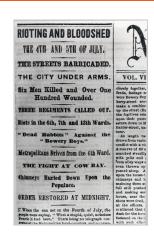
# DEAD RABBITS vs. THE BOWERY BOYS



- 0. DEAD RABBITS vs. THE BOWERY BOYS Story Preface
- 1. BACKGROUND
- 2. FIVE POINTS
- 3. LIFE IN FIVE POINTS
- 4. THE BOWERY
- 5. THE IRISH ARRIVE
- 6. GANGS AND TAMMANY HALL

#### 7. DEAD RABBITS vs. THE BOWERY BOYS

- 8. BILL THE BUTCHER
- 9. MURDER OF BILL THE BUTCHER
- 10. MONK EASTMAN AND JOHNNY SIROCCO
- 11. 1863 DRAFT LAW
- 12. 1863 DRAFT RIOTS
- 13. REACTION TO THE RIOTS
- 14. HISTORICAL FACTS, PEOPLE AND PLACES



Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper reported what happened on the 4th of July, in 1857, when a gang-related riot erupted in New York City's Five Points neighborhood. Image online via the Library of Congress.

By 1857, vast numbers of Irish working people—trying to escape <u>restrictive laws</u> and famine in their own country—had moved to New York City. Aiming to curb immigrants' drinking habits, the New York State Assembly passed a Liquor Excise Law which closed saloons on Sundays. The law took effect on Sunday, the 4th of July, 1857.

Totally <u>disregarding</u> the law aimed directly at them, the Irish people of Five Points kept their saloons open. When the police tried to enforce the law, the Irish—led by the "Dead Rabbits" gang—started <u>a riot</u>. The police—aided by the "Bowery Boys" gang—were quick to respond. Several people died in the <u>fighting</u> which was reported in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

Although the <u>lives</u> of <u>street children</u> in tenement New York were extremely <u>difficult</u>, "Amsterdam Vallon" and "Jenny Everdeane" (as depicted in the movie *Gangs of New York*) are works of fiction. It is not hard to imagine, however, that historical gang members (like William Poole—known as "Bill the Butcher") were capable of killing people the way "Bill the Butcher" dispatches Liam Neeson in the film.

Who were the historical characters William Poole and Monk Eastman? Were they really part of the gangs who lived and fought in New York City during the Civil War?

### See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

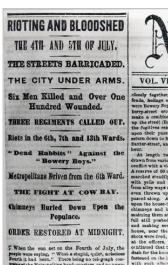
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/DEAD-RABBITS-vs.-THE-BOWERY-BOYS-Gangs-of-New-York

### See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/DEAD-RABBITS-vs.-THE-BOWERY-BOYS-Gangs-of-New-York

Media Stream







### Irish People of Five Points - July 4, 1857 Riot

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Irish-People-of-Five-Points-July-4-1857-Riot

## Reports of Gang-Related Violence in NYC - July 4-5, 1857

Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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View this asset at:

 $\underline{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Reports-of-Gang-Related-Violence-in-NYC-July-4-5-1857}$ 

# Scene from the July 1857 Saloon-Closing Riot in NYC

<u>Image, described above</u>, maintained at the Library of Congress. It has this reproduction number: LC-USZ62-122057. Online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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