



Nathan Wise

# The Pursuit of Justice

The Military Moral Economy  
in the USA, Australia,  
and Great Britain – 1861-1945

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University  
Press

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# 1 Introduction

In May 1863, approximately 125 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment initiated a protest against military authorities. Their unit had been disbanded, and those 125 men were ordered to march out to a new unit, the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Those men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine had built a home in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine; their comrades had become like family, and they had built a common identity in the unit with their own traditions, cultures and values. When the order came to move out, the men stood their ground and refused to obey the order. Exactly 55 years later an almost identical incident played out on the Western Front during the First World War.

In September 1918, several battalions of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) initiated a protest against military authorities. As with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine in 1863, their units were ordered to disband, and the men were ordered to march out to new units. As with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine, the men of those Australian battalions had built a home and an identity in their battalion, and their comrades had become like family. And again, as with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine in 1863, when the order came to move out, the men stood their ground and refused to follow the order. Finally, in September 1943, a group of men from the 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Divisions of the British Army were ordered to transfer to other units as reinforcements. Those men, as with those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine and of the AIF, had built their home and identity within their units. They had expected the military to honour their wishes to remain with their units, and when their expectations were shattered, they refused to comply with the orders.

These three extraordinary events – which took place in three very different armies in three very different wars, separated across 80 years of history – display a series of remarkable similarities. In each of the situations men of the rank and file had developed clear expectations of how they should behave and how they should be treated within the environment of the military. In each case, when authorities broke those expectations, rank-and-file men felt they could, and should, engage in direct action to return the situation back to the *status quo*. As this book will show, those patterns within those military environments reflect the same patterns that functioned as *moral economies* within civil societies – and they can thus effectively be described as *military moral economies*.

To emphasize the above points and demonstrate the workings of those military moral economies, this book will present an analysis of these three

incidences of protest within military environments. In particular, it will seek a detailed answer to the question: 'Why did these protests occur?' A close analysis of these incidents reveals striking parallels in the motivations of the protesters, their treatment by authorities, and the manner in which these actions were eventually resolved. Equally important, however, is understanding why *these particular men in these particular circumstances* protested, while other men in similar circumstances did not protest. For example: the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine men protested when ordered to serve elsewhere; but the 10<sup>th</sup> Maine men did not protest when given similar orders. The 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 37<sup>th</sup>, 42<sup>nd</sup>, 54<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> Battalions of the AIF protested when ordered to serve elsewhere; but the 36<sup>th</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup>, and 52<sup>nd</sup> did not protest when given similar orders. And 350 men of the 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Divisions protested when ordered to serve elsewhere; but 1150 other men in the same draft did not protest the order.

In order to shed further light on these events, and to understand their peculiarities, this book will investigate these men and their circumstances in detail. By contrasting those three events, and by linking with other similar events of those periods, it will also contribute towards the growing global history of military labour and protest, and identify some of the common aspects of soldiers' approach towards and expectations of military service.

Historians have often described the protesters of 1863, 1918, and 1943 as 'mutineers'. Leonard Guttridge noted that the term *mutiny* stirs the imagination and causes some to strike a sympathetic chord.<sup>1</sup> But there is little scholarly consensus in the definition of the term, and historians often apply it to excite readers and build tension. Guttridge added that 'Seldom has a term weighted with such gravity and threat eluded consensus upon its true definition'.<sup>2</sup> Among military historians, there is often uncertainty regarding when a simple refusal to obey orders becomes a mutiny.<sup>3</sup> For example, the author and editor of the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*, C.E.W. Bean, was uncertain how to describe the events of September 1918. Bean used inverted commas to note the 'mutinies' and 'mutinies over disbandment',<sup>4</sup> and he indexed the event as the 'protest

1 Leonard F. Guttridge, *Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection* (Annapolis: Blue Jacket Books, 1992), p. 1.

2 Guttridge, *Mutiny*, p. 1.

3 Guttridge provides examples of such uncertainty surrounding several incidents in *Mutiny*, pp. 2-3.

4 C.E.W. Bean, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918: Volume VI – The Australian Imperial Force in France during the Allied Offensive, 1918* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1942), p. 953.

agst disbandmt. of bns.<sup>5</sup> The men involved in these three incidents also expressed similar uncertainty. For example, Hugh Fraser, one of the men involved in the Salerno protest of 1943, later reflected on the events:

When the word mutiny is mentioned you perhaps think of, you know, Captain Bligh and the *Bounty* and men going about shouting and bawling and waving their swords and guns about. This was the quietest mutiny which ever happened at any time.<sup>6</sup>

Complicating this further are the political implications of this language. Mutinies have long been seen by military authorities as failures of leadership,<sup>7</sup> and for this reason commanding officers who experience a mutiny under their command are often hesitant to use the term, lest it damage their reputation.<sup>8</sup> This is a common theme that recurs throughout military forces. For example, in the British Royal Navy, mutinies were described as ‘regrettable incidents’ in an attempt to preserve the force’s reputation as ‘the world’s most powerful and proudest naval force’.<sup>9</sup> In other military forces, officers often sought to quickly resolve the issues at the heart of a mutiny or protest, and thus stop the action before it was brought to the attention of their superiors. Webb Garrison argued, for example, that during the American Civil War, ‘Many a general officer tried to avoid the risk of having his own leadership questioned in the aftermath of a mutiny, so used soft words in describing resistance to his authority’.<sup>10</sup>

Similar practices have been observed within the AIF during the First World War. Rowan Cahill argued that, ‘To minimize the number of actual mutinies, it seems the preferred Australian option has been, where possible, to treat alleged mutinous behaviour as something less legally controversial, thereby attracting less attention and scrutiny, and avoiding political fallout’.<sup>11</sup>

5 Bean, *Official History: Vol. VI*, Index, p. xxi.

6 Interview with Hugh Fraser for ‘Moray Firth People’. Am Baile: Highland History and Culture website, <http://www.ambaile.org.uk>, File 1669 (5/15).

7 For example, Douglas Haig blamed the commander of the Australian Corps, William Birdwood, for the Australian disciplinary problems during the First World War. J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 169.

8 Guttridge, *Mutiny*, pp. 2-4.

9 Guttridge, *Mutiny*, p. 4.

10 Webb Garrison, *Mutiny in the Civil War* (Shippensburg: White Mane Books, 2001), p. v.

11 Rowan Cahill, ‘The Battle of Sydney’, *Overland*, no. 169, 2002, pp. 50-54. For examples of this treatment of mutiny in international contexts, see David Englander, ‘Mutinies and Military Morale’, in Hew Strachan (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War* (Oxford:

Terry Irving and Rowan Cahill also argued that, 'Australian defence authorities have successfully swept mutinies under the carpet'.<sup>12</sup> Peter Stanley also commented on a number of incidents of strike and protest at length in his book *Bad Characters*. Stanley noted that, 'many of the "riots" and "mutinies" that the authorities faced were actually collective demonstrations [...] Officers had reason to conceal or diminish such incidents but soldiers' diaries reveal what the official record does not'.<sup>13</sup> Stanley elaborated on this point by noting that officers of the AIF often felt 'shamed by their men's protests',<sup>14</sup> and they were thus keen to cover up any rebellious incidents that occurred under their leadership. An example of this can be seen in an incident that took place in January 1915. While on a long route march through the Egyptian desert, soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the AIF simply sat down in the sand as a protest against their inadequate rations. The men refused to move until their complaints were listened to. The flustered commanding officer promised the men better treatment provided they end their protest and continue marching before their brigadier arrived.<sup>15</sup> However, such incidents barely featured in the *Official History of Australia during the War of 1914-1918*, as the official historian, C.E.W. Bean, was keen to downplay occurrences of 'bad behaviour' to instead present a positive image of the Australian soldier to readers at home.

Even stronger sentiments are evident in histories of the British Army during the Second World War. Lawrence James argued that mutinies that occurred during the world wars 'were deliberately hushed up for the good reason that news of them would dishearten both civilians and fighting men as well as cheer the enemy'.<sup>16</sup> Where mutinies were described, the mutineers were often presented as cowards who shirked their duties and abandoned their comrades. Indeed, James argued that mutiny, 'like cowardice, can be interpreted as a moral weakness. It is therefore a crime which is not much

Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 191-203; Jeffrey Grey, *The Australian Centenary History of Defence: Volume 1: The Australian Army* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 62-6; Christopher Pugsley, *On the Fringe of Hell: New Zealanders and Military Discipline in the First World War* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), especially p. 297; Timothy Bowman, *Irish Regiments in the Great War: Discipline and Morale* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Terry Irving and Rowan Cahill, *Radical Sydney* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010), p. 121.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Stanley, *Bad Characters: Sex, Crime, Mutiny, Murder and the Australian Imperial Force* (Sydney: Pier 9, 2010), p. 149.

<sup>14</sup> Stanley, *Bad Characters*, p. 210.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey Williams, 'Discipline on Active Service: The 1st Brigade, First AIF 1914-1919' (LittB thesis, Australian National University, 1982), p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence James, *Mutiny in the British and Commonwealth Forces, 1797-1956* (London: Buchan & Enright, 1987), p. 3.

talked about, either by civilians or servicemen'.<sup>17</sup> An example of these various elements can be found in Hugh Pond's analysis of the protest at Salerno in 1943. Pond scolds the protesters as 'mutinous troops' and describes in unsympathetic terms the 'appalling situation' in what was a 'sad day for the British Army'.<sup>18</sup> Pond also rashly suggested that the 'real reason' the men protested was because they 'wanted to go back home (to Britain) with their regiments'.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Pond argued that, 'Not unnaturally the whole episode was hushed up under wartime secrecy'.<sup>20</sup>

Because mutinies and protests were often interpreted as shameful behaviour, the trend has also been to downplay and even omit such events from wartime reporting. Mutinies had the potential to damage morale, and there was always the risk that the behaviour could spread to other units. During wartime, soldiers were typically presented as 'heroes' – praised for their dedication to comrades, their courage under fire, and their sacrifice for the greater good. Praise was accorded to those soldiers who serve nobly and dedicate their lives to the military. Within this style of writing, refusals to work and fight, refusals to follow the orders of officers, and broader protests against military authorities were portrayed as cowardly, shameful and regretful incidents often led by a few 'bad characters'. For example, one naval officer argued that the Fort Jackson mutineers of 1862 'were mostly of foreign birth and low origin';<sup>21</sup> and investigations into that mutiny by the Confederate general, Mansfield Lovell, attributed blame to the working-class and immigrant soldiers.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, during the First World War, C.E.W. Bean attributed the cause of bad behaviour within the AIF in late 1914 and early 1915 to a small number of 'old soldiers'. Bean argued, 'A large number of these men were not Australians', and they exerted a bad influence on the other younger men.<sup>23</sup>

17 James, *Mutiny in the British and Commonwealth Forces*, p. 4. James also remarked that he was refused access to one private archive due, he believed, to this reason.

18 Hugh Pond, *Salerno* (London: William Kimber and Co., 1961), pp. 208-9. Pond also argued that the men were 'vitaly required at the Salerno front' which, by the time of their protest, was no longer the case.

19 Pond, *Salerno*, pp. 208-9.

20 Pond, *Salerno*, pp. 208-9.

21 Cited in Michael D. Pierson, *Mutiny at Fort Jackson: The Untold Story of the Fall of New Orleans* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), p. 32.

22 Pierson, *Mutiny at Fort Jackson*, p. 32.

23 C.E.W. Bean, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918: Volume: I – The Story of ANZAC from the Outbreak of War to the End of the First Phase of the Gallipoli Campaign, May 4, 1915* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, 1941), pp. 128-9.

Both American and Australian military law (and procedures) were originally direct descendants of British military law, and for many years after American independence and Australian federation, both American and Australian military laws, respectively, retained direct links and references to (and in many cases, directly copied) their British counterparts<sup>24</sup> Indeed, in Australia, Australian forces were specifically made subject to the British Army Act, 'as if they were part of His Majesty's Regular Land Forces', and this included provisions for punishments as provided by the Army Act.<sup>25</sup> However, despite the similarities in these systems of law, the application of those laws – specifically as they apply to mutinous behaviour – varied considerably depending on local factors, most notably the sentiment of commanding officers. As much as was possible and practical within a given situation, officers attempted to quell mutinous behaviour, deter protesters from persisting in such action, and avoid having to resort to laying charges against their men under the respective provisions granted by military law. In many cases where charges were made, they were laid by higher authorities and officers outside the unit being charged. Commanding officers and authorities within a unit were generally reluctant to lay serious charges against their own men if it could be avoided. In addition to the sentiment of commanding officers, other local environmental factors were also critical in determining authorities' responses to mutinous behaviour. Lenience might be shown if men were desperately needed in combat; if officers were desperate to be seen as strong leaders; or if officers empathized with the causes of the men under their command. These details will be further unpacked in the following chapters. As such, individual acts of protest and mutiny must be understood within their specific contexts.

As will be seen in the following chapters, there was a remarkably different response to the protests of 1863 and 1918, compared with the protests of 1943. Furthermore, we can even observe subtle changes in the treatment of mutinous behaviour during each of the three respective conflicts. The levels of discipline imposed by officers, and the punishments for offences throughout both the Confederate and the Union armed forces in 1865, bore little resemblance to the relatively more relaxed circumstances of early 1861. Similarly, during the Second World War, the threat posed by Germany

24 See for example Alfred Avins, 'A History of Short Desertion', *Military Law Review*, vol. 13, 1961, pp. 143-65.

25 Defence Act 1917, No. 36, ss 54 and 55. Australian military law retained these close references and links with British law until The Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, 85 years after the Federation of Australia.

hardened the discipline level and the hitherto casual approach to military service by the ‘Saturday night soldiers’ of the Territorial Army (TA).

Because authorities’ responses to mutinous behaviour have varied across space and time, historical accounts of mutinies and protests within military environments often adopt a comparative approach. For example, Webb Garrison’s book *Mutiny in the Civil War* served as a catalogue of protests and mutinies during the American Civil War, with several pages dedicated to each event, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine’s protest of 1863.<sup>26</sup> Lawrence James’s *Mutiny in the British and Commonwealth Forces* similarly sought to uncover and document a series of relatively little-known events over a broad period, and James included a brief discussion on the protest at Salerno in 1943.<sup>27</sup> One of the most valuable aspects of James’s analysis is that he also sought to provide a broader social and political context to the events, with his objective being ‘not so much to discover a pattern, but in an attempt to reveal the extent to which external factors not only contributed to the uprisings but shaped them’.<sup>28</sup> Leonard F. Guttridge’s *Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection*, focused, as the title suggests, on mutinies and protests within international naval forces;<sup>29</sup> and John Harris adopted a similar approach in his book *Scapegoat!* by selecting a series of courts-martial for analysis, including several protests/mutinies.<sup>30</sup>

While there have been no dedicated studies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine’s protest in 1863, several scholars have provide valuable analyses of the events within broader contexts. Most notably, James Mundy dedicated a chapter to the 1863 protest within his broader history of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine during the American Civil War.<sup>31</sup> The key value here is that Mundy also established a detailed understanding of the broader experiences of the unit during the war. A similar level of insight is gained in Thomas Desjardin’s history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine during the Gettysburg campaign.<sup>32</sup> While Desjardin focused his analysis on the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine, the experiences of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine men during their protest feature strongly in his discussion.

26 Garrison, *Mutiny in the Civil War*, pp. 92-7.

27 James, *Mutiny in the British and Commonwealth Forces*, pp. 167-75.

28 James, *Mutiny in the British and Commonwealth Forces*, pp. 4-5.

29 Guttridge, *Mutiny*, 1992.

30 John Harris, *Scapegoat! Famous Courts Martial* (London: Severn House, 1989).

31 James H. Mundy, *Second to None: The Story of the 2d Maine Volunteers – ‘The Bangor Regiment’* (Scarborough, ME: Harp Publications, 1992), pp. 1-32.

32 Thomas A. Desjardin, *Stand Firm Ye Boys from Maine: The 20<sup>th</sup> Maine and the Gettysburg Campaign* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).



Likewise, there have been no dedicated studies of the protests undertaken by the AIF in 1918. The most detailed account to date comes from C.E.W. Bean, who analysed the protests over several pages of the sixth volume of the *Official History*. But while Bean adopted an empathetic approach to the protesters, and did briefly seek to understand their motivations for protesting, his attention was primarily focused on the administrative circumstances surrounding the disbandment of the AIF battalions and how this was managed by officers. Elsewhere, Michele Bomford and Ashley Ekins also provided brief summaries of the incident in their respective works, and a number of individual battalion histories have also made brief mention of the incident.<sup>33</sup> But, to date, there remains an absence of any detailed analysis of the protest.

Most analyses of the protest at Salerno in 1943 are also brief. The protest featured in Eric Morris's detailed study of the Salerno invasion, titled, *Salerno: A Military Fiasco*, but only as a side-note within a section that generally explores the German counter-attack.<sup>34</sup> It received similar attention by Hugh Pond, who provided a brief and critical analysis of the protest in his study of Salerno.<sup>35</sup> And Dominick Graham and Shelford Bidwell also summarized events within the context of the Salerno invasion, concluding that, 'The gut feeling of the Salerno mutineers was neither a refusal to face the dangers of the battlefield nor undue attachment to their regiments but that they had been treated unreasonably'.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, aside from those brief summaries of the events, there are few detailed studies available on the events of 1863, 1918 and 1943.

The one important exception to this is Saul David's detailed analysis of the 1943 protest, titled *Mutiny at Salerno*.<sup>37</sup> David scoured archival records and conducted interviews with many of the protesters and others involved in the subsequent trial to provide an exhaustive account of the 1943 protest, subsequent court-martial and the long-term impact of events on the protesters. Given this solid foundation, my investigation of the 1943 protest draws

33 Michele Bomford, *Beaten Down By Blood: The Battle of Mont St Quentin-Peronne 1918* (Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2012), pp. 325-7; Ashley Ekins, 'Fighting to Exhaustion: Morale, Discipline and Combat Effectiveness in the Armies of 1918', in Ashley Ekins (ed.), *1918: Year of Victory: The End of the Great War and the Shaping of History* (Auckland and Wolombi: Exisle Publishing, 2010), p. 113.

34 Eric Morris, *Salerno: A Military Fiasco* (New York: Stein and Day, 1984), pp. 271-4.

35 Pond, *Salerno*, pp. 208-9.

36 Dominick Graham and Shelford Bidwell, *Tug of War: The Battle for Italy, 1943-45* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military Classics, 2004), pp. 92-4.

37 Saul David, *Mutiny at Salerno 1943: An Injustice Exposed* (London: Conway, 2005).

heavily on David's work, and primarily seeks to contrast the events of 1943 with those of 1863 and 1918 and to understand the workings of the military moral economy within those environments.

Within the traditional genre of writing, historians have long portrayed mutineers as among the most dangerous and destructive elements of a military force.<sup>38</sup> Mutiny strikes fear into the heart of officers and has long been a military crime linked with the death sentence.<sup>39</sup> But if we take the time to cast aside these fears and actually examine the sentiment, motivations, and actions of supposed 'mutineers', we can often observe clear efforts to maintain standards of honour, integrity, and justice in environments where those standards were in general decline. Furthermore, such 'mutinies' were often intended simply as protests or strikes against perceived injustices within a military environment, and they were not necessarily attempts to gain control of that environment. In the three cases analysed in this book, for example, the protesters were attempting to maintain the moral *status quo* and achieve justice in an environment where they all felt that moral values were being violated by authorities.

To complement this traditional genre of military history, there is a growing body of scholarship that analyses military forces of the past as social environments, communities, and workplaces. Service personnel often enlisted for the pay or for the long-term social or economic benefits they hoped would result from military service; and they often thought of daily work within the military in similar ways that they thought of daily work within the civilian world.<sup>40</sup> Previous analyses of military labour have argued that this approach towards military service as work also included responses to complaints that utilized pre-war understandings of industrial action and bargaining.<sup>41</sup>

38 For example, Erik-Jan Zürcher argued that "Industrial action" by its own armed forces was of course the most serious crisis any ruling elite could face.' Erik-Jan Zürcher, 'Introduction: Understanding Changes in Military Recruitment and Employment Worldwide', in Erik-Jan Zürcher (ed.), *Fighting for a Living: A Comparative History of Military Labour 1500-2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), p. 41.

39 Guttridge, *Mutiny*, p. 7. C.E.W. Bean noted that 'Mutiny was one of the only two offences punishable in the A.I.F [Australian Imperial Force] by death.' Bean, *Official History: Vol. VI*, p. 940. Furthermore, mutiny remained an offence punishable by death in the United Kingdom until as late as 1998.

40 See for example the analyses within Zürcher, *Fighting for a Living*. See also Nathan Wise, 'The Lost Labour Force: Working Class Approaches towards Military Service during the Great War', *Labour History*, 93, November 2007, pp. 161-76.

41 Wise, 'The Lost Labour Force', pp. 171-3; Nathan Wise, "In Military Parlance I Suppose We Were Mutineers": Industrial Relations in the Australian Imperial Force during the Great War',

There are also increasing efforts to link these themes throughout different conflicts, and to identify the similarities and differences in the nature of military labour across different times and places. Erik-Jan Zürcher's 2013 compilation, *Fighting for a Living*, brought together 19 different case studies that explored aspects of military labour around the world through five different centuries of conflict. Many of these studies focused on the nature of labour relationships within the military – that is, what were the structures (nature of income, duration of service, and legal constraints on freedom) within which soldiers were employed by the military.<sup>42</sup>

These historians have sought to place such incidents within a broader social, cultural, and labour framework, and to see these incidents within the military as protests (or strikes) against unsatisfactory social and labour conditions. However, it can be difficult to determine when a protest becomes a more formal and organized strike.<sup>43</sup> This is particularly the case in the AIF protest of 1918, when the protesters refused to follow a particular order, but continued with their regular work. Nonetheless, it is clear that both mutinies and strikes, however defined, fundamentally begin with a protest against military conditions that often develops into a larger incident. As such, the term *protest* is given preference throughout this book.

By and large, the study of protests, mutinies, and strikes in military environments is an under-studied and under-appreciated area. It is thus hoped that this book will make a substantial contribution to the field, both in terms of uncovering details on the three events in focus and by shedding valuable light on the factors that incite people to protest, and how common these factors were across different military forces in different eras. Protests, mutinies, and strikes must be seen as more than just responses to short-term mistreatment and low morale. They must be placed within broader contexts that incorporate considerations of pre-war social and cultural environments. As James Scott suggested in his analysis of Southeast Asian peasant protests, such behaviour must be seen within the context of contemporary understandings of 'social justice, of rights and obligations, of reciprocity'.<sup>44</sup> With this in mind, this book pays close attention to those

*Labour History*, no. 101, November, 2011, pp. 161-76.

42 See for example Zürcher, 'Introduction', pp. 19-29.

43 Indeed, some scholars believe the term 'strike' originated in naval mutinies where, as Gilje argues, 'sailors would "strike" the sails of a ship to prevent it from sailing during a labor stoppage'. See Paul A. Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 252.

44 James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. vii.

understandings. It will scrutinize how those protesters of 1863, 1918, and 1943 perceived their rights and the obligations of the military, and how those perceptions factored into their desire to protest.

As a starting point, scholars must recognize and appreciate the civilian origins of soldiers, of their attitudes, and of the communities they constructed within the military. Much like the civil societies whence they came, the military communities those men shaped (largely, of course, in the absence of women) were structured along clear class lines and were heavily influenced by perceptions of manliness, job skill, and social status. Scholars must appreciate the continuities between those civilian and military environments. The same social divisions and tensions that permeated civil society in the USA, Australia, and Britain were replicated within military environments. Indeed, as explored in the following chapters, the rank-based hierarchy of the military was an extension of the civil social hierarchy.

Thus, in order to understand the sentiments of protesters in 1863, 1918, and 1943 – and, in particular, their sense of opposition and resistance to authority and the sense of moral economy that developed in those three environments – each analysis in the following three chapters includes a detailed exploration of the pre-war civilian relations which formed the basis for social relations and social hierarchies within the military. In particular, they will consider the oppositional relationship workers experienced with their employers and other authorities within civil society. They will consider how those civilian workers in the 1860s, 1910s, and 1930s – much like Thompson's English working people of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries<sup>45</sup> – articulated their sense of a common interest between themselves, and against their employers.

As those civilian workers entered the military to become soldiers, they found themselves once again in a familiar position in the social hierarchy. Whereas in civil society they had worked at the demands of powerful authorities, their employers, within the military they worked at the demands of another class of powerful authorities – their officers. As will be seen in the chapters to follow, the men who held power in civil society were the same men who held power within the military. The class structure of civil society was simply replicated by the rank hierarchy of the military.

Together, those workers carried that same identity of interests between themselves as they joined the rank and file in their new military environments. And, together, they encountered another class of men, their officers,

45 E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 2013 [first published 1963]), pp. 8-9.

who held interests that were often different from, and occasionally in opposition to and in conflict with, the interests of the rank and file. For many workers, this pattern of common experiences – of being on the ‘lesser end’ of a productive relationship and of being in conflict with the interests of other classes, whether it be in a civil or a military environment – helped solidify their class consciousness and identity. In the United States, for example, the defeat of the Confederacy in 1865 was celebrated, by some, as the defeat of aristocracy and inequality throughout American society. In a resolution presented in Boston, Ira Steward urged that it ‘be known that the workingmen of America will in future claim a more equal share in the wealth their industry creates in peace and a more equal participation in the privileges and blessings of those free institutions, defended by their manhood on many a bloody field of battle’.<sup>46</sup> The actions of men like Steward invigorated class-conscious workers and the American labour movement, and in the post-war years labour organizations flourished.

These understandings of class, approaches to work, and responses to workplace issues must also be contextualized within historical understandings of gender and, in particular, of ‘manliness’ in these eras. In each of the three eras under investigation in this book, men demonstrated their manliness in an attempt to gain peer approval and social recognition.<sup>47</sup> John Tosh observed of nineteenth-century Britain, for example, that the ‘qualification for a man’s life among men – in short for a role in the public sphere – depends on their masculinity being tested against the recognition of their peers during puberty, young adulthood and beyond’.<sup>48</sup> Within civil society, manliness was typically demonstrated and tested at home, at work, and among all-male associations.<sup>49</sup>

In each period, within the United States of America, Australia, and Great Britain, enlisting in the armed forces was a powerful way to assert manliness. Within an Australian context, for example, Martin Crotty argued that ‘the most obvious way in which manliness could be defined in national terms was in the glorification of fighting for the nation against external

46 Resolution presented at Faneuil Hall, Boston, 1865. Cited in Hyman Kuritz, ‘Ira Steward and the Eight Hour Day’, *Science and Society*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1956, p. 122.

47 Tosh argued that public affirmation was central to masculine status. John Tosh, ‘What Should Historians do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *History Workshop*, no. 38, 1994, p. 184.

48 Tosh, ‘What Should Historians do with Masculinity?’, p. 184.

49 Tosh, ‘What Should Historians do with Masculinity?’, p. 184.

enemies'.<sup>50</sup> Soldiers' identities then were grounded in an assertion of peak-manliness. Enlisting in the military was widely regarded as the 'manliest' thing a man could do. But enlistment in the armed forces did not end the pursuit of manliness. Within the new living and working environment of the military, men continued to search for ways to assert their manly credentials over others, and to test their manliness among their peers.<sup>51</sup>

However, this assertion of peak-manliness and attempts to assert manliness on a daily basis in the new environment of the military were complicated by the fundamentally subservient nature of military service. While new recruits asserted their masculine superiority over civilians who did not enlist, they were simultaneously in an authoritatively inferior position below their officers. On occasion, the tensions could boil over into conflict – not only between officers and their men but also between regiments of the same army – as groups of individuals sought opportunities to assert their manly superiority over others.<sup>52</sup>

Within the subservient environment of the army, one of the ways that men of the rank and file sought to assert their manly superiority was to display a sense of pride in their work. Much like skilled labourers in civil society had displayed pride in their productive outputs, so too soldiers in military environments displayed a sense of both personal and collective pride in their military achievements. In time, those achievements, and the sense of pride associated with them, became an integral part of each unit's sense of *esprit de corps*, as outlined in more detail below.

The similarities in these three protests can best be explained by utilizing the theories of moral economies, similar to those originally espoused by E.P. Thompson and James Scott.<sup>53</sup> Moral economy theory holds that communities

50 Martin Crotty, *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity 1870-1920* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001), p. 25. For a recent similar analysis of the situation in New Zealand, where soldiers were held up as the archetypal man during the First World War, see Steven Loveridge, "Soldiers and Shirkers": Modernity and New Zealand Masculinity during the Great War', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2013, pp. 59-79; for a British comparison, see Meg Albrinck, 'Humanitarians and He-Men: Recruitment Posters and the Masculine Ideal', in Pearl James (ed.), *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), pp. 312-39.

51 This has been analysed in an Australian context in Nathan Wise, 'Job Skill, Manliness and Working Relationships in the Australian Imperial Force during World War I', *Labour History*, no. 106, May 2014, pp. 99-122.

52 For a detailed example of this, see Wise, 'Job Skill, Manliness and Working Relationships', pp. 115-21.

53 E.P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, no. 50, February, 1971; Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*.

develop sets of standards and normal values that are then used as the basis for evaluating social and economic circumstances. These core values then contribute towards the assumptions upon which community decisions are made and legitimized, and thus upon which broader social institutions are shaped. When those expectations are broken, or 'breached', there is a sense that a social contract has been broken. This is often followed by direct action that primarily seeks to repair that contract and return the situation to the *status quo*. Such action is often presented as a legitimate response to an illegitimate or unjust breach of the moral economy.

Within military environments, soldiers – both the rank and file and officers – construct and maintain communities that stand somewhat apart from civilian communities. Within that military community, sets of laws, customs, and cultures – often inherited directly from civil society – are developed and sustained. To secure the service of civilians recruited into those communities, the relationship is typically formalized through a contract, such as a service paper or attestation form, which effectively obliges the individual to work and serve in the military for a period of time – or, as is often the case, for the duration of a particular conflict. This binds the soldier and the military into an *economic arrangement* – the soldier works for the military in exchange for payment and benefits. Despite the many differences between military and civil societies – and, of course, in the nature of that work – to many recruits of military forces throughout history this initial arrangement has resembled other employment arrangements that they had experienced in civil society.<sup>54</sup>

But, from the very outset, that economic arrangement, and the broader social and cultural norms within that community, are influenced by and continue to change in accordance with a range of *expectations* held by both parties to the agreement. As noted, in civil society, social and economic behaviour is often guided by expectations of standards, norms, and customary practices which develop over time and are often codified by law. Similarly, within military forces, such behaviour is guided by a separate set of standards, norms, and practices also often codified by a separate

54 Gammage noted of the Australian Imperial Force that many of the earliest recruits simply left camp and returned home at the end of the day's training, much as they would at the end of a regular shift of civilian work. Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years: Australian Soldiers in the Great War* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1987), p. 31. For other international examples see Wise, 'The Lost Labour Force' and 'Job Skill, Manliness and Working Relationships'; Frank Tallett, 'Soldiers in Western Europe, c. 1500-1790', in Zürcher, *Fighting for a Living*, pp. 147-9; and Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, 'Military Service and the Russian Social Order, 1649-1861', Zürcher, *Fighting for a Living*, pp. 404-17.

set of military laws and orders which are judicially enforced by military authorities. When these two worlds first meet – that is, when civilians enter the military to become soldiers – a compromise takes place. The civilian modifies their expectations and their standards of behaviour to retain employment in the military, while the military adjusts their expectations of the new soldier to secure the ongoing commitment of that individual. In professional military forces, the compromise is minor as the recruit is more willing to accept the authority of officers and the high standards of the force. But in amateur forces consisting of citizen-soldiers, such as those analysed in this book, the compromises take place on both sides and can be substantial. The result of these compromises, whether small or large, is a new *military moral economy*.

Because theories of moral economy focus on themes such as class relations, moral values, communities, and direct action, they were originally applied to analyses of pre-industrial agrarian societies and peasant rebellions, where protests tried to avoid risks that would jeopardize subsistence.<sup>55</sup> For example, Thompson originally rooted his exploration of the moral economy in eighteenth-century England. But numerous scholars have since shown how moral economies are evident in a broad range of other historical contexts. As a result, moral economy theory is no longer rooted in peasant and pre-industrial societies; it has been successfully applied to settler societies, workplaces, business sectors, and modern global economic systems.<sup>56</sup> It has become a trans-historical, trans-cultural concept that has been utilized to successfully explain the root causes of many forms of direct action throughout many different cultures in history. For example, Gregory Aldrete successfully argued that the Ancient Romans had a ‘moral economy’ analogous with that proposed by E.P. Thompson,<sup>57</sup> while Keiko Sakurai and

55 See for example Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*, p. 18; Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’.

56 See for example Knut Laaser, ‘The Moral Economy of Work and Employment in Banks’ (PhD thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2013); Michael K. Goodman, ‘Reading Fair Trade: Political Ecological Imaginary and the Moral Economy of Fair Trade Goods’, *Ethics in Political Ecology*, vol. 23, no. 7, 2004, pp. 891-915; Mark Banks, ‘Moral Economy and Cultural Work’, *Sociology*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2006, pp. 455-72; Bruce Scates and Melanie Oppenheimer, ‘“I Intend to Get Justice”: The Moral Economy of Soldier Settlement’, *Labour and the Great War: The Australian Working Class and the Making of Anzac*, *Labour History*, no. 106, May, 2014, pp. 229-53; and Alan Atkinson, ‘Four Patterns of Convict Protest’, *Labour History*, no. 37, November, 1979, pp. 28-51.

57 Gregory S. Aldrete, ‘Riots’, in Paul Erdkamp (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 429.



Fariba Adelkhah, among others, argued that a moral economy forms the basis for interactions in madrasas.<sup>58</sup>

In 1991, in response to the broadening utilization of moral economy theory, Thompson 'reviewed' his original exploration. With respect to the general concept of a moral economy, he argued that:

No other term seems to offer itself to describe the way in which, in peasant and in early industrial communities, many 'economic' relations are regulated according to non-monetary norms [...] As Charlesworth and Randall have argued, 'The basis of the moral economy was that very sense of community which a common experience of capitalist industry generated'.<sup>59</sup>

While Thompson was particularly focused on the economy of the crowd in the food market of eighteenth-century England, he recognized that the theory had applications outside of his own initial intent and interests; and, with some caution, he accepted the broadening definition and application of moral economy theory.<sup>60</sup>

With this in mind, the theory of moral economy employed in the following analysis, while borrowing heavily from Thompson's original conception, more closely resembles Paul Greenough's broader definition that removes the theory from a specific time and place. Greenough noted:

By 'moral economy' I mean the cluster of relations of exchange between social groups, and between persons, in which the welfare and the merit of both parties to the exchange takes precedence over other considerations such as the profit of one or the other.<sup>61</sup>

Thompson himself supported this definition as one which, if it encourages historians 'to discover and write about all those areas of human exchange to which orthodox economics was once blind [...] is a gain'.<sup>62</sup> Moral economy

58 Keiko Sakurai and Fariba Adelkhah (eds.), *The Moral Economy of the Madrasa: Islam and Education Today* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).

59 E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 340.

60 Thompson, *Customs in Common*, pp. 340-51.

61 Paul R. Greenough, 'Indian Famines and Peasant Victims: The Case of Bengal in 1943-44', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2, 1980, p. 207n.

62 Thompson, *Customs in Common*, p. 344.

theory is no longer rooted in a specific time or place; it is, as Thompson accepted, increasingly utilized as a valuable explanatory concept.<sup>63</sup>

While the precise nature of each of the military moral economies analysed in this book was new for the developing environments of the military,<sup>64</sup> the assumptions and expectations that made up those moral economies were not new for the men who had long held onto and preserved similar values in their civilian lives. The cultural customs and values, and notions of right and wrong, that made up the military moral economies originated in civilian moral economies, and they were carried over into military environments by civilians as they enlisted. As noted above, those customs underwent some modification to fit the demands of military authorities; but they retained many core principles, in particular the right to subsistence and the best chances of survival. Recruits accepted that military service came with the risk of dying, but they assumed that officers would, within reason, do their utmost to prevent this from happening; and, as the following chapters will show, this assumption underpinned the military moral economy.

In that new environment of the military, when the formal terms of the military service contract were adhered to and the informal, unwritten expectations of both groups met, then the relationship between the rank and file and their officers could strengthen and grow. In those situations, authorities developed a sense of trust in their soldiers; and soldiers developed an attachment to the military, identified the military community as their primary 'home', and adhered to the directions and orders of their officers. The expectations the rank and file had of normal and standard behaviour within those environments were legitimized through repeated acceptance of and adherence to those standards by authorities and, gradually, the moral economy was strengthened.

Numerous scholars have observed the strengthening and 'legitimizing' of the moral economy through consensus in other contexts.<sup>65</sup> Thompson observed that:

the men and women in the crowd were informed by the belief that they were defending traditional rights or customs; and, in general, that they were supported by the wider consensus of the community. On occasion

63 Thompson, *Customs in Common*, p. 351.

64 This is particularly so for newly formed units.

65 In addition to Thompson, see also Steffen Mau, *The Moral Economy of Welfare States: Britain and Germany Compared* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 32; and Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*, pp. 4-7.

this popular consensus was endorsed by some measure of licence afforded by the authorities.<sup>66</sup>

Thompson later added that the moral economy:

supposed definite, and passionately held, notions of the common weal – notions which, indeed, found some support in the paternalist tradition of the authorities; notions which the people re-echoed so loudly in their turn that the authorities were, in some measure the prisoners of the people.<sup>67</sup>

While strong support from authorities is not necessarily essential for the development of a moral economy, it certainly helps by adding strength through a further sense of legitimacy. Thus, while different groups of people or classes within a society may have opposing interests – such as Thompson’s English crowd and their authorities, Scott’s Southeast Asian peasants and their landlords, or the military’s rank and file and their officers – those opposing groups may find a consensus in some of their views of the moral economy. Even then, this is not to say that they must agree on all aspects of that moral economy. Thompson, again, elaborated how ‘the moral economy of the crowd broke decisively with that of the paternalists: for the popular ethic sanctioned direct action by the crowd, whereas the values of order underpinning the paternalist model emphatically did not’.<sup>68</sup> This demonstrates that, while the building of consensus between opposing groups helps give strength to the assumptions of a moral economy, it is not *necessarily* required; and moral principles and rights held by one group could bring them into conflict with the interests of the other.

An additional consequence of that consensus is the development of a sense of *mutuality*, *commonality*, and *reciprocity*,<sup>69</sup> which also adds to the strength and legitimacy of the moral economy. Indeed, Steffen Mau argued that ‘reciprocity norms are quite crucial’ within the moral economy of welfare institutions.<sup>70</sup> Within the military, that sense of mutuality, commonality, and reciprocity between the rank and file and their officers is often fostered as a necessity to counter the strength of an external enemy. In short, the rank and file must work together with their officers and other authority

66 Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’, p. 78.

67 Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’, p. 78.

68 Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’, p. 98.

69 Indeed, Steffen Mau suggested that membership status and mutuality are important features in the development of communities. Mau, *The Moral Economy of Welfare States*, p. 73.

70 Mau, *The Moral Economy of Welfare States*, p. 32.

figures towards the mutual goal of defeating the enemy. The rank and file often accepts the general hardships of military life, on the understanding that their officers will work hard to provide comforts and subsistence when able. As noted above, the rank and file also accepts that they must risk their lives by engaging in combat with the enemy, on the understanding too that their officers will not be careless with their decisions, and that those officers will, as much as is practicable, provide the best circumstances for the survival of the rank and file. In time, both the rank and file and their immediate officers reached a consensus view that the best circumstances for survival were those which kept men together within the unit where they held a strong sense of *esprit de corps*.

Those core principles of the military moral economy, the right to subsistence and survival, were directly inherited from civil moral economies. Indeed, these concepts often form the basis for community well-being and prosperity. People within a community often base their daily interactions and behaviours around this moral economy and around broader expectations of normal and standard behaviour. Steven Hahn went so far as to describe the moral economy as ‘the web of social life’, including, ‘ideas about justice, independence, obligation, and other aspects of social and political life, rooted in specific relationships and refracted through historical experiences’.<sup>71</sup> Thompson’s eighteenth-century food rioters, for example, were angered at soaring prices and malpractice among dealers (among other issues), which, they felt, challenged their right to subsistence and thus breached the moral economy.<sup>72</sup> Military moral economies work in similar ways. Expectations of norms within the military bind the rank and file together into cohesive units where they can operate with a clear understanding of the behaviour *expected* of them by authorities, while those men also believe that behaving in such ways will be reciprocated by authorities’ adherence to the rank and file view of the moral economy.

As noted above, in civil societies, when those habits of mutuality and commonality are broken by one party, when expectations of standard and normal behaviour are not met, when the moral economy breaks down, and when faith and trust in the other parties within that economy is lost, the result is often a sense of *moral outrage*.<sup>73</sup> Breaches of that moral economy –

71 Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 6, 85.

72 Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’, p. 78.

73 Thomas Clay Arnold, ‘Rethinking Moral Economy’, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 95, no. 1, 2001, p. 86.

described by Gregory Knouff as ‘violations’<sup>74</sup> and by Thompson as ‘outrages’ to moral assumptions<sup>75</sup> – need not be malicious or intentional; but they are often sufficient to cause strong feelings of mistrust and anger which result in subsequent action. As shall be seen, in each of the three protests analysed, the protesters felt that they had legitimate concerns, that they were defending their rights, and that ‘justice’ was on their side.

Despite the growing utilization and value of moral economy theory, it has been relatively absent from histories of the military, where issues of class, morality, community, and direct action are generally less common, or where it is erroneously assumed that soldiers’ expectations of rights, standards and norms, and community customs and practices did not have time to develop. Often, the workings of this moral economy within the military are evident through the expression of expectations of rights, obligations, justice, and fairness in much the same way that they are expressed in breaches of civil moral economies. For example, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion’s protest of September 1918, Peter Stanley argued that the rank and file ‘would defy orders they thought contravened their understanding of their rights’.<sup>76</sup> As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the protesters of 1863, 1918, and 1943 frequently drew on such language to describe their circumstances.

While analyses of the concept of a moral economy operating within the military are rare, this is not the first study of this type. Gregory Knouff has previously presented a detailed analysis of the workings of a moral economy within the army during the American Revolution, and Michael S. Drake explored the concept of moral economy in his general study of military power.<sup>77</sup> Knouff argued that those who enlisted in the American Continental Army:

shared assumptions about what constituted a moral economy in both army and civilian life. They presumed that the bare necessities of life would be available at camp on a fair basis for all. In fact, many probably recalled politicized mob actions in which they engaged before the Revolution to defend the economic interest of their immediate community against imperial policy and life in the army. They expected to receive promised pay and bounties on time. Troops also demanded that their

74 Gregory T. Knouff, *The Soldiers’ Revolution: Pennsylvanians in Arms and Forging of Early American Identity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 100.

75 Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd’, p. 79.

76 Stanley, *Bad Characters*, p. 210.

77 Michael S. Drake, *Problematics of Military Power: Government, Discipline and the Subject of Violence* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

basic material needs (food, clothing, shelter, and so on) be met. Although soldiers endured privation on a level that few European professional soldiers would, there was a limit. When they felt that the government or their officers treated them unfairly, soldiers took matters into their own hands and reacted to blatant violations of what might be termed their military moral economy. They developed comparable understandings of what sort of treatment they deserved and developed strategies against mistreatment. Such actions took the form of petitions, individual and mass desertions, and isolated uprising against the authority of officers, culminating in the revolt of the entire Pennsylvania Line in 1781.<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, Knouff argued that the central motive in the January 1781 mutiny was soldiers' 'commitment to protecting their own interests within the military moral economy'.<sup>79</sup> Incidentally, the perceived violation of the moral economy in 1781 was around the issue of service duration. The Pennsylvanians had signed contracts to serve for 'three years or the duration of the war', and they expected to be released after three years. It was only after they were ordered to continue serving after that three-year period that the men began to protest.<sup>80</sup>

Unlike other forms of social action that seek substantial changes in societal norms and values, reactions to breaches in the moral economy often simply seek a return to the *status quo*. Marsha Pripstein Posusney argued:

collective action is a response to violations of norms and standards to which the subaltern class has become accustomed and which it expects the dominant elites to maintain. Rather than reflecting some emerging new consciousness, then, protests under a moral economy aim at resurrecting the status quo ante. The goal is not to negotiate and redefine the terms of exploitation but to reinstate them after they have been abandoned.<sup>81</sup>

As will be seen in the following chapters, this directly reflects the motivations of the protesters in 1863, 1918, and 1943 – the *primary objective* these men strived for was a return to the *status quo*. Although the protests

78 Knouff, *The Soldiers' Revolution*, p. 98.

79 Knouff, *The Soldiers' Revolution*, p. 101.

80 Knouff, *The Soldiers' Revolution*, p. 101.

81 Marsha Pripstein Posusney, 'Irrational Workers: The Moral Economy of Labor Protest in Egypt', *World Politics*, vol. 46, no. 1, 1993, p. 84.

analysed in this book took place in relatively more developed societies compared to Thompson's food rioters and Scott's peasants, they were not without their risks, and the motivations to engage in protest were built upon precedents that established the idea that direct action could be conducted, it was believed, with minimal risk of punishment or retribution. Thus, the fear of punishment was either diminished, or was deemed worth risking to secure that *status quo ante*. As will be seen, these were clearly *restorative protests*. They sought not gains in income, conditions, or benefits. Rather, they clearly sought a return to circumstances as they previously were; a return to those standards and norms that operated, under mutual agreement, within the established military moral economy.

While a sense of common class interest is evident in each of the three protests under investigation, two equally if not more important components in most military moral economies are the values of *esprit de corps* and *unit cohesion*. Within the military, *esprit de corps* is often publicly expressed as (and promoted by authorities as) pride in and loyalty to large battalion, regiment, brigade, or divisional units. Such pride and loyalty helps bind the rank and file to higher authorities, and encourages the ranks to strive towards broader military objectives. Frederick Manning argued that, within these groups, soldiers bond with their leaders and 'come to accept these leaders' aims and goals as their own'.<sup>82</sup> But, on a daily basis, *esprit de corps* runs parallel to what scholars refer to as 'unit cohesion': the close bonds and sense of camaraderie that unite the men of smaller unit structures – such as sections, platoons, and companies – and provide direct motivation for them to work in military environments.<sup>83</sup> S.L.A. Marshall observed in his seminar study that, 'I hold it to be one of the simplest truths of war that the thing which enables an infantry soldier to keep going with his weapons is the presence or near-presence of a comrade'.<sup>84</sup>

Both unit cohesion and *esprit de corps* function side by side. Authorities will often attempt to extrapolate and link individual values of unit cohesion into the broader value of *esprit de corps*. Manning, for example, argued that:

Esprit then is a higher order concept, paralleling cohesion at the primary group level, implying above all pride in and devotion to the reputation of a

82 Frederick Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry' in Franklin D. Jones (ed.), *Military Psychiatry: Preparing in Peace for War* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2000), p. 5.

83 Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry', p. 5.

84 S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000 [first published 1947]), p. 42.

formal organization beyond the primary group, and along with cohesion, necessary for sustained effective performance of soldiers in combat.<sup>85</sup>

In time, individuals, while feeling and experiencing close daily associations with the primary group, come to shape and express their personal identities and self-understandings as members of that larger secondary group; and they link their ongoing well-being and survival with membership of that larger battalion, regiment, brigade, or division. They increasingly believe, and publicly express their views, that they stand the best chances of surviving war if they remain within that group.

To military psychiatrists, the issue of both unit cohesion and *esprit de corps* has long been paramount in their considerations of the mental health of soldiers and the morale and fighting effectiveness of their units. For example, Manning argued in *Military Psychiatry* that soldiers 'need to have some justification, however inchoate, to stimulate them to do something which so obviously conflicts with the urge to self-preservation'.<sup>86</sup> Soldiers often use *esprit de corps* as that justification.

Because of the potential for *esprit de corps* to bind soldiers together into larger functioning groups striving towards larger military objectives, its development has also long been of interest to authorities. Building *esprit de corps* results in improved discipline, effectiveness, and morale. Likewise, soldiers benefit from the increased morale and satisfaction when they experience *esprit de corps*. Thus, *esprit de corps* and unit cohesion typically form standard expectations within the moral economy of military forces. Soldiers expect that their pride and loyalty in their unit, and their close bonds with comrades, will be respected and maintained.

From the perspective of military authorities, *esprit de corps* is not without its downsides. *Esprit de corps* within confined units is often so intense that members of those units lose sight of the greater purpose of their efforts. Loyalty to a single unit can damage the effectiveness of a larger combined military force as soldiers bond with and express loyalty towards their unit, but not with (and often to the exclusion of or in competition with) other units in the broader force. Indeed, Knouff suggested that, during the American Revolutionary War, the sense of an 'imperial military community' within the British army, coupled with 'draconian discipline', meant that the British army did not experience the same degree of collective action as the Americans, who, in contrast, were largely bound together by local ties as

85 Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry', p. 5.

86 Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry', p. 5.



the primary focus of their loyalty. As a result, soldiers of the British Army 'rarely believed their military moral economy to be violated', whereas the Americans perceived numerous violations.<sup>87</sup> Evidence of this weakening of the force as a whole can clearly be seen in the three incidents in question. As will be shown, in all cases, men clearly proclaimed that they would only fight with their unit, not with any other.

Within the broader structure of the military moral economy, soldiers developed a sense that their willingness to work for military authorities was bound to authorities' willingness to support them, both as individuals and as a community tied together within broader battalion and regimental structures. In addition to expecting regular food, pay, and comforts, men also increasingly expected authorities to respect and honour the camaraderie, cohesion, and *esprit de corps* that developed among those men. In most cases, such respect and honour was mutually beneficial – it enhanced morale and fighting effectiveness and it gave men a primary reason for continuing their service; and, as explored in more detail in the following chapters, authorities often worked hard to foster *esprit de corps* among their units. But, as will also be seen in the three cases of protest, failure to appreciate the importance of *esprit de corps*, and attempts to remove men from their beloved units against their wishes, was perceived as a breach in the military moral economy.

As will be seen, in all of the cases explored, the protests took place several years into their respective conflicts, by which stage both forces had experienced several years of horrific and exhausting fighting. But, again in all cases, the seeds for these incidents were planted in the original recruitment and development of the respective units. It was during this early stage that these men shaped their approach towards military service; and in doing so they also subsequently began shaping the cultures and the moral economies of their respective units. It will be seen how, in 1861, the men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment initially enlisted for three months in what was expected to be a quick war; in 1914, Australian men enlisted into the AIF with a proudly irreverent attitude; and, in 1939, British men enlisted into the Territorial Army partly because their friends were doing so and partly because there was the promise of a paid annual camp to a interesting location. These seemingly simple factors shaped the culture and the moral economy of those respective units, and they would go on to play a substantial role in the subsequent protests of 1863, 1918, and 1943.

87 Knouff, *The Soldiers' Revolution*, p. 115.

The cases analysed in this book draw together the above themes to explore how consensus from familiar officers strengthened the rank and file's sense of the legitimacy of their perceived rights within the moral economy. Specifically, commanding officers at battalion, regiment, brigade, and division level acknowledged the importance of maintaining *esprit de corps* and unit cohesion, and they worked to preserve those aspects of military life. These core components of the rank and file view of the military moral economy were clearly endorsed by their immediate superiors. This 'licence' from authorities helped the military moral economy take root quickly within the culture of the rank and file of all three forces. In all three cases (in 1863, 1918, and 1943), the breach in the moral economy was caused by orders from unfamiliar higher authorities that lay outside the familiar unit structure. They had not given their licence, their support, their consent to the assumptions of the rank and file moral economy, and they had less hesitation in breaching those rank and file expectations. As shall be seen, in some cases, those breaches were even acknowledged by that familiar group of officers, and some even sought to work with their men in an attempt to restore the *status quo*.

In order to understand the significance of the early stages of military service, the first part of each chapter is dedicated to understanding the civilian foundations of the military moral economies that developed in these three military forces. Each of the three chapters explores the nature of the respective military forces prior to the protests, and considers the men's motivations for enlisting and how this shaped their approach to military service, their relationships with officers, and their level of discipline.

Few of the men involved in the various protests considered themselves career soldiers or professional soldiers. Certainly, at the time of their protests they were well experienced in their job, considered themselves highly skilled, and felt that their value to the military as soldiers had increased through combat experience. But most men still saw themselves as civilians in arms, or 'citizen-soldiers', serving in the military for a limited period of time. This all meant that they never surrendered their civilian mentalities and never fully accepted the military regimen. They carried over into the military their civilian ways of thinking, their civilian beliefs and values, and, of particular pertinence for this analysis, their civilian ways of responding to breaches in the moral economy. For men experienced in industrial action, this meant utilizing the language and behaviour associated with such action within military environments. For men accustomed to independent modes of work, it meant maintaining the independent and democratic values associated with their new type of work within the military; and for

men accustomed to working within a particular moral economy, it meant attempting to maintain the standards and norms that operated within that environment.

In making the decision to serve in the military, many of these men, particular those of the AIF, were motivated by the military pay, by the perceived job security of military employment (compared to the insecurity and itinerancy of civilian work), or by the benefits they believed they would reap when they returned to civilian lifestyles. This all meant that those non-professional, non-career soldiers – typically making up the vast bulk of the rank and file within those military forces – approached their military service as a job of work. They signed a contract upon enlisting, and many described daily life and daily work within the military in much the same way that they might otherwise describe daily life and daily work in civil society. The values and beliefs these men brought into the military, coupled with the fact that there was considerable intellectual continuity in transitioning from civilian to military work, were critical in providing the foundations for the moral economy within those three respective military environments.

Building on this, each chapter then explores the breaches of those moral economies in detail, including an examination of why these breaches caused offence to the men of those units. Breaches in the moral economy could range from broader issues such as soldiers' objection to the general conduct of the conflict, through to local issues such as the poor quality of food provided to rank and file troops. The large-scale French Army mutiny of 1917 provides a key example of the former, while the Australian army's practice of conducting mock funeral services for poor military meals during the First World War provides an example of the latter. This analysis culminates with exploring the decision by those men in 1863, 1918, and 1943 to peacefully protest those breaches and seek a return to the *status quo*.

The final part of each chapter explores responses to those breaches and the various attempts that were made to resolve the protests that took place. As will be seen, in two of the cases, those of 1863 and 1918, there was a resolution to the protests that, to varying extents, satisfied the protesters such that they returned to service – although this did not result in a return to the *status quo* in either case. In the third case, the protesters of 1943 were arrested and charged with mutiny. These analyses will consider why the protests were resolved in different ways, and what the key factors were in these different resolutions.

The structure and nature of this book demands the analysis of a diverse range of sources. Where possible it has drawn upon evidence from

participants and witnesses to the events, particularly as presented in diaries, letters, and recollections through oral interviews. While caution must be observed when assessing the degree to which these records reveal actual events from the period, this material nonetheless provides valuable insights into the thoughts and attitudes of witnesses, particularly with regard to their motivation to protest and their response to treatment by authorities. In addition to accounts from soldiers, official letters and military records were used where relevant. Identification and analysis of this material was no easy feat. Men rarely had the patience, the peace of mind, the time, or the opportunity to write. Joshua Chamberlain, who commanded the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine at the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine's protest in 1863, commenced one of his letters to Governor Coburn of Maine, dated 21 July 1863, with 'I embrace a rare opportunity – namely a day's halt within a mile of our baggage – to write you in reference to the affairs of our Reg't'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, Chamberlain had earlier written to his wife Frances ('Fanny'):

I do not have a very natural place for writing but I sit down on a box and take a piece of paper on a board in the midst of a furious drumming on one side and ever so many men talking loudly on the other.<sup>89</sup>

And again, several weeks later, he wrote:

I am surrounded by ever so many officers on the floor sick, and a boy is cleaning an oil lamp right under my nose. I with both elbows stretched out to the utmost to make a good base am dashing off these lines.<sup>90</sup>

Such were the problems facing a commanding officer when he attempted to write home; the situation was even more difficult for the men of the rank and file, many of whom had limited literacy. This was as much the case in 1863 as it was in both 1918 and 1943. For example, Ernest Murray, who served in the AIF, commenced his diary in 1916 with a brief note: 'This

88 Letter from Joshua Chamberlain to Governor Coburn, dated 21 July 1863. Maine State Archives online, <http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=arcesesq&id=145532&v=article> (accessed 16 January 2015).

89 Letter from Joshua Chamberlain to Frances ('Fanny') Chamberlain, 20 August 1862, in Thomas Desjardin (ed.), *Joshua L. Chamberlain: A Life in Letters* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2012), pp. 166-7.

90 Letter from Joshua Chamberlain to 'Fanny' Chamberlain, 3 September 1862, in Desjardin, *Joshua L. Chamberlain*, pp. 168-9.

is a very scrappy Diary – written in all kinds of places and under all kinds of conditions’.<sup>91</sup>

A range of other sources also complements this material. The analysis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine draws heavily on local newspapers that closely followed the experiences of locally raised units and often printed letters from soldiers during the war. The analysis of the AIF’s protest draws strongly on unit war diaries that typically provided daily accounts of unit activities. These are often supplemented by a range of appendices that shed additional light on events; and, for the 1943 protest, detailed analysis was made of court-martial records and of oral interviews with former service personnel. Each of these types of source presents potential problems. Few of them provide a direct and detailed account of events at the time. Indeed, a number of the key sources consulted were created weeks, months, years, and sometimes decades after the events took place. This then raises concerns about the reliability of the accounts, and extensive care has been taken to cross-reference and verify information within these sources. Ultimately, a diverse range of source material was analysed to understand the workings of the military moral economy during three different events, as the following analysis will reveal.

91 Ernest Murray, No. 151, Mechanic, Surry Hills, Mitchell Library Manuscripts (hereafter ML MSS) 2892, undated entry in Diary 4, c. 1916-1917.