Copyright 2013, The Concord Review, Inc., all rights reserved

MAYHEM IN MANHATTAN: THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ASTOR PLACE RIOTS OF 1849

Malcolm Steinberg

In the late 1840s, few acting rivalries were stronger than that of English actor William Charles Macready and American actor Edwin Forrest. Both were tragedians and, until 1843, had a degree of professional respect for each other. According to theatrical historian Arthur Hornblow, it was in that year, while Macready performed in America, that critics "pitted him against Forrest," creating "considerable rivalry and partisanship among theatergoers." Two years later, while performing for the second time in London, Forrest found himself the victim of hissing from his audience at the Princess' estate. He immediately blamed this hostility on "the machinations of Macready."[1] Determined to have revenge, Forrest visited Edinburgh, where Macready was performing *Hamlet;* Forrest, Hornblow writes, "went to the theatre, stood conspicuously in a box and hissed the English actor."[2] So was born a feud. When Macready performed again in New York in May 1849, the rivalry would trigger a disastrous riot at the Astor Place Opera House, where Macready was to perform *Macbeth*. However,

Malcolm Steinberg is a Senior at the St. Albans School in Washington, DC, where he wrote this paper for Dr. Benjamin Labaree, Jr.'s United States History course in the 2011/2012 academic year.

the rivalry was not the only cause of the riot. The events of May 7 through 11, 1849, resulted from both the antagonism between Macready and Forrest's fans and already existing social tensions, largely between rich and poor, and nativists and anglophiles; these social tensions can be seen in the public's reaction to the riots.

The social tension of the 1840s mainly stemmed from this reality of industrialization in the antebellum northeast, especially New York: As more and more immigrants began to arrive, the wealth gap, and thus social stratification, expanded. For instance, according to Levine's *Half Slave and Half Free,* in 1800, the wealthiest 10 percent of Philadelphians controlled one half of their city's taxable property; by 1850, the wealthiest *1* percent of Philadelphians controlled *more* than half of the taxable property.[3] By 1860, the top 5 percent of northerners controlled over 50 percent of northern property.[4] In New York City, the rich got richer: In 1845, almost 1,000 New Yorkers claimed personal property of over $100,000, whereas only 100 New Yorkers could claim more than $20,000 of personal property in 1820.[5] Meanwhile, the working class transitioned from a group of self-employed farmers to a class of factory wage-workers—only about one fifth of the U.S. labor force was estimated to have worked for someone else in 1800, while by 1860, "more than half did so."[6] Industrialization reduced self-employment particularly in the North. In 1860, as many as 65 percent of northerners may have been working for wages.[7] Immigrants tended to fill these wage-earning, often unskilled jobs.

Immigration to the United States, particularly to the North—and particularly to New York—exploded during the antebellum era. From 1820 to 1839, more than 667,000 immigrants arrived on America's shores, fully 501,000 of whom—three out of every four—landed in New York.[8] Not all immigrants stayed in the cities in which they arrived—for example, about 40 percent of English, Scottish and Welsh immigrants, who generally fared the best, were farmers by 1860—but unskilled laborers, who constituted about 40 percent of all immigrants between 1840 and 1860, sought urban manufacturing jobs.[9] Consequentially, as New York City's population swelled from 313,000 in 1840 to 814,000 in 1860,

the total employment of the nation's mining and manufacturing industries tripled.[10] In New York, this massive influx of immigrants, especially of Irish immigrants, who began to pour into America in the late 1840s as the potato famine drove them from their homeland, settled at the bottom tier of socioeconomic status.[11] While the upper and middle classes generally remained comprised of native-born, Protestant Americans, by the time of the Civil War more than 75 percent of the working class was foreign-born and Catholic.[12] Irish workers began to populate slums like the Five Points, an infamously crime-ridden slum on the lower east side of Manhattan.

The influx of Irish labor, combined with rapid industrialization, created a chasm between a genteel class of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Americans and a poor class of predominantly Catholic Irish-Americans. Both sides clung to their cultures and became isolated from each other. Wealthy New Yorkers, many of them relatively new-moneyed, tended to be, according to Burrows and Wallace, "quite comfortable with success."[13] The so-called "uppertens" "indulged in fine wines, fast horses, and voguish clothing with no discernible traces of guilt;" they established exclusive institutions for themselves, as the elite members of a society often do, and largely detached themselves from the plight of fellow New Yorkers, to the point at which, by 1850, they were "wallowing in luxury with a nonchalance unknown among prior generations."[14] While a rich Manhattanite around the time of the Astor Place Riot "might easily spend ten thousand dollars on furniture for a single room," a few miles away a single room—15 feet square—in the Old Brewery, a run-down tenement in the Five Points, held about 26 people in squalid conditions.[15] The Irish in particular were further isolated from upperten culture by their religion, Catholicism, to which many Irishmen clung despite being "barely conversant with the sacraments and doctrines of their church."[16] Irish-Catholics felt connected to their native land through their faith, especially considering that they were antagonized by a Protestant upper class in America the same way they had been by their "English conquerors" back in Ireland.[17] As a result of this fiercely loyal faith, Roman Catholics constituted by 1850 the single larg-

est religious denomination in the United States.[18] In short, the proletarians and the haute bourgeoisie of 1849 New York City had little in common.

The classes did share a love for Shakespeare, whose works enjoyed a massive American revival in the 19th century, but they did not support the same actors. On May 7, 1849, during his performance of *Macbeth,* a rowdy, pro-Forrest group of audience members booed William Charles Macready, a favorite of the New York aristocracy, off the stage, throwing rotten eggs and produce, pieces of wood, copper coins and asafetida, which smelled, according to the actor, "most horribly."[19] Outraged, the English actor decided he would not perform again and would leave New York, much to the dismay of his wealthy fans. However, even if Macready were willing to give up the fight against the rowdy Forrest supporters who booed him offstage, the bourgeoisie was not. As wealthy businessman Philip Hone noted in his diary, "This cannot end here; the respectable part of our citizens will never consent to be put down by a mob raised to serve the purpose of such a fellow as Forrest.[20] Macready's supporters finally convinced him to stay and perform again with a petition that read as follows:

> To W.C. Macready, Esq.,
>
> Dear Sir:—The undersigned, having heard that the outrage at the Astor Place Opera House, on Monday Evening, is likely to have the effect of preventing you from continuing your performances, and from concluding your intended farewell engagement on the American Stage, take this public method of requesting you to reconsider your decision, and of assuring you that the good sense and respect for order, prevailing in this community, will sustain you on the subsequent nights of your performances.[21]

Forty-seven affluent New Yorkers, including Herman Melville and Washington Irving, signed the petition, which appeared as an open letter in the *New York Herald* on May 9.[22] Macready decided to go on performing; the *Weekly Herald* reported, "Rumors prevailed throughout the city, that the opposition to Mr. Macready's appearance would be persisted in," and the authorities "made their arrangements likewise, and it became evident…that there would be a serious collision" between the mob and the police.[23] There

was such a collision that evening; a large mob—Hone described it as "a dreadful one in numbers and ferocity"—descended on Astor Place.[24] At around 9:00, after City Hall was alerted to the situation, several cavalry troops from the State Militia's First Division, as well as a battalion of the National Guard, arrived to reinforce the police presence and quell the riot.[25] The troops, led by General Sanford, in a state of confusion and under assault from a mob of about 10,000 to 15,000 people, fired several volleys directly into the crowd, killing or mortally wounding 22 and wounding over 150.[26] The next day, the city authorities stiffly reinforced the forces protecting the theater: Thousands of infantry, four troops of artillery, 1,000 special policemen, and cavalry were in the streets. These guards were able to disperse another angry crowd on May 11, fortunately without having to fire.[27]

To the elite of New York, the riots were a form of popular revolt and something to be feared. Fear was especially prominent in light of the European revolutions of 1848.[28] Many saw the riot as an undeniable sign that the plebeians were finally turning on the bourgeoisie, egged on by inflammatory rhetoric similar to that of contemporary European movements. A *Weekly Herald* article asked if, because of the *Tribune*'s constant stimulation of "the hostility of the poor and idle against the rich and industrious," New Yorkers "now really see the beginning of socialism in America[.]" The article also called the *Tribune* "the organ of French socialism and kindred abominations."[29] This critique was not entirely off point. Although Horace Greeley, the head editor of the *Tribune,* was not in fact a socialist but a Whig, Greeley had, especially during the early 1840s, allowed prominent Fourierist Albert Brisbane to publish a wide variety of pro-labor and even socialist literature in the newspaper.[30] Thus, the *Tribune* did, to some degree, serve as an extension of the popular socialist movements that surged through Europe in the 1840s.

Much of this fear of socialism and social upheaval stemmed not just from the rioting and vocalism of the poor, however, but from the threatening nature of a protest against the Astor Opera House and all it represented. Commissioned only a few years

earlier in 1846, the theater served as a new cultural sanctuary for the well-to-do.[31] Architect Isaiah Rogers designed it as such; he "aristocratized" the pit with fixed, upholstered chairs instead of open benches.[32] The theater enforced an evening-wear dress code, and was, as Wallace and Burrows noted, "a frankly elitist organization."[33] On May 7, 1849, when the rowdy audience members booed Macready off the stage, they were, in the eyes of much of New York's aristocracy, booing everything he stood for in the name of everything Forrest stood for.

To the working-class public, Edwin Forrest was a hero. Forrest was born in Philadelphia in 1806 to a Scottish father, a business failure who died during his son's childhood.[34] His mother, a poor widow, could do little to provide for him, so young Forrest had to scrape by on his own.[35] From an early age, he developed an interest in acting, and he got his start on the professional stage at an extremely "dilapidated" theater—as Hornblow calls it—in Pittsburgh. From there, he moved on to Maysville and Lexington, Kentucky, and then to Cincinnati. Forrest's situation was far from glamorous. Hornblow writes that while travelling by land, "Forrest and the other actors rode on horseback" while the rest of the company followed in "in covered wagons with the theatrical paraphernalia."[36] These rustic beginnings, as well as Forrest's extreme patriotism and boisterous style, "endeared him to the American people," Lawrence Levine argues.[37] Moreover, Forrest debuted—at only 26 years of age—on the New York stage at the Bowery Theatre. Far from the sumptuousness and refinement of institutions like the Astor Opera, the Bowery was a rowdy show house in the notorious slum called the Five Points; it had burned down four times before the time of the riots, in 1828, 1836, 1838, and 1845.[38] Forrest debuted there as Othello on November 6, 1826; by then, he had already been on a whirlwind national tour after wildly successful performances with the celebrated tragedian Edmund Kean in Albany in 1825.[39] He went on to play King Lear, considered by many critics to be his finest role because of his "magnificent physique, rugged exterior [and] tempestuous style of acting," in 1836.[40] In essence, Forrest was, as Hornblow notes,

"a native American actor and the most dominant personality our stage has ever known."[41]

William Charles Macready was, as Levine writes, "Forrest's diametric opposite," at least in terms of public perception.[42] To begin with, he was from a more affluent family; his father, William Macready, Sr., acted and managed theatres, and was able to provide, through money and connections, an excellent education for William, Jr.[43] Macready debuted as Romeo in Birmingham, England on June 7, 1810; his premiere in New York coincided with Forrest's, on October 2,1826, but took place at the more aristocratic Park Theatre.[44] From early on, Macready's style was less rough and more artistic than Forrest's; he was famous for the "brisk pirouette" which he introduced to Hamlet, and which Forrest publicly criticized.[45] The English actor had what Levine calls "identification with the wealthy gentry."[46] The wealthy gentry certainly identified with *him,* especially over Forrest. A journal entry by Hone sums up well the bourgeois opinion of the two, and of Forrest's fan-base: He calls Macready "a gentleman," and Forrest a "vulgar, arrogant loafer, with a pack of kindred rowdies at his heels."[47] So, when that "pack of kindred rowdies," on May 7, 1849, rained down on Macready, according to the *Weekly Herald,* "a perfect torrent of groans and hisses… and a deluge of assafoetida," and subsequently yelled "Three Cheers for Edwin Forrest," they were making, as far as the wealthy were concerned, an assault on the wealthy gentry on behalf of the lower class.[48]

Of course, the "rowdies" themselves saw the situation differently; in their minds, they were protesting the rule of an English aristocracy that they saw as encroaching upon the power of the common man of New York. A day after the initial booing on May 7, an organization calling itself the "American Committee" posted this broadside all over the city:

> Workingmen, shall Americans or English rule! In this City? The crew of the British steamer [on which Macready arrived] have threatened all Americans who shall dare to express their opinions this night at the English aristocratic! Opera house! We advocate no violence but a free expression of opinion to all public men. Workingmen! Freemen!! Stand by your lawful rights![49]

Such attacks, which portrayed Macready and his supporters not just as elitist, but as "English" aristocracy, appealed to a variety of working-class demographics. Poor native-born Americans saw Englishmen as un-American and unwelcome; the Irish immigrants hated the British as well, and, further, felt threatened by the prospect of an aristocracy ruling America, their refuge, the same way one did in Europe. Thus, a hatred of the English constituted one of the few overlaps between Irish and nativist views in plebeian politics—and among New York gang affiliations, which had much to do with slum politics and with the Astor Place Riots. The most prominent antebellum gangs of the Bowery district, including the O'Connell Guards, the Atlantic Guards, and, famously, the Bowery Boys, had a membership that Asbury notes was in fact "principally Irish."[50] One mostly Irish gang, the True Blue Americans, frequently engaged in the same kind of specifically anti-British nativism that embodied the American Committee; the members spent much of their time dressed in over-the-top, Uncle-Sam-style frock coats and stovepipe hats while publicly denouncing the British Empire. While they never embraced American identity enough that "Ireland did not remain their principal vocal interest," gangsters like the True Blue Americans, as well as other public figures, managed to mesh together the radicalism of poor natives and poor immigrants by focusing on the common enemy they all had in Great Britain.[51]

All of this Anglophobic anger manifested itself on May 7 not just at Astor Place, but at Forrest's performance that night at the Bowery Theater: He received wild applause when he delivered Macbeth's line, "What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug will scour these English hence?"[52] As a result of the anger, when Macready announced his intentions to stay in America and perform another night, on May 10, workingmen formed a massive mob and headed to Astor Place, that "English aristocratic" theater, determined to stop the English actor and his rich, un-American cronies. A majority of the rioters, numbering in the thousands, were "native born," according to Burrows and Wallace, "but there was also a considerable minority of Irish immigrants—butchers and laborers united in mutual Anglo-aristophobia."[53]

At the head of the mob, "calling upon them," according to the *Weekly Herald,* "to stone the building," was a man named Edward Z.C. Judson.[54] Judson, alias "Ned Buntline" —the name under which he was indicted for leading the rioters—was in charge of the American Committee, and likely behind the publishing of the inflammatory poster. (Judson was not just indicted, but later convicted, and served a year in prison).[55] He was a "Friend of the Working Man," a nativist hero of New York's poor, according to Wallace and Burrows.[56] His 1848 work *Mysteries and Miseries of New York* "dwelt in lascivious detail on the plutocratic lifestyle of the city's rich." (The book was also hailed rurally as a "testament to urban wickedness.")[57] Judson and his mob's anti-elitist attitude represented the typical sentiment of New York's working poor in the antebellum period. In fact, the popularity of Judson's political philosophy endured even the disaster of the riots, their quelling, and subsequent legal action which the city officials took; he was "treated as a hero on his release" from prison in 1850.[58]

The proletarian bloc's reaction to the police's lethal quelling of the riot also reflects a fervent anti-elitist attitude. For instance, in a *New York Daily Tribune* article, an unnamed author wrote on behalf of "the Citizens of New-York" that the death of rioters was "the most wanton, unprovoked, and murderous outrage ever perpetrated in the civilized world."[59] An op-ed article in the *Weekly Herald* sarcastically mocked the decision of the police to fire on the crowd as an "indication of American fame and American name" designed to appeal to European aristocrats. The article explains that the quelling, "the slaughter of twenty-five citizens of New York, and the maiming of fifty more and upwards, in order to avenge the wounded honor of an English play actor…aroused the British press to a degree almost of Hibernian enthusiasm."[60] The article goes on to more broadly mock the opinions of the wealthy—and the Whig party, which protested the Mexican War, a war supported by the Democratic Party, the party of the "Common Man":

> The Mexican war was a wretched, miserable, insignificant, paltry affair…a cold-blooded, cowardly, atrocious, unprovoked assault on a few miserable devils, unable to make any resistance! Of course it

> was; for so said the truth-loving journals of London. But the affair at Massacre place—God forgive us! We mean *Astor* Place—was a grand, magnificent, heroic achievement, almost worthy of John Bull himself.[61]

Discourse at a later meeting at Tammany Hall, the Democratic political institution whose main constituency was the working poor, also focused on the perceived cruelty and folly of the Whig city officials who crushed the riot. One politician argued that they deserved to be "displaced" "for their management of the Astor Place riot, for their waste of the public moneys, and for their other misdeeds."[62] He also questioned the responsibility of the judicial response to the events, arguing that the real instigators were Macready's friends; he asked, "How is it that those who signed the Macready card [petition] were not indicted?"[63] The politician's theory, which he shared with his fellow Democrats, was that Macready's supporters were never indicted for the same reason "the whole Sunday press…supported the authorities in the course they took in that riot": "It was because two-thirds of the editors of that press are Englishmen and hence they supported the cause of the English actor."[64] The upper class fought back against this accusation of treacherous anglophilia: For example, one journalist present in the theater was sure to note "that very many of those who were most conspicuous and enthusiastic in favor of Mr. Macready, were American citizens."[65]

While the poor blamed the deaths on an Anglo-aristocratic conspiracy, the wealthy blamed the riots—and thus the deaths—on a working-class conspiracy. Yet another *Weekly Herald* article asked provocative questions about the authorities' response to the mob:

> Have they inquired with inquisitorial care, whether there was any persons [sic] high on authority, who avoided the responsibilities of [their offices]? Have they, during the three weeks of careful investigation, taken pains to ascertain whether any person or persons left the ground of the tumult when the disturbance was rife?...Have they carefully inquired how many tickets were given away, and by whom and to whom? Have they…made careful investigation…without fear, favor, or hope of reward?...All we know is, that twenty-one persons have been indicted, and, from all that can be learned, we are forced to the conclusion that these unfortunates…have been made the cats paws of more able and designing men.[66]

Philip Hone also indicated a belief in the activities of "more able and designing men." Describing the cause of the riots, he cited not the poor decision Macready made to perform after encouragement from his friends, but rather noted that "inflammatory notices were posted…meetings were regularly organized, and bands of ruffians, gratuitously supplied with tickets by richer rascals, were sent to take possession of the theatre."[67] Hone saw little wrong or elitist about the police's quelling of the mob, writing, "The city authorities have acted nobly…The police force…were employed in every post of danger."[68] One cannot help but contrast this statement with an earlier-quoted op-ed that sarcastically says Sanford and his troops were in danger.[69] Others, however, concurred with Hone in that the police were not at fault; nay, "we cannot award too much praise to the police…for the manner in which they arrested the leading rioters in the house and…outside…many of the ringleaders of the mob," wrote the *Weekly Herald*.[70]

General Sanford himself was more balanced on the subject. "No one blames the military for the blood shed," he said to the press, but we "must…inquire as to the policy of the police and civil authorities, by whose imbecility, weakness and folly, the bloody collision was brought about."[71] He argued that if the police "had done their duty Monday night" by preventing an initial demonstration against Macready, they would not have needed to use lethal force on Thursday.[72] Although he did not acknowledge the fault of the authorities in the catastrophe of the riots, he did, in that interview, at least express that there was some complexity to the problem, and that the working-class rioters were not solely to blame.

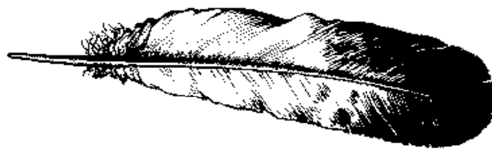
The fact is that there was indeed complexity; to a degree, the criticisms of each side by the other are simultaneously correct. The theory proposed by the mob—the belief that the wealthy conspired to control events, were anglophiles, and saw the deaths of rioters as a success—was at least somewhat accurate. First of all, the city's elite were tightly knit and regularly shared an agenda. On May 11, the night after the first major riots, Hone wrote that he "was one of a large party who dined today with Mr. Vail, at his splendid

mansion, Fifth avenue" with a guest list that included "General Scott…Washington Irving…General Tallmadge…John Van Buren [Martin Van Buren's son]…Mr. Corcoran of Washington" and others.[73] Of the guests, two—Irving and Charles A. Davis—signed the May 9th petition to Macready that convinced him to perform, while another two—generals Scott and Tallmadge—influenced the activities of the military that quelled the riot.[74] In fact, Macready wrote in his journal that Tallmadge contacted him on May 10, and "assured" him "that every measure should be taken to insure the tranquility of the house tonight, etc."[75] Such meetings smack of collusion. Secondly, the wealthy *did* perceive the handling of the riot as appropriate and good; Hone writes of the quelling as practically an advertisement "that law and order can be maintained under a Republican form of government."[76]

Nonetheless, some of the elite's critiques of the mob were equally true. For example, according to Burrows and Wallace, the theory that devious men of means had given out tickets to poorer rowdies was factually correct. Assistants to Captain Isaiah Rynders, "Forrest's most ardent backer," handed out tickets and "marching orders" to "assorted b'hoys" at Chatham Square and Dover Street (an intersection in the Bowery near the Bowery Theater and the Five Points).[77] Hone's description of Forrest's fans as a "pack of kindred rowdies" was not unjustified. The Bowery Theater, Forrest's New York home base, had a reputation for being rowdy and un-artistic. As one literary critic quipped, "Throw not the pearl of Shakespeare's wit,/ Before the swine of the Bowery pit."[78] The b'hoys may have "adored theatre," as Burrows and Wallace note, but they did not engage in the same level of polite and cultured appreciation that could be found in a more reputable institution.[79] Isaiah Rynders himself was a particularly notorious example of this low-brow quality of the Five Points. He became politically powerful when he discovered "the gangsters could be employed to great advantage," according to Asbury.[80] In addition to being a political leader—he was a Tammany Hall boss—Rynders was "the patron and protector of the Five Points gangs" and commanded, by midcentury, a massive criminal empire, including the "notorious" Empire Club of Park Row and several "green-groceries,"

drug-dealing dens disguised as produce stores.[81] Rynders' reason for promoting a riot with handbills was that "he sometimes permitted his love for the Irish and his hatred of the English to upset his judgment."[82] Rynders was put on trial alongside Edward Z. C. Judson but, unlike his fellow ringleader, was acquitted; he was no doubt aided by the defense of Democrat John Van Buren, who made the political boss's case in court as a symbolic gesture, as Burrows and Wallace put it, that "Tammany…would look after its own."[83] Whatever his personal politics, that a criminal figure like Rynders was largely responsible for instigating the riots speaks at least to some partial truth of Hone's "pack-of-kindred-rowdies" critique.

Essentially, the riots at Astor Place represented the growing social divisions of New York City. The rivalry between Forrest and Macready was just another aspect of New York's culture that antagonized the rich and the poor, the native-born and foreigners, Whigs and Democrats, the bourgeoisie and the b'hoys. On the surface, the riots may have seemed the simple result of an acting rivalry, but public opinion following the events, as well as strict legal action, reflected the deeper underlying tensions that really caused the disaster.



[1] Arthur Hornblow, A History of the Theatre in America (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincot Company, 1919) Vol. 2, p. 37

[2] Ibid., p. 38

[3] Bruce Levine, Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005) p. 58

[4] Ibid., p. 58

[5] Ibid., p. 58

[6] Ibid., p. 59

[7] Ibid., p. 59

[8] Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 736

[9] Bruce Levine, p. 67; Ibid., p. 59

[10] Burrows and Wallace, p. 736; Bruce Levine, p. 58

[11] Ibid., p. 68

[12] Burrows and Wallace, p. 739

[13] Ibid., p. 725

[14] Ibid., p. 725; Ibid., p. 720

[15] Ibid., p. 721; Herbert Asbury, Gangs of New York: An Informal History of the Underworld (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1928) p. 13

[16] Bruce Levine, p. 86

[17] Ibid., p. 86

[18] Ibid., p. 85

[19] Journal of William Charles Macready ed. J.C. Trewin (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967) p. 262

[20] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2 ed. Bayard Tuckerman (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1889) p. 360

[21] "To W.C. Macready, Esq.," New York Herald (May 9, 1849)

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!" Weekly Herald (May 12, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 20

[24] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2, p. 361

[25] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!"

[26] Asbury, p. 40; Burrows and Wallace, p. 764

[27] Ibid., p. 764

[28] Ibid., p. 762

[29] "The Late Tragedy—Opinions of the Press—Verdict of the Coroner's Jury—Socialism in New York," Weekly Herald (May 19, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 21

[30] Burrows and Wallace, p. 768
[31] "New Theatre in N.Y," Brooklyn Eagle (October 21, 1846) Page 2
[32] Burrows and Wallace, p. 724
[33] Ibid., p. 763; Ibid., 724
[34] Hornblow, p. 31
[35] Ibid., p. 32
[36] Ibid., p. 33
[37] Lawrence Levine, Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998) p. 60
[38] Hornblow, p. 28
[39] Ibid., p. 31; Ibid., p. 35
[40] Ibid., p. 36
[41] Ibid., p. 31
[42] Lawrence Levine, p. 60
[43] Hornblow, p. 19
[44] Ibid., p. 20; Ibid., p. 18
[45] Lawrence Levine, p.60; Ibid., p. 63
[46] Ibid., p. 60
[47] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2, pp. 359–360
[48] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!"
[49] American Committee, "Working men, shall Americans of English rule! In this City?" 1849, Print, 91 cm x 60 cm, Folger Digital Image Collection
[50] Asbury, p. 26
[51] Ibid., p. 26
[52] Lawrence Levine, p. 60
[53] Burrows and Wallace, p. 763
[54] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!"
[55] Burrows and Wallace, p. 698; "Ned Buntline at Home," Brooklyn Eagle (August 10, 1849); Burrows and Wallace, p. 763; Ibid., p. 765
[56] Ibid., p. 698
[57] Ibid., pp. 698–699
[58] Ibid., p. 765
[59] "The Riots," New York Daily Tribune (May 12, 1849)
[60] "The British Press and the British Aristocracy, on the Astor Place Massacre," Weekly Herald (June 23, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 25

[61] Ibid.

[62] "The Ratification Meeting at Tammany Hall," Weekly Herald (November 11, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 44, p. 347

[63] Ibid., p. 347

[64] Ibid., p. 347

[65] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!"

[66] "The Astor Place Riots, and the Grand Jury of the Court of Sessions," Weekly Herald (June 30, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 26, p. 205

[67] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2, pp. 360–361

[68] Ibid., p. 362

[69] "The British Press and the British Aristocracy, on the Astor Place Massacre"

[70] "Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!"

[71] "General Sanford on the Astor Place Massacre," Weekly Herald (June 16, 1849) Volume XV, Issue 25, p. 188

[72] Ibid., p. 188

[73] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2, p. 362

[74] Ibid., p. 362; Levine, p. 63

[75] The Journal of William Charles Macready, p. 263

[76] The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851, Volume 2, p. 362

[77] Burrows and Wallace, p. 763; Tyler Anbinder, Five Points: The 19th Century New York City Neighborhood That Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World's Most Notorious Slum (New York: The Free Press, 2001) p. ix

[78] "The Theatres," New York Mirror (June 1, 1839)

[79] Burrows and Wallace, p. 757

[80] Asbury, p. 39

[81] Ibid., p. 5; Ibid., p. 39

[82] Ibid., p. 39

[83] Burrows and Wallace, p. 765

Bibliography

"Dreadful Riot and Bloodshed at the Astor Place Theater!" Weekly Herald May 12, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 20: 145, New York, New York

"General Sanford on the Astor Place Massacre," Weekly Herald June 16, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 25: 188, New York, New York

"Investigation of the Astor Place Riot," Weekly Herald June 9, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 24: 179, New York, New York

"More deaths," Weekly Herald May 13, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 21: 154, New York, New York

"Ned Buntline at Home," Brooklyn Eagle August 10, 1849, Brooklyn, New York

"New Theatre in N.Y.," Brooklyn Eagle October 21, 1846, Brooklyn, New York

"The Astor Place Riots, and the Grand Jury of the Court of Sessions," Weekly Herald June 30, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 26: 205, New York, New York

"The Astor Place Tragedy! Farther particulars. Movements of the Military. Departure of Macready," New York Tribune May 12, 1849: 1, New York, New York

"The British Press and the British Aristocracy on the Astor Place Massacre," Weekly Herald June 23, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 25: 197, New York, New York

"The Late Tragedy—Opinions of the Press—Verdict of the Coroner's Jury—Socialism in New York," Weekly Herald May 19, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 21, New York, New York

"The Ratification Meeting at Tammany Hall," Weekly Herald November 11, 1849, Volume XV, Issue 44: 347, New York, New York

"The Riots," New York Daily Tribune May 12, 1849, New York, New York

"The Theatres," New York Mirror June 1, 1839, New York, New York

"To W.C. Macready, Esq.," New York Herald May 9, 1849, New York, New York

American Committee, "Working men, shall Americans of English rule! In this City?" 1849, Print, 91 cm x 60 cm, Folger Digital Image Collection

Anbinder, Tyler, Five Points: The 19th Century New York City Neighborhood That Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World's Most Notorious Slum New York: The Free Press, 2001

Asbury, Herbert, The Gangs of New York: An Informal History of the Underworld New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1927

Bell, Michael Davitt, Culture, Genre, and Literary Vocation: Selected Essays on American Literature Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001

Bordman, Gerald, and Thomas S. Hischak, "Astor Place Riots," The Oxford Companion to American Theatre 2004, Encyclopedia.com (accessed January 3, 2012)

Burrows, Edwin G., and Mike Wallace, Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898 New York: Oxford University Press, 1999

Cliff, Nigel, The Shakespeare Riots: Revenge, Drama, and Death in Nineteenth-Century America New York: Random House, 2007

Foner, Eric, Give Me Liberty! An American History 2nd Seagull ed., New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009

Hone, Philip, The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828–1851 edited by Bayard Tuckerman, in two volumes, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1889

Hornblow, Arthur, A History of the Theatre in America Vol. 2, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1919

Levine, Bruce, Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War New York: Hill and Wang, 2005

Levine, Lawrence W., Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998

Macready, William Charles, Journal of William Charles Macready edited by J.C. Trewin, London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967

Moses, Montrose Jonas, The Fabulous Forrest: the record of an American actor Bronx, New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1969

Spann, Edward K., The New Metropolis: New York City, 1840–1857 New York: Columbia University Press, 1981

Strong, George Templeton, The Diary of George Templeton Strong: Young Man in New York, 1835–1849 edited by Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952

Tried by War

James M. McPherson

New York: Penguin Press, 2008, p. 191

...Lincoln could take some credit for the success of the brigade armed with Spencer repeaters. He had always been interested in new technologies. In 1849 Lincoln had patented a device for lifting steamboats over shoals. (He is the only President of the United States to have held a patent.) In the 1850s he occasionally delivered a lecture called "Discoveries and Inventions." During the war Lincoln functioned at times as chief of ordnance, ordering the hidebound Brigadier General James Ripley, who officially held that position until the President forced his retirement in September 1863, to test new weapons offered by inventors. Some of the latter were crackpots, and some of Lincoln's subordinates complained that he wasted too much time with these men. On the other hand the President helped pave the way for the navy's contract with John Ericsson to build the Monitor and for the army to try Thaddeus Lowe's observation balloons. Lincoln personally test-fired breech-loading and repeating rifles on the open ground south of the White House. On more than one occasion he overrode General Ripley and ordered the Ordnance Bureau to purchase the best of these—especially the seven-shot repeating rifles and carbines invented by Connecticut Yankee Christopher Spencer. These guns turned out to be the best shoulder weapons of the war. The carbines gave Union cavalry a significant advantage in the last fifteen months of the war. Infantry regiments armed with Spencer rifles gained a fearsome reputation among enemy units.