

**THE DRAFT RIOTS IN NEW YORK.
JULY, 1863. THE METROPOLITAN
POLICE: THEIR SERVICES DURING
RIOT WEEK. THEIR HONORABLE
RECORD**

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The Draft Riots in New York. July, 1863. The Metropolitan Police: Their Services During Riot Week. Their Honorable Record by David M. Barnes

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BY

DAVID M. BARNES.

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To the Board of Police Commissioners—Messrs. **ACON** and **BERGEN**—Superintendent, Inspectors, and the Officers and Members of the Metropolitan Police of the City of New York, this compilation is respectfully inscribed. It affords Historical Record of the excellence of the organization, of its fidelity, bravery, and efficiency.

DAVID M. BARNES.

NEW YORK, SEPT., 1863.



PREFATORY.

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

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

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

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

expectedly, and when they were the only force to meet it; rallying on sudden warning, they did meet it, and, by their well-concerted action, their speedy movements, and their determined assaults upon the mobs in the different localities, they gave the rioters no time to correctly estimate their own strength or properly estimate the weakness, at the time, of the authorities. Had it not been for this, there is scarce a doubt that the greater excesses which were in contemplation, the raid into the lower portions of the city, the pillaging visit to Wall Street and the Government buildings, would have been consummated, and a period of destruction, plunder, and carnage have ensued to an extent most fearful, and to which what did occur would have been as nothing.

On Tuesday afternoon the police were strengthened by the military, and then commenced exemplary work with the rioters; on all but two or three occasions the military fired directly into the mobs, and with deadly effect. The number killed by the police and the military in the different conflicts, when alone and united, can never be ascertained; it is estimated by those who witnessed the terrible scenes, and have the best opportunity of judging, at from four hundred to five hundred. The bodies of those killed on the spot were hurriedly taken off, and, in many cases, conveyed out of the city, or secreted here and privately buried. Cases of subsequent deaths from wounds, it is known, were attributed to other causes. Eighteen persons are known to have been killed by the rioters, eleven of whom were colored.

The number of buildings burned by the mob, from Monday morning until Wednesday morning, was over fifty,—among them the Colored Orphan Asylum, two Police Stations, three Provost Marshal's Offices, and an entire block of dwellings on Broadway.

A large number of stores and dwellings were sacked, though not burned, and their contents destroyed or carried away. The aggregate amount of property destroyed and stolen amounts to upwards of one million two hundred thousand dollars.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

—◆—

Their Services during the Riot Week,

JULY, 1868.

—◆—

THEIR HONORABLE RECORD.

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THE acts of the Inspectors, a record of which follows, and their commands, were all conducted under the direction of the Police Commissioners. The legal organization of the Board invests the Superintendent with the command of the force, the Commissioners acting in an administrative capacity. In the absence of the Superintendent the command is assigned to the President of the Board, and thus the duties of Mr. KENNEDY, who early on Monday morning was disabled by the rioters, were assumed by

COMMISSIONER THOMAS C. ACTON

with the promptness, intelligence, and energy which characterize him. The labor during the first four days was immense, and some estimate of it may be formed by the fact that, in the telegraphic department alone, there were upward of *four thousand* dispatches received and orders sent, all of which, with but few exceptions, required the personal supervision of Mr. Acton. These, it must be remembered, were only a fraction of the many matters requiring his attention. He was not out of the office, save on official business, and then but briefly, during the first five days of the week—the duration of riot and its symptoms—and had no sleep from six o'clock Monday morning until two o'clock on Friday morning. He then lay down for the first time, getting two hours' rest. The position of affairs was one as important and as critical as that on a field of battle; time of as much value; sagacity and decision as necessary. Upward of two thousand men under his control, constant emergencies