peter S. Michie, *The Life and Letters of Emory Upton, Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Artillery, and Brevet Major-General, U. S. Army* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1885), 109.

¹¹⁵ Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle*, 90; Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 209; Steven E. Sodergren, *The Army of the Potomac in the Overland and Petersburg Campaigns: Union Soldiers and Trench Warfare, 1864-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017), 83-85 (quote).

¹¹⁶ J. Watts de Peyster to Edwin D. Morgan, December 10, 1863, box 4, EDM Papers, NYSL; Henry C. Lea, “Volunteering and Conscription,” *United States Service Magazine* 1 (1864): 239-242; Alexander, “Exemptions from Militia Service in New York State during the Revolutionary War;” Nuria Sales de Bohigas, “Some Opinions on Exemptions from Military Service in Nineteenth Century Europe,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10 (1968): 261-289; Hugh C. Earnhart, “Commutation: Democratic or Undemocratic?” *Civil War History* 12 (1966): 132-142; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 199-202.

¹¹⁷ Geary, *We Need Men*, 104-105 (quote), 117-118, 128-131.

fighting erupted in May, War Department officials pushed for a draft. Lincoln hesitated to make such an unpopular move, and Senator Morgan stepped in on May 23 with another amendatory bill that repealed commutation, among other reforms to enrollment. For nearly six weeks, the proposed amendments consumed much attention in legislative chambers and among the public.¹¹⁸ Former State Adjutant General John Watts de Peyster forcefully protested repeal, warning Morgan his bill would leave the middle class (the “best blood” of the North) to fight and die, benefitting only those who could afford substitutes. De Peyster cited the example of a forty-year-old family man who had been drafted and was saved when neighbors pooled their resources to pay for his exemption. Had the man been forced to serve, de Peyster wrote, “I cannot see any other result than the pauperation of his family of little ones. There are thousands such cases.” Many single men remained idle at home while soldiers’ families suffered. De Peyster further warned that loyal Republicans would turn on Lincoln in the coming election should commutation be repealed.¹¹⁹ But the need for men rather than money could not be denied, and the new amendatory act passed on July 4, ending commutation except for conscientious objectors.¹²⁰

Repealing exemption was buffered for public consumption with a range of more appealing reforms, including graduated bounties for years of service, cutting the draft term to one year, letting draftees choose their units, and authorizing states to recruit in most areas of the South.¹²¹ Northerners seized upon southern recruitment in particular as the answer to their quota dilemmas. On authority from governors, communities sent agents to find men in specific regions of southern states; these brokers and their activities were subject to regulation by the local Union

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 134-135.

¹¹⁹ De Peyster to Morgan, May 30, (first quote), and same to same, June 14, (second quote), both 1864, box 4, EDM Papers, NYSL.

¹²⁰ Geary, *We Need Men*, 138.

¹²¹ Ibid.; *Oswego Commercial Times*, July 6, 1864.

commander.¹²² A special committee of the Kings County Board of Supervisors appointed seven agents (one for each assembly district) to recruit in the South among “negroes, refugees, and prisoners;” the seven expected to profit by providing southern substitutes to Brooklynites at a fixed rate.¹²³ But southern recruitment failed miserably: the brokers involved proved just as corrupt as their colleagues in the North but far less successful. Concentrating on enlisting African Americans, they often seized them by force and subterfuge and impeded military operations while securing few men. Altogether the agents in the South wrote a bitter chapter in the history of Civil War mobilization; referring to the brokers sent by its own city, a Rochester Democratic newspaper called their hunts for southern blacks worse than slavery.¹²⁴ This charge, while an exaggeration, indicates the poor reputation the program and its agents gained. State recruitment in the South was finally stopped in March 1865.¹²⁵

Other initiatives in mid-1864 had nobler impulses but similarly disappointing results for the Empire State. In April, the governors of several midwestern states offered to raise a large force of infantry “for the approaching campaign,” to be mustered in for one hundred days’ service; these men would receive no bounties and not count toward state draft quotas.¹²⁶ Lincoln accepted the proposal and, when Confederates launched a raid into Maryland in early July, called on other states to supply one-hundred-day men. New Yorkers, true to form, complicated matters. Seymour first asked if men would be accepted for a shorter period.¹²⁷ On July 8, he issued a proclamation urging New Yorkers to fill up the National Guard and respond to this fourth call

¹²² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 484-486.

¹²³ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, August 1, 1864, CW-BHS.

¹²⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 768-769; Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 64-67; Geary, *We Need Men*, 135-136; *Brooklyn Daily Union*, August 11, 1864, CW-BHS; Marsh, “A History of Rochester’s Part in the Civil War,” 55.

¹²⁵ Geary, *We Need Men*, 165-166; Reuben E. Fenton to Edwin M. Stanton, March 22, 1865, box 3, Reuben E. Fenton Papers, NYSL.

¹²⁶ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 237-238.

¹²⁷ Stanton to Seymour, July 5, and Seymour to Stanton, July 5, 1864, Telegram Book, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL.

upon the state's militia. Noting that the metropolitan region had borne the brunt of previous militia call-ups, Seymour suggested a more proportionate response from all the state's counties this time.¹²⁸ The old question of whether militiamen could be ordered to serve outside the state delayed New York's response, as did Seymour's attempt to get them exempted from the draft when Lincoln issued another troop call on July 18.¹²⁹ Despite heavy National Guard recruitment over the past year, lack of numbers, equipment, and interest caused New York to contribute fewer than half of the twelve thousand troops requested. Seymour, smarting over Fry's refusal to exempt them, would not permit his one-hundred-day men—most of whom hailed from New York City despite his wishes—to reinforce the national capital.¹³⁰ But the turnout of the National Guard looked magnificent compared to a different volunteer program begun in June. In response to requests, the Provost Marshal General announced that individuals unfit for service or ineligible for the draft could “procure at their own expense and present for enlistment recruits to represent them in the service;” those supplying men would have their names noted in the soldiers' records.¹³¹ This appeal to “practical patriotism,” as Fry called it, elicited barely a murmur from the public. Residents of New York, the most prominent of whom were Peter Cooper and Reuben E. Fenton, accounted for just 119 representative recruits.¹³² Had they been issued two years earlier, the one-hundred-days and representative recruit proposals likely would

¹²⁸ Seymour, “Order Directing the Recruitment of Militia Regiments,” July 8, 1864, in Seymour, *Public Record*, 221-222.

¹²⁹ J. B. Stonehouse to Seymour, July 12, J. F. Miller to Seymour, July 23, Seymour to Maj. Gen. Sandford, July 21, July 26, July 29, all 1864, Telegram Book, box 16, Seymour Papers, NYSL.

¹³⁰ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature February 1, 1864*, 1: 29; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 1: 11-12, 14-15, 40-44; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 413; *OR*, ser. 4, vol. 4, 550.

¹³¹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 453-454.

¹³² *Ibid.* (quote); Fry to Morgan, June 26, 1864, box 5, EDM Papers, NYSL; *Brooklyn Daily Union*, July 21, 1864, CW-BHS; Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 1: 63-64.

have drawn a large, enthusiastic response from New Yorkers. But in the changed atmosphere of 1864—and without the pull of self-interest in the form of bounties or exemption—they failed.

With war and draft-related weariness rising and no end to the fighting in sight, the summer of 1864 saw the most severe tensions over the draft in a year. A preview of these troubles came on May 17 when two conservative New York City newspapers printed a supposed announcement by the president of a draft for four hundred thousand men. Lincoln and the War Department moved swiftly to disclaim the spurious document (which Stanton called “a great national crime”) and arrest the perpetrators. (Lincoln, in fact, had planned to issue a troop call on the same day but decided against it.) Apparently, the publisher behind the so-called Bogus Proclamation hoped to profit from a rise in gold prices.¹³³ By late June, a new enrollment and indications of an impending draft were whipping up resentment and Republican concerns over their prospects in the fall elections. Fry received word of Irish-American “friends of Vallandigham” in New York City gathering weapons for a “grand riot” should a draft be ordered.¹³⁴ Lincoln, however, saw no option but to make a call for half a million troops on July 18, with a draft to begin fifty days later in areas not meeting quotas. The number called for was large and commutation no longer available for most, but the administration tried to soften the blow with other stipulations made possible under the July 4 amendatory act. State quotas would be deducted by subtracting naval enlistments and excess credits from previous calls, while volunteers had the option of enlisting for one, two, or three years.¹³⁵ The *Herald*, exasperated by the recent rebel incursion into Maryland, argued the president’s proclamation came too late and the new troops it called out would not become available for several months. But New York

¹³³ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 386, 390 (quote), 395, 399, 400-401; Geary, *We Need Men*, 134; Hanchett, *Irish*, 104-106.

¹³⁴ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 483-484.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 515-516.

City's excess credits under the last call gave reason to hope that the local quota could be met. If residents contributed all they could toward bounty bonds and helped find volunteers, there need be no fear of a draft. "Whatever may be said or thought of the President's call," the *Herald* concluded, "it is certain that more men are needed to end this war, and New York should supply them, as she has hitherto done, cheerfully and without compulsion."¹³⁶

The tense period following this editorial gave reason to doubt that the North would meet the call for manpower, cheerfully or otherwise, or that there would much longer be a Union cause to fight for. Union forces seemed stalled in front of Petersburg and Atlanta. Once again, New York soldiers agitated for the right to go home with their veteran regiments instead of serving full terms, while their governor disputed the status of his one-hundred-day men. The various terms of service authorized in July led to complications and legal challenges in determining credits and quotas, and Democrats and Republicans alike worried that faulty enrollment and quotas led to inordinately high taxes to provide bounties.¹³⁷ Even areas of the country with Republican majorities saw a high rate of draft skedaddling. On August 5, Frederick Townsend reported that in the Nineteenth District "a stampede is going on that threatens to be serious unless checked." Soldiers, as usual, expressed outrage at the thought of young men in their hometowns shirking duty, but citizens speculated that a draft could only be enforced in the northeastern states through a heavy military presence. Dix expected violence in New York City and requested ten thousand troops.¹³⁸ The Secretary of State invited criticism in his hometown of Auburn when he speculated in a speech that no more drafts were forthcoming, an ill-advised

¹³⁶ *New York Herald*, July 19, 1864.

¹³⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 530, 546-547, 563; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 1: 9-10; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 413-414.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 580 (quote), 646; William Rimmel to "Dear Brother," August 4, 1864, in Rimmel, *Like Grass Before the Scythe*, 111; Weber, *Copperheads*, 152.

action under the circumstances.¹³⁹ Meanwhile, Republican prospects in the coming elections looked bleak. Townsend considered the draft issue “vastly more delicate” than it had been the previous year and told his superiors that if conscription went ahead, Lincoln would lose reelection.¹⁴⁰ “The people are wild for peace,” Albany editor Thurlow Weed informed Seward and Lincoln on August 22, adding that citizens were frustrated by the president’s refusal to give up emancipation in negotiations with the Confederacy. Four days earlier, Syracuse had hosted a large peace meeting at Fernando Wood’s instigation. Lincoln considered his reelection impossible.¹⁴¹ Seymour condemned New York’s latest quotas, encouraged the mayors of New York City and Brooklyn to resist the looming draft, and attacked Lincoln’s administration in a speech at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The Democrats nominated General McClellan for the presidential contest, giving the vice-presidential candidacy to George Pendleton, a Copperhead.¹⁴² In the six weeks following Lincoln’s July 18 call, the Union cause possibly came nearer defeat than at any other time during the war.

It is well known that northern fortunes rose decisively—and virtually overnight—in early September when Sherman’s army captured Atlanta. The welcome news caused a series of events leading to Lincoln’s nomination for a second term, confirming Republican support for continuing the war to victory. Democrats, their claim of a failed war effort shattered, were doomed to defeat in the elections. Historians often describe these September 1864 events as decisive to the war’s outcome.¹⁴³ This interpretation contains much truth but discounts issues of

¹³⁹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 152-153.

¹⁴⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 629-630.

¹⁴¹ Weed quoted in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 7: 514-515n1; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 106.

¹⁴² *New York Herald*, August 13, 1864; “Governor Seymour and the Proposed Draft of 1864,” in Seymour, *Public Record*, 225-227; Seymour, “Speech on Taking the Chair as President,” August 30, 1864, in *ibid.*, 230-233; Weber, *Copperheads*, 169-170.

¹⁴³ See for instance McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 772-776; Weber, *Copperheads*, 176-180; Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation*, 422-425.

mobilization that loomed large that late summer and fall. The leading scholar on the Union governors, for instance, asserts that after Atlanta “[t]he conflict was no longer a matter of putting regiments in the field,” a statement that ignores continued efforts under Lincoln’s July 18 proclamation and an additional call and threatened draft in December.¹⁴⁴ In the tense days of July and August, even as they considered the strong possibilities of Lincoln’s defeat and a negotiated settlement with the South, federal officials investigated ways to improve recruiting and communities girded themselves to meet local quotas. The War Department and state governments, in fact, continued dispatching new regiments and recruits for old units until April 1865. This was part of a process that began in late July as states and their communities reluctantly undertook to fill new troop quotas. The period from August 1864 to April 1865 saw stunning contrasts as the North enlisted hundreds of thousands at the same time mobilization spurred public frustration and class conflict.

New York faced the task of raising 77,539 men under the July 18 call—the largest single quota of any state during the entire war, though excess credits lessened the burden in many districts. On July 30, Fry authorized Seymour “to raise 100 new companies of volunteer infantry ... The term of service will be for either one, two, or three years, as the recruits may elect.”¹⁴⁵ Evidently, the intention was to meet the remainder of the quota with recruits for veteran units. In August, towns and cities across New York undertook these daunting assignments with two very different but familiar tactics: offering competitive volunteer bounties and convincing the Provost Marshal General’s Bureau to award extra credits. For both plans, however, the figures in dollars and credits involved dwarfed those seen since the war began, requiring greater efforts. New York County’s Committee on Volunteering, faced with a quota of 22,003 after subtracting excess

¹⁴⁴ Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation*, 423 (quote), 425-426.

¹⁴⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 515, 561 (quote).

credits, saved its residents through the second tactic. In June, the county comptroller had borrowed two million dollars for bounties in anticipation of the coming troop call—a loan that had no legal backing and thus needed to be met through public subscriptions. The committee, under leadership that included gun manufacturer Orison Blunt and Tammany boss William M. Tweed, had little faith that such a subscription would raise the funds; previous such subscriptions promoted “solely on patriotic grounds” had fizzled. Moreover, they were authorized to offer a maximum bounty of three hundred dollars—hardly competitive by the summer of 1864. Raising just a portion of the loan money occupied nearly a month. A special committee took on the county’s efforts and got over nineteen thousand previous naval enlistments credited to the county thanks to recent amendments to the draft law. With an election looming, the national government wished to avoid another round of draft riots; Gotham got the credits and avoided the draft. Blunt, Tweed, and their fellow special committee members proudly reported that their endeavors had met the local quota and “saved to the County the enormous sum of over *twenty-one millions* of dollars.” Yet they had procured only 733 volunteers for the Union ranks.¹⁴⁶ Across the East River, supervisors in Kings County made hundreds of corrections to their enrollment and adding similar numbers of naval credits. Brooklynites were “jubilant” when “the dreaded fifth of September” arrived and they avoided a draft.¹⁴⁷ In New York City and Brooklyn, the system developed by 1864 kept a large majority of eligible residents out of military service. Some, however, believed community honor suffered when residents prioritized credits over supplying actual soldiers for their country’s cause.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ New York County Board of Supervisors, *Report of Special Committee on Volunteering*, iv-v, 6 (quotes); Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 414.

¹⁴⁷ *Brooklyn Daily Union*, September 5 (first quote), August 27, (second quote), both 1864, CW-BHS.

¹⁴⁸ See Spann, *Gotham at War*, 177-178; *Brooklyn Daily Union*, September 6, 1864, CW-BHS.

Most of the Empire State's counties could not rely on naval enlistments to meet their quotas, and the southern recruiting scheme achieved very modest results. These localities faced the seemingly impossible task of securing sufficient volunteers. Counties levied future taxes upon their residents and borrowed funds for bounties that typically reached one thousand dollars for a year's service. Newspapers and letter-writers at the front urged every loyal citizen to act as a recruiting sergeant and addressed countless enquiries about enlisting and finding substitutes. Militia regiments advertised for recruits in order to fill up for active duty.¹⁴⁹ And many thousands, white and black, native-born and immigrant, old and young, enlisted and reenlisted. "Never were enlistments more rapid than now," one paper noted, "elicited by the enormous bounties offered" as well as fears of a draft.¹⁵⁰ Mass volunteering under the July 18 call got underway in late August and reinforced the field armies from September on, making an immediate impression. Soldiers, like many civilians, believed the army's manpower situation would be just as decisive a factor in the war's outcome as would the coming presidential election. A Syracuse native in the Army of the Potomac informed his hometown paper that the rebels "have robbed the cradle and the grave, to fill up their shattered ranks," while in the North "all we need is to have our armies filled up, (as they are now being filled up, rapidly) to crush the rebellion."¹⁵¹ Some towns and counties endured a draft that fall, but a majority gained sufficient

¹⁴⁹ Hough, *History of Lewis County, New York*, 518; *Watertown Daily Reformer*, August 10, 1864; *Watertown Northern New York Journal*, August 23, 1864; "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery A Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatACWN.htm> (accessed January 9, 2016); *Brooklyn Daily Union*, July 21, 1864, CW-BHS.

¹⁵⁰ *Adams Jefferson County News*, August 25, 1864.

¹⁵¹ "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery K Civil War Newspaper Clippings," *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/1stArtLt/1stArtLtBatKCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016); "2nd Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings;" Edward K. Wightman to "Dear Brother," July 21, 1864, in Wightman, *From Antietam to Fort Fisher*, 203; "Waterford" to editors of *New York Sunday Mercury*, September 4, 1864, in Stypke, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 288-289; "7th Regiment Artillery (Heavy), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings;" "50th Regiment Engineers New York Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings;" "1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery H Civil

credits. In New York's most impressive showing in two years, the state exceeded its huge quota and put several new regiments in the field.¹⁵² Like the arithmetic that helped New York City and Brooklyn escape a draft, these decisive, communal efforts among Empire State citizens to raise so many troops demonstrated that—even after a year and a half of federal direction under the Enrollment Act and its amendments—mobilization still depended on local networks and autonomy.

If the troop-raising campaign that summer and fall proved the strength of northern resolve and community spirit, it also indicated to many that ugly aspects of mobilization had gotten only uglier. There seems to have been no consensus on whether the recruits of late 1864 made good soldiers. A Jefferson County editor believed the new local regiment was “made up of splendid material, as is the case generally with our volunteers” under the July call, and some veterans agreed that the new men proved themselves in the field.¹⁵³ But many others did not consider these recent additions reliable or equal to those who came earlier. Their huge bounties and one-year terms angered men who had enlisted for longer and for less.¹⁵⁴ Officers had to remain vigilant to ensure new recruits actually reached their regiments before deserting or being assigned to other units.¹⁵⁵ While many substitutes and high-bounty men served well, thousands shirked their duty or deserted to the enemy in late 1864.¹⁵⁶ By December, a veteran who had

War Newspaper Clippings;” Wesley Gould to “Dear Brother,” August 27, 1864, in Harris and Niflot, *Dear Sister*, 137.

¹⁵² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 515; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 1: 444-445.

¹⁵³ *Adams Jefferson County News*, September 22, 1864 (quote); *Watertown Daily Reformer*, September 3, 1864; “1st Artillery Regiment (Light) Battery H Civil War Newspaper Clippings;” “3rd Artillery Regiment (Light), NY Volunteers Civil War Newspaper Clippings,” *New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center*, <https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/3rdArtLight/3rdArtLtCWN.htm> (accessed February 9, 2016).

¹⁵⁴ Charles Biddlecom to “Dear Esther,” July 9, 1864, in Biddlecom, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 185.

¹⁵⁵ William Rimmel to “Dear Sister,” October 16, 1864, in Rimmel, *Like Grass Before the Scythe*, 127; Alonzo Alden to Maj. L. H. Pelouze, August 22, 1864, 169th NY Regimental Letter Book, RG 94, NARA-DC, p. 13-14; H. M. Karples to “Captain,” December 29, 1864, 52nd NY Regimental Letter, Order, and Miscellaneous Book, *ibid*.

¹⁵⁶ Edward K. Wightman to “Dear Brother,” November 28, 1864, in Wightman, *From Antietam to Fort Fisher*, 215 (quote); Styple, *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 310, 312; “18th Independent Battery New York Volunteers

once opposed drafting now spoke in support of it because he wanted the “solid men of the north” to join him in the field rather than the “miserable lot of trash” who had arrived that fall.¹⁵⁷ In many cases, such attitudes drew from ethnic and class prejudices, but laxness and corruption clearly brought more unfit recruits into service than ever before.

Ever-present controversies over class also marred the enlistment drive. Historians have long differed on whether the draft, especially commutation and its repeal in July 1864, placed a disproportionate burden on any segments of northern society. But Russell L. Johnson’s study of wartime Dubuque, Iowa, revealed that “local war supporters placed particular emphasis on pushing working and poor people into the army” throughout the conflict.¹⁵⁸ This would not have surprised New Yorkers in the conflict’s last summer. In August, Governor Seymour reiterated his claim that the draft was a “terrible affliction” to working-class people unable to survive on low, irregular military pay, a notion supported by some soldiers. Antiwar elements in New York City viewed want of work among the poor as the main enlistment motive among local volunteers.¹⁵⁹ Far to the north, a Jefferson County editor who supported Lincoln’s war policies also accepted the primacy of economic motives, noting that although “we shudder at the thought” of the recent county tax of one million dollars to provide bounties, the money was not leaving the county but being transferred to another class of residents. “One thousand of the poor young men of the county are getting a good start in the world” thanks to the generosity of wealthier taxpayers who provided bounties for war service. In this symbiotic relationship “[t]he

Civil War Newspaper Clippings;” Nelson Taylor to “Sister Han,” September 19, 1864, in Taylor, *Saddle and Saber*, 180; George W. Whitman to “Dear Mother,” September 17, 1864, in Whitman, *Civil War Letters of George Washington Whitman*, 131; George Englis to “Dear Mother,” October 29, 1864, in *This from George*, 166.

¹⁵⁷ Charles Biddlecom to “Dear Esther,” December 6, 1864, in Biddlecom, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 253-254.

¹⁵⁸ Johnson, *Warriors into Workers*, 34.

¹⁵⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 571-572 (quote); Charles Biddlecom to “Dear wife,” July 27, 1864, in Biddlecom, *No Freedom Shrieker*, 198-199; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 147-148.

wealthy and those who go to war are both abundantly provided for ...”¹⁶⁰ In late August, prosperous attorney and Sanitary Commission advocate George T. Strong spent eleven hundred dollars at a provost marshal’s office procuring “a big ‘Dutch’ boy of twenty or thereabouts” to serve as his “*alter ego*” (substitute) for the pending draft.¹⁶¹ Whether accurate or not, the impression was strong in the second half of 1864 that service had become the preserve of the poor.

The draft occupied much attention even as elections neared and Union forces gained further triumphs in the Shenandoah Valley.¹⁶² Democrats in New York and nationally tried to capitalize on fears of conscription in portraying Republicans as the party of war and forced service. “A vote for Lincoln is a vote for more drafts,” the Albany *Atlas and Argus* declared on October 25.¹⁶³ But the latest draft had proved less burdensome than many originally predicted, while Democrats suffered from internal divisions between peace and war factions. The Republicans joined with War Democrats and rebranded themselves the National Union Party. Election Day came on November 8. After a state campaign that attracted nearly as much countrywide coverage as the presidential race, Seymour suffered an extremely narrow defeat at the hands of Union Party challenger Reuben E. Fenton, a speculator and consummate politician hailing from Chautauqua County. Lincoln gained victory in the Empire State with the help of the state’s newly enfranchised soldiers, but it was a much closer contest in New York than

¹⁶⁰ *Watertown Northern New York Journal*, August 23, 1864.

¹⁶¹ Strong, *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, 3: 479. See also Emile Dupré to “My dear mother,” July 28, 1864, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 55.

¹⁶² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 742.

¹⁶³ Geary, *We Need Men*, 154; Weber, *Copperheads*, 178; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 426 (quote).

nationally.¹⁶⁴ The election results seemed to ensure Lincoln's administration a free hand in bringing the war to a successful close.

Events in December and onward, however, indicated the march to victory would not enjoy a smooth path at home. By this point, state and local officials had somewhat refined their methods for tabulating quotas and credits. The year before, Adjutant General Sprague had begun employing discharged veterans in copying muster rolls for every New York regiment since the first call in April 1861. After ponderous printed editions were released in 1864, politicians and communities prized them for determining local quotas.¹⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the public in New York and elsewhere evinced both concern for fair apportionment and growing frustration mixed with indifference. From New York City, a German immigrant who had become a successful merchant told his parents back in the old country that the war was causing great suffering. "As long as we're not personally affected, we'll be able to get through any difficulties," he added.¹⁶⁶ Then Lincoln announced a call for three hundred thousand men on December 19. As Fry explained, so many excess credits had been allowed on quotas under the July 18 call that numbers of troops actually provided fell short, making another call imperative. The Provost Marshal General also disseminated new formulas designed to bring forth men, not merely credits, in every district, and

¹⁶⁴ Geary, *We Need Men*, 154; Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York*, 3: 115, 125; Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War*, 395-396; Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874*, 54. On Fenton, see Samuel R. Harlow and Stephen C. Hutchins, *A Sketch of the Life of Hon. Reuben E. Fenton, Governor of the State of New York: Being Specimen Pages of a Forthcoming Work ... "Life Sketches of the State Officers and Members of the Legislature of the State of New York"* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1868); Helen Grace McMahon, *Reuben Eaton Fenton* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1939).

¹⁶⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 1: 8-9; Sprague to Edwin D. Morgan, December 20, 1864, box 12, EDM Papers, NYSL; *A Record of the Commissioned Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates, of the Regiments which were Organized in the State of New York and Called into the Service of the United States to Assist in Suppressing the Rebellion Caused by the Secession of Some of the Southern States from the Union, A. D. 1861, as Taken from the Muster-In Rolls on File in the Adjutant-General's Office, S. N. Y.*, 8 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1864-1868).

¹⁶⁶ Geary, *We Need Men*, 157-158; Karl Wesslau to "Dear parents," December 14, 1864, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, 69 (quote).

sought only infantrymen to fill up regiments in the field.¹⁶⁷ Lincoln's unexpected call, Fry's new calculations, and the resulting draft fell like bombshells on the northern populace, sparking widespread resistance that lasted until recruitment finally halted the following April. New York State Adjutant General William Irvine called that winter the period of greatest anxiety since July 1862.¹⁶⁸

New York faced a quota of 61,076 under the December 19 call. Soon after taking office on January 1, Fenton challenged New Yorkers to show patriotic devotion and adherence to American principles by filling their state quota. "Let there be a rally of the People in every city, village and town," he urged.¹⁶⁹ The governor hoped to avoid a draft in his state, and Fry authorized him to form five new regiments and fifty companies to reinforce old regiments or be consolidated.¹⁷⁰ But difficulties immediately developed because the people Fenton had harangued mostly refused to rally. Widespread exhaustion and disgust toward both the brokerage system—which had only grown in corruption since mid-1864—and Provost Marshal General Fry left New Yorkers and other northerners hesitant to contribute funds for bounty subscriptions, much less enlist. This attitude prompted counties to levy higher taxes, but bounties still remained inadequate and recruitment stalled.¹⁷¹ In New York City, where dissent over draft quotas and recruitment fraud ran hot, Blunt, Tweed, and the Board of Supervisors demanded an investigation into how their quotas had been determined. Lincoln and Stanton felt compelled to authorize it. In early February, members of the state legislature and the editors of the *Times* and

¹⁶⁷ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1002-1003, 1008-1009, 1033, 1045-1048.

¹⁶⁸ Geary, *We Need Men*, 155; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 17, 1866* (Albany: C. Wendell, 1866), 7.

¹⁶⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1002; Harlow and Hutchins, *A Sketch of the Life of Hon. Reuben E. Fenton*, 17 (quote).

¹⁷⁰ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1039.

¹⁷¹ Geary, *We Need Men*, 155-156, 157-158; Murdock, *One Million Men*, 155; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 12, 1865*, 1: 5.

Tribune independently, and unsuccessfully, called for the beleaguered Provost Marshal General to be dismissed.¹⁷²

More consequential developments at this time brought victory to the friends of emancipation while indicating how New York's white majority remained divided on the issue and committed to state sovereignty. In late January, Congress ratified an amendment to the Constitution banning slavery and then passed it to the states for voting. On February 3, New York's Senate and Assembly ratified the measure despite strident objections from Democrats in both houses. (Only one Democratic assemblyman voted in favor of the amendment.) Unlike their colleagues in Washington, Democrats in the state capital refused to drop long-running opposition to black equality and "the regulation of affairs purely internal and domestic by the votes of other states."¹⁷³ As the votes were counted in Albany, state senators and members of New York County's special committee met with Lincoln in Washington and convinced him to reduce troop quotas in all the state's districts by one quarter.¹⁷⁴ But a new round of conscription could not be delayed. On March 1, Fry ordered a draft to begin on the 15th in each of New York's three divisions.¹⁷⁵ Immediately after the order, some drafted men in Western New York (and probably elsewhere) paid \$1,500 for substitutes. That grim month also saw more cases of abduction and enlistment of minors and "fictitious mothers" who impersonated legal guardians of underage recruits for a fee.¹⁷⁶ Enthusiasm for volunteering had reached possibly its lowest ebb yet. "In fact

¹⁷² McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 298-299; *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1092-1096, 1099-1100, 1130, 1132, 1133-1142, 1144-1146; Geary, *We Need Men*, 70.

¹⁷³ *New York Daily Tribune*, February 4, 1865 (quote); Leonard L. Richards, *Who Freed the Slaves? The Fight Over the Thirteenth Amendment* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 210-211. Michael Vorenberg, however, interprets the state legislature's vote as stalled by Democratic opposition in the Assembly and believes New York only ratified the amendment after Lincoln's assassination. Vorenberg, *Final Freedom: The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 214.

¹⁷⁴ *New York Herald*, February 3, February 4, 1865.

¹⁷⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1205.

¹⁷⁶ Cora Beach Benton to "Dear, dear Charlie," March 5, 1865, in Benton, *Hard Breathing Days*, 437; Marsh, "A History of Rochester's Part in the Civil War," 95; Rosen, *Child Soldiers in the Western Imagination*, 53-54 (quote).

it is almost impossible to get a man to go,” a woman in the Western New York town of Albion informed her husband at the front. “Neither patriotism or money can induce them.”¹⁷⁷ On the battlefield, the war seemed moving inexorably toward a Union triumph. At home, however, anxiety over wartime issues—mobilization not least among them—persisted.

A minor corner was turned by mid-March as communities played to their strengths in redoubled efforts to find volunteers and get their quotas reduced. When the draft was announced, residents of Brooklyn’s Green Point neighborhood met straightaway, raised twenty thousand dollars, and exceeded their quota in two weeks. Citizens in the Twentieth Ward met “to devise means to mitigate the hardships of the draft,” forming a family aid association, and Brooklynites deposited funds into the Draft Insurance Company for similar purposes. Several National Guard regiments around the state volunteered for active duty so that their district quotas would be met.¹⁷⁸ In response to Fenton’s requests and reports of renewed activity, Fry on March 11 agreed to delay the draft in New York “as long as and wherever recruiting is progressing reasonably fast;” in areas where names had already been pulled, “the men will not be called for as long as men are fairly recruited at these points.”¹⁷⁹

Attempts to bring long-overdue order to the brokerage system had mixed results. This was seen in the third Amendatory Act passed, coincidentally, on the two-year anniversary of the Enrollment Act, though reforms in the latest law were minor. In February, state legislators had finally addressed the problem of skyrocketing local bounties and substitute prices when they passed an act granting funds to draftees who procured substitutes. Another state law in late

¹⁷⁷ Cora Beach Benton to “Dear, *dear* Charlie,” March 5, 1865, in Benton, *Hard Breathing Days*, 437.

¹⁷⁸ Manuscript, “17th Ward Brooklyn, Green Point;” undated newspaper clipping (March 1865); manuscript history of 56th NYNG, undated; all CW-BHS; Reuben E. Fenton to Edwin M. Stanton, March 13, and Fenton to William A. Darling, March 30, both 1865, box 3, Fenton Papers, NYSL.

¹⁷⁹ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1230-1231, 1242; Thomas G. Alvord to Fenton, March 11, 1865, box 3, Fenton Papers, NYSL (quote).

March authorized a loan to provide for state bounties.¹⁸⁰ On April 1, Orison Blunt told Fenton that New York County would meet its volunteering goals if given funding, and the governor assured him the state would pay bonds for the purpose.¹⁸¹ Even as remaining Confederate forces collapsed in late March and early April, ensuring an imminent Union victory, quotas still had to be met. On April 6, Fry and State Assistant Adjutant General J. B. Stonehouse implored Fenton to keep the recruitment machinery running. Six days later, the tattered survivors of the Army of Northern Virginia formally surrendered their arms to Union troops at Appomattox Court House, effectively ending the war. On the same day and some four hundred miles to the north, a committee of the New York City Common Council wrote the Secretary of War with a request to suspend the coming draft. This was not due to the popular notion that no more men were needed, the committee added, and they acknowledged the government's right to conscript. Rather, they wished time to fill the city's quota with volunteers and thus avoid an event calamitous to the city's economy, workers, and middle class. The very next day, April 13, Stanton issued orders for all provost marshals in the country to "discontinue the business of recruiting and drafting;" within two weeks, the War Department followed up with a round of cost-cutting measures that included discharging unassigned recruits.¹⁸² The increasingly unwelcome policies of mobilization were finally over, having drawn fire from New Yorkers up to the very end. Up to that point, the Empire State had contributed nearly thirty-three thousand men toward its

¹⁸⁰ Geary, *We Need Men*, 164; Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 29; Fenton to R. A. McCurdy, March 28[?], 1865, box 3, Fenton Papers, NYSL.

¹⁸¹ Blunt to Fenton, April 1, and Fenton to Blunt, April 1, 1865, box 3, Fenton Papers, NYSL.

¹⁸² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1258, 1260-1263, 2063 (quote), 1271, 1280.

December quota.¹⁸³ With manpower procurement halted, the War Department immediately began the process of dismantling the large citizen army and discharging its members.¹⁸⁴

During the bitter days of early March, a new Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General, Edward W. Hinks, had taken charge of the bureau's work in New York City. "I found the whole business of obtaining volunteers and substitutes in the hands of an irresponsible committee of citizens," he reported in reference to Blunt's group, while city residents were "utterly careless and apathetic, leaving the whole matter of their quota to this committee." Hinks's efforts to strictly enforce the draft in the waning days of the war failed, doomed by an uncooperative public and the ease of bounty jumping in a major city. "The stoppage of recruiting and drafting is looked upon as a special triumph of New York," the disgusted AAPMG explained.¹⁸⁵ All things considered, it was fortunate for the Union that the war ended when it did, for the recruitment system as it had developed over the previous two years sparked growing exhaustion, disinterest, and resentment from the public. In these trying times, as they had for decades, New Yorkers counted on the leadership of their associations and rejected compulsion. Citizens of city, state, and nation had endured a four-year conflict to bind the Union into a closer compact, but they had also fought to preserve their local communities and values.

¹⁸³ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York: Transmitted to the Legislature January 17, 1866*, 5, 7.

¹⁸⁴ On demobilization, see William B. Holberton, *Homeward Bound: The Demobilization of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1865-1866* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001); Clayton R. Newell and Charles R. Shrader, "The U.S. Army's Transition to Peace, 1865-66," *Journal of Military History* 77 (2013): 867-894.

¹⁸⁵ *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1271-1273.

CONCLUSION

During the Civil War, New Yorkers and their federal officials argued incessantly over manpower policies and the numbers involved. Perhaps inevitably, they differed when the time came to compile statistics about the Empire State's involvement. Mobilization of northern forces had occupied almost exactly four years, from Lincoln's first call for troops on April 15, 1861, to Stanton's termination of recruiting and drafting on April 13, 1865. War Department figures for total United States enlistments during the war came to 2,778,304. This does not indicate the actual number of servicemen, however, as many enlisted for more than one term; estimates for individuals who served usually hover around two million.¹ Federal clerks finally calculated New York's quotas at 507,148; the state was credited with 448,850 troops furnished and 18,197 individuals who paid commutation. As befitted New York's large population, its quotas and credits far exceeded numbers for any other state.² Decades after the war ended, New York's official historian of its wartime services found a total of 503,765 enlistments in all military branches and for terms of service ranging from thirty days to four years. Just under four hundred thousand New Yorkers or men credited to the state served during the war. The historian arrived at these figures, however, with the help of careful estimates.³ Securing the services of these men had not come cheaply. In late 1865, an incomplete report on "amounts paid for bounties, fees and expenses, interest on loans, and for the support of the families of soldiers" by New York's counties, cities, and towns put the amount at over 105 million dollars. State-level bounties were calculated at nearly thirty-five million dollars and the state's total war-related expenses at

¹ E. B. Long with Barbara Long, *The Civil War Day by Day: An Almanac, 1861-1865* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1971), 705.

² *OR*, ser. 3, vol. 4, 1269.

³ Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 1: 65-67.

roughly two hundred million.⁴ These figures of troops and dollars dwarfed New York's commitments in any previous conflict.

As discrepancies in federal and state records indicate, statistics are slippery things. They also do not give us a reliable sense of the war's true costs and impact. Private and communal outlays for bounty subscriptions and related expenses did not necessarily represent a permanent sacrifice, as the state legislature authorized reimbursement for some of these costs after the war.⁵ But the economic impact on New York was nonetheless considerable. Public works and other expenses of peacetime were not put on hold during the war; the addition of bounty outlays "doubled the state debt immediately after the war," as one historian notes, which in turn spurred conflict over taxes and other responses to this debt. Debates and policies regarding federal reimbursement for states' war expenses began early in the conflict, continued for decades, and spurred more growth in the national government's duties and influence.⁶ Even less calculable was the influence of four years of military mobilization on New Yorkers and their communities. The number of Native American state residents who served and the total casualties they suffered were not remarkable in the grand scheme of the war, for instance, yet these losses had devastating effects on their small, tightknit populations.⁷ When Albany officials planned the state census of 1865, public fear of the draft prompted them to change the title of census takers from "marshals" to "enumerators" and to instruct them to assure people the count was not intended for draft or militia enrollment.⁸ In some specific cases, the culture of corruption that recruitment and

⁴ Ibid., 93-94.

⁵ James D. Bell and W. Burt Cook, Jr., *Chronological List of the Laws of New York Relating to the War of the Rebellion and Veterans of That War, 1861-1910* (Albany: J. B. Lyon and Co., 1910); Hough, *History of Lewis County, New York*, 518.

⁶ Baker, "The Gilded Age (1860-1914)," in Klein, *The Empire State*, 438 (quote); Kyle S. Sinisi, *Sacred Debts: State Civil War Claims and American Federalism, 1861-1880* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

⁷ Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War*, 145.

⁸ Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865*, 609.

troop quotas had inspired haunted the postwar decades. Major John A. Haddock, who had served as Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General in Western New York late in the war, went on trial in May 1865 for an astonishing amount of collusion with brokers. He was found guilty of all charges, sentenced to imprisonment, and ordered to pay a ten-thousand-dollar fine. Before it ended, Haddock's trial sucked in two powerful congressmen, Roscoe Conkling and James G. Blaine, who took opposite sides on the matter and began one of the most celebrated, longest-running rivalries in American political history.⁹

For many New Yorkers, however, personal involvement in the war engulfing their nation had not extended much beyond fear of the draft; the Empire State's citizens helped ensure that traditions of social choice and voluntarism would survive the crisis. Their state, though in debt, emerged from the war with a robust economy, growing public education system, and other indicators of prosperity. For Lockwood L. Doty—the man who had served as Governor Morgan's secretary, delivered his annual message to legislators in 1861, and now headed the state's war records office—these facts brought extra honor upon his fellow New Yorkers. “The ability of our people to conduct a long war, and yet successfully to prosecute the vast enterprises of peace, is truly marvelous,” he reflected in 1865, “and this generation well deserves that no fact should be lost which goes to illustrate the spirit, the patriotism, the liberality, and, most of all, the heroism of this period.”¹⁰ But the crowded years of the Gilded Age softened memories of the 1860's. “It has become a habit to say that the War of the Rebellion is forgotten, because the minds of the people are occupied with new incidents and events,” an historian of the state's war

⁹ Murdock, *Patriotism Limited*, 187-203; Case File MM 2612, Court Martial Case Files 1809-1894, RG 153, NARA-DC; James B. Fry, *The Conkling and Blaine-Fry Controversy, in 1866: The Outbreak of the Life-Long Feud between the Two Great Statesmen, Roscoe Conkling and James G. Blaine* (New York: A. G. Sherwood and Co., 1893).

¹⁰ *Second Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Military Statistics* (Albany: C. Wendell, 1865), 15.

experiences noted in 1889.¹¹ Many of the war's lessons in mobilizing and caring for large bodies of troops certainly appeared forgotten by 1898, when war with Spain led federal authorities to rely once more upon the states for volunteer forces. Once again, much time was wasted and many lives unnecessarily lost to camp diseases and supply failures thanks to inefficient oversight.¹² The situation had changed dramatically by 1917, however, as the United States entered the First World War. The comprehensive spirit of reform that marked the Progressive Era, along with years of calls to improve state and national military readiness, led Woodrow Wilson's administration to reject the old model of voluntary mobilization that had sparked tension and inefficiency in past conflicts. Selective Service, introduced in 1917, revolutionized mass mobilization by dropping the volunteer principle and redefining compulsory service as honorable and patriotic. Voluntarism remained a potent force among the public but diminished as government policy discouraged it.¹³ For New Yorkers and their fellow Americans, freedom of choice and the volunteer impulse had prompted stirring episodes of valor and dedication during the Civil War but could not be counted on in the twentieth century.

¹¹ Thomas S. Townsend, *The Honors of the Empire State in the War of the Rebellion* (New York: A. Lovell & Co., 1889), 11.

¹² On state and national mobilization in the Spanish-American War, see *New York in the Spanish-American War 1898: Part of the Report of the Adjutant General of the State for 1900* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1900); S. W. Burt and the New York State Historian (Hugh Hastings), *New York and the War with Spain: History of the Empire State Regiments* (Albany: Argus Co., 1903); Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1971).

¹³ Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 103-237; Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 175-373; Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21-54, 83-116.

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