

Civil War Recruitment Posters

Inquiry Question: What tactics did the authors of the Massachusetts recruitment posters use to persuade their audiences?

Grade Spans: 3-5; 9-12

Glossary

Broadside: a sheet of paper printed with information that is meant to be shared publicly

Recruitment / Recruit: the act of trying to get people to sign up to serve in the armed forces (all of the posters in this set are recruiting for the Union Army)

Enlist/Enlistment: to sign up to serve in the army

Regiment: an army unit

Bounty: money paid to encourage enlistment

Casualty (casualties, pl.): a person killed or hurt in a war

Infantry: unit of soldiers fighting on foot

State aid: money given to a person/family by the government

Descent: family origins

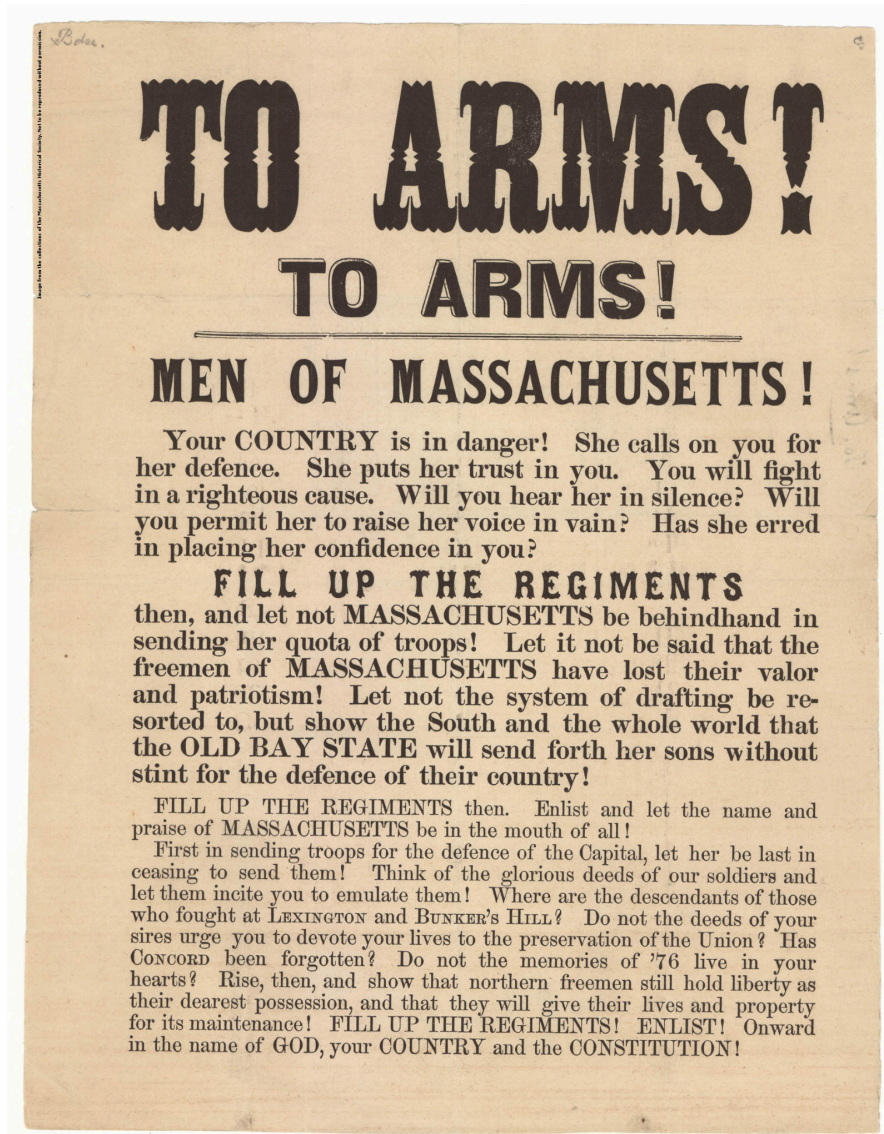
Analyzing Enlistment Posters

The MA government created all of these recruitment posters. As you read them, consider:

- When was this poster created?
 - Context: What was happening in the war/country at the time?
- Who was the audience for this poster?
 - Hint: Who is the poster recruiting?
- What were soldiers offered?
- Why might someone choose to enlist?

"To arms! To arms!" 1862

Published in the early years of the Civil War, this broadside recruits white men to enlist with Massachusetts regiments. Between 1861-1862, Massachusetts suffered a high number of casualties, and so the Union worked to recruit many more soldiers.



"Your COUNTRY is in danger! She calls on you to fight for her defense. She puts her trust in you. You will fight in a righteous cause"

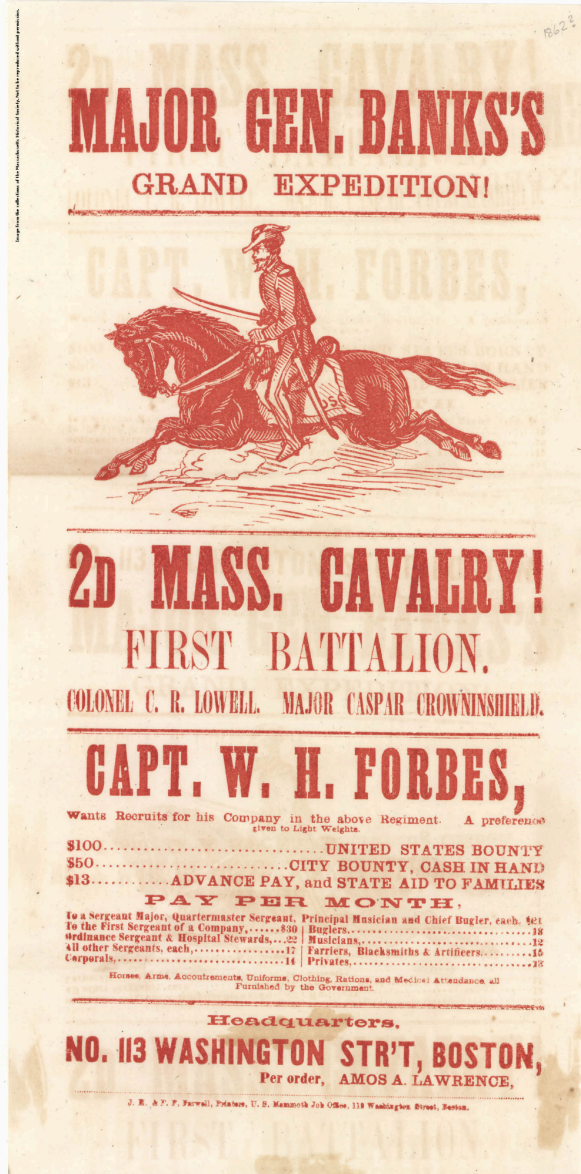
History SOURCE

2nd Mass. Cavalry, 1862

This broadside is recruiting to fill several positions in the 1st battalion of the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry—a regiment that rode on horseback.

Civil War regiments were formed based on friendships and group connections. Young men marched off to war with siblings, friends, school and work mates, and, when a regiment had high casualties in a battle, this led to enormous grief for the soldiers' shared networks of friends and families.

This was the case for the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment on 9 August 1862 at Cedar Mountain, in Culpeper County, Virginia. During a long battle, 173 men (out of a regiment of less than 500) died. Of its 22 officers, 16 were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner by the Confederates.



**MAJOR GEN. BANKS'S
GRAND EXPEDITION!**

**2D MASS. CAVALRY!
FIRST BATTALION.**

CAPT. W. H. FORBES,

Wants Recruits for his Company in the above Regiment. A preference given to Light Weight.

\$100.....UNITED STATES BOUNTY
\$50.....CITY BOUNTY, CASH IN HAND
\$13.....ADVANCE PAY, and STATE AID TO FAMILIES

PAY PER MONTH.

To a Sergeant Major, Quartermaster Sergeant, Principal Musician and Chief Bugler, each, \$61
To the First Sergeant of a Company, \$30 | Buglers,.....18
Ordinance Sergeant & Hospital Stewards,.....12 | Musicians,.....12
all other Sergeants, each,.....12 | Farriers, Blacksmiths & Artificers,.....15
Corporals,.....14 | Privates,.....25

Horses, Arms, Accoutrements, Uniforms, Clothing, Rations, and Medical Attendance, all
Furnished by the Government.

**Headquarters,
NO. 113 WASHINGTON STR'T, BOSTON,**
Per order, **AMOS A. LAWRENCE,**

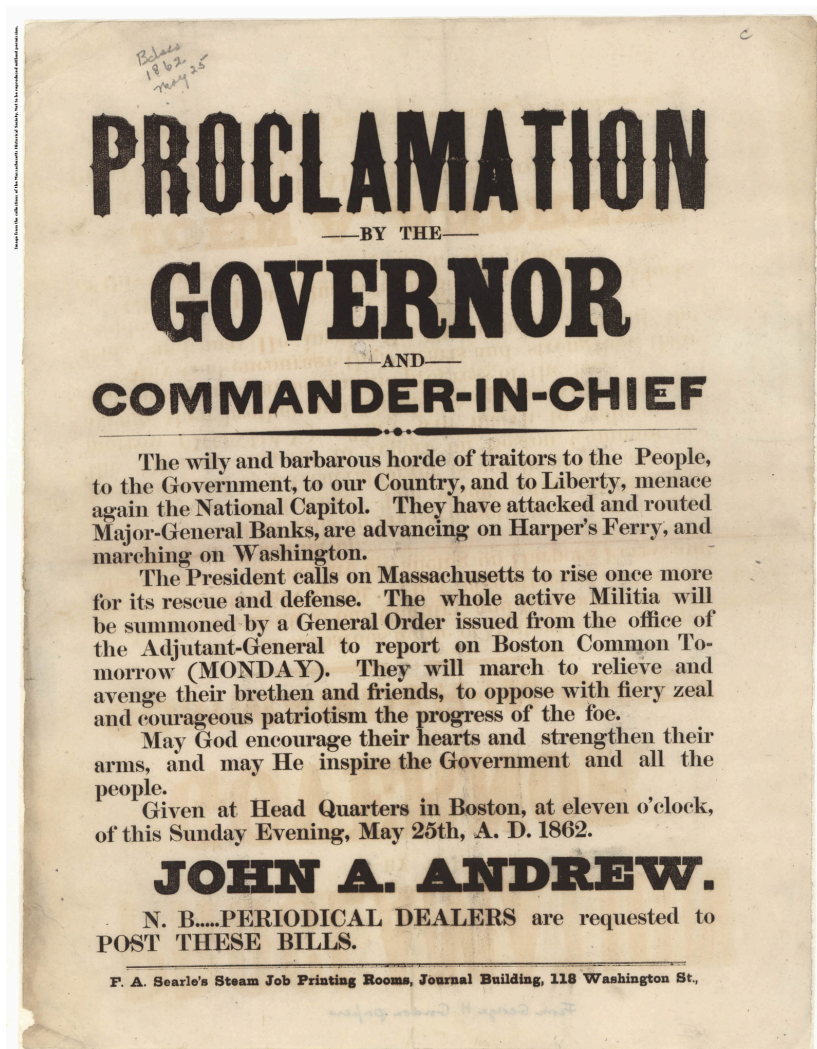
J. B. & P. F. Farwell, Printers, U. S. Manumit Job Office, 118 Washington Street, Boston.

“Your COUNTRY is in danger! She calls on you to fight for her defense. She puts her trust in you. You will fight in a righteous cause”

Gov. Andrew's Proclamation, 25 May 1862

John Albion Andrew served as governor of Massachusetts from January 1861 through January 1866. During the Civil War, state governors were responsible for providing troops from their state for service in the Union Army. Early in 1861, Gov. Andrew began raising money and gathering troops to make sure Massachusetts was prepared to help the government. In this broadside, he warns that, after defeating the MA 2nd cavalry, the Confederates are closing in on Washington, D.C., and calls up the militia to replace fallen soldiers and strengthen the Union Army.

Andrew remained a strong supporter of Abraham Lincoln and his policies throughout the Civil War.



“The wily and barbarous horde of traitors to the People, to the Government, to our Country, and to Liberty, menace again the National Capitol... [Massachusetts] will march to relieve and avenge their brethren and friends, to oppose with fiery zeal and courageous patriotism the progress of the foe.”

[“The Glorious 9th! Irishmen to the Rescue!” 1862](#)

In 1861, Governor Andrew supported Irish immigrants in the formation of the 9th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a regiment for Irish Americans.

After comparing the bravery of Irish soldiers from past wars and battles in Ireland to the bravery of Irish Americans in the Civil War, this broadside notes that the number of soldiers in the 9th have gotten low and attempts to recruit additional volunteers. Recruitment for the 9th continued throughout the Civil War. [Read a transcription of part of the poster here.](#)

*Colse
1862-2*

The Glorious 9th!

IRISHMEN

To the Rescue!

Irish Americans of Massachusetts!

The indomitable valor and bravery which distinguished your ancestors on many a bloody battle-field in past ages, have descended to you unimpaired. Your fellow countrymen of the 9th Massachusetts Regiment have proved at "Hanover Court House," at "Mechanicville," at "Gaines Mill," and at "Newtonville," that it has not degenerated. They are worthy inheritors of the courage and prowess of the heroes who fought at "Clontarf," at "Red-an-ath-Buath," at "Limerick," at "London," at "Oranmore" and "Fountainstown."

The Union and future glory of this great sanctuary of freedom is in danger. A host of Southern traitors seek to destroy our free democratic government, and erect upon its ruins a contemptible and Despotic Aristocracy.

Irish valor and bravery, have, to a great extent, thus far, impeded the march of these native Vandals, and driven back their superior numbers in dismay. Wherever the "chivalry" of the South have dared to encounter, on an open field, our Irish braves, they have found to their cost that Irishmen, as of old, are still invincible.

No Regiment in the service of the United States, has earned more imperishable glory than the 9th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, and its late gallant and heroic Colonel. The fortunes of war have thinned its ranks: it must not be allowed to perish for want of brave men to fill up its numbers. The honors it has earned you can share. The living heroes of the 9th are still "eager for the fray." They yearn to be led once more against the enemy—the enemy of human freedom—the enemy of mankind. They long to avenge their brave compatriots.

We never to revenge them!—no joy shall be tasted.
The hero shall be slung, the maiden saved.
Our hands shall be united, and our faith shall be tested.
Till vengeance is wreaked on the "Chivalry" band.

They call upon you from the banks of the James to fill up their ranks, to share with them the honors of the past and the glory of the future. Will you not respond to their call?

Our green flag follows for us.
The friends we've tried, are by our side,
And the foe we hate, before us!

The City of Boston has voted a Bounty of \$100!

In addition to thirty-eight dollars allowed by the United States, for every volunteer who joins the 9th Regiment, to defend the best and freest government ever vouchsafed to man. In joining the Ninth, you join your own gallant kith and kin. You will be led to the battle-field by officers of your own ancient race, who have proved themselves inferior to no others of our grand army. Here, too, the

FLAG OF IRELAND!

Is carried side by side with the Starry Banner, and Irish heroes will obtain the credit it deserves. The hands you win will deck your own brow—others will not obtain the credit which belongs to you. And while your prowess and invincible valor shed additional lustre on

The Stars and Stripes!

They will cast a bright ray of glory on the

GREEN FLAG!

and the unconquerable nationality it represents.

In this Regiment you will have

A CHAPLAIN OF THE OLD FAITH

To minister to your spiritual wants and dispense the priceless blessings of religion.

Your families will be provided for by the BOUNTY OF THE STATE, and you will receive in Pay, Rations and Clothing, an allowance more than that for which many of you toil at laborious drudgery, equally, if not more dangerous, than the field of honor and glory.

The nation provides also a handsome pension for you if disabled, and for your wives and little ones if you fall at the post of duty. What employer, let us ask, does the like?

Our brave countrymen, hitherto, have rushed to the battle-field without bounty, with little hope of reward. Can YOU hesitate NOW, when such ample provision is made for you and yours?

Let the ranks of the glorious 9th be at once manned by heroes, worthy successors of those who have fallen, and fit companions of the veterans still eager for the fight. This Regiment is yours. Its history—its glory—its past—its future, are yours, and shed a lustre not on you only, but on the Irish race. The only power in Europe which supports the South is your ancient enemy, the Government of England.

Then onward your green banners racing!
To dash every rival to the wall!
On battle is the brave and gallant.
On onward is virtue and faith.

The Sum of \$188,000!

Will be paid to each volunteer as soon as mustered into service. Pay and Rations from enlistment.

Transportation for volunteers, over any of the railroads to Boston, furnished to those wishing to join.

The undersigned has received full power from the City Government of Boston to recruit the ranks of the 9th REGIMENT to its full quota.

All applications for enlistment to be made at the

Headquarters, 112 Washington Street, Boston,
Over Little & Brown's Bookstore, to
Capt. B. S. TREANOR,
OR HIS AUTHORIZED AGENTS.

J. E. Farwell & Co., Steam Job Printers, 37 Congress Street, Boston.

“Let the ranks of the glorious 9th be at once manned by heroes, worthy successors of those who have fallen, and fit companions of the veterans still eager for the fight. This Regiment is yours. Its history - its glory - its past - its future, are yours, and shed a lustre not on you only, but on the Irish race.”

History SOURCE

"The Glorious 9th! Irishmen to the Rescue!" 1862 (Excerpt)

The Glorious 9th!

IRISHMEN

To the Rescue!

Irish Americans of Massachusetts!

In this Regiment you will have

A CHAPLAIN OF THE OLD FAITH

To minister your spiritual wants and dispense the priceless blessings of religion.

Your families will be provided for by the BOUNTY OF THE STATE, and you will receive in Pay, Rations and Clothing, an allowance more than that for which many of you toil at laborious drudgery, equally, if not more dangerous, than the field of honor and glory.

The nation provides also a handsome pension for you if disabled, and for your wives and little ones if you fall at the post of duty. What employer, let us ask, does the like ?

Our brave countrymen, hitherto, have rushed to the battlefield without bounty, with little hope of reward. Can YOU hesitate NOW, when such ample provision is made for you and yours?

Let the ranks of the glorious 9th be at once manned by heroes, worthy successors of those who have fallen, and fit companions of the veterans still eager for the fight. This Regiment is yours. Its history—its glory—its past—its future, are yours. and stud a lustre not on you only, but on the Irish race. The only power in Europe which supports the South is your ancient enemy, the Government of England.

"Then onward your green banners rearing;
Go flesh every sword to the hilt ;
On our side is virtue and Erin,
On theirs is the Saxon and guilt."

The Sum of \$138.00!

Will be paid to each volunteer as soon as mustered into service. Pay and Rations from enlistment.

Transportation for volunteers, over any of the railroads to Boston, furnished to those wishing to join.

History SOURCE

"To Colored Men. 54th Regiment!" 1863

In early 1863, following President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and in need of additional soldiers, Governor Andrew began to recruit Black soldiers. The 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment consisted of men from states across the country.

The commissioned officers of both regiments were white. Black soldiers could rise up the ranks and become noncommissioned officers.

This recruitment poster promises enlistees \$13 a month; however, members of the 54th regiment had to wait more than a year to receive full pay from the federal government.

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TO COLORED MEN.

54th

REGIMENT!

MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS,

AFRICAN DESCENT!


\$100 BOUNTY!

At the expiration of the term of service.

PAY, \$13 A MONTH!

STATE AID TO FAMILIES.

RECRUITING OFFICE,

 **Cor. Cambridge & North Russell Sts., Boston.**

Lieut. J. W. M. APPLETON, Recruiting Officer.

J. E. FARWELL & Co., Steam Job Printers, No. 37 Congress Street, Boston.

[“Now in Camp at Readville! 54th Regiment!” 1863](#)

In February 1863, the Massachusetts government began publishing newspaper advertisements and recruiting posters encouraging Black men to enlist in the 54th Regiment. 25 men responded immediately, and by the end of the first week of enlistments 72 recruits were present at Camp Meigs in Readville (now Hyde Park), Massachusetts. To fill the regiment, the Army began recruiting Black men in states throughout the North and South and into Canada. Governor Andrew chose Colonel Robert G. Shaw, a white Massachusetts man, to lead the regiment.

NOW IN CAMP AT READVILLE!

54th REGIMENT!

MASS. VOLUNTEERS, composed of men of

AFRICAN DESCENT

COL. ROBERT G. SHAW.

 **Colored Men, Rally 'Round the Flag of Freedom!**

BOUNTY \$100!

AT THE EXPIRATION OF THE TERM OF SERVICE.

Pay, \$13 a Month!

Good Food & Clothing!

State Aid to Families!

RECRUITING OFFICE.

COR. CAMBRIDGE & NORTH RUSSELL STS.,

BOSTON.

Lieut. J. W. M. APPLETON, Recruiting Officer.

RWELL & CO., Steam Job Printers, No 37 Congress Street, Boston. [1863]

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“Colored
Men, Rally
‘Round the
Flag of
Freedom”

History SOURCE

Cite the Sources in this set:

1. *To arms! To arms! : Men of Massachusetts! Your country is in danger!* Broadside by Charles P. Bowditch [Boston: 1862] Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/2170>.
2. *Major Gen. Banks's Grand Expedition!: 2d Mass. Cavalry!* Broadside [Boston : J. E. Farwell, 1862] Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/2171>.
3. *Proclamation by the Governor and Commander-in-Chief*, Broadside, Boston: F. A. Searle's Steam Job Printing Rooms, 1862, Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/2196>.
4. *The Glorious 9th! Irishmen to the Rescue! Irish Americans of Massachusetts!* Broadside, Boston: J.E. Farwell & Co., [1862?] Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/2213>.
5. *To Colored Men. 54th Regiment! Massachusetts Volunteers, Of African Descent.* Broadside, Boston: J. E. Farwell & Co., [1863] Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/49>.
6. *Now in Camp at Readville! 54th Regiment!* Broadside, Boston: J. E. Farwell & Co, [1863?] Massachusetts Historical Society, <https://www.masshist.org/database/22>.