

## Transcription

### Colonel Shaw Speaks at Aid Meeting

From *The Liberator* – March 13, 1863

#### MEETING IN AID OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH REGIMENT MASS. VOLS

A meeting in aid of the Fifty-fourth Regiment, Col. Shaw, was held at a private house on Tuesday, March 3. In spite of a violent storm, a large number of ladies and gentlemen assembled, who were animated by the most hearty enthusiasm and earnest desire to do their utmost to make this regiment as well appointed and useful as any in the service. Col. Shaw was present, and gave encouraging accounts of the progress of enlistments and of the excellent behavior of the men now in camp at Readville. He considered them fully up to the average of men whom he had seen elsewhere in service.

A committee of six ladies and four gentlemen was chosen to carry out the purposes of the meeting by procuring all necessary comforts for the regiment, and a banner to be presented to them at a proper time. It was stated that the New Bedford Company would come provided with their full outfit by their own patriotic fellow-citizens. All friends of this good cause are cordially invited to cooperate with the committee.

Mr. J.H. Stephenson, Treasurer, will be happy to receive contributions of socks, towels, handkerchiefs, thread, needles, or any other articles necessary for the soldier, or donations in money, at his office, No. 12 Arch Street, Boston. Contributions may also be left at the office of the Sanitary Commission in Summer Street.

By March 1863, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw had become a celebrity in Boston, attending dinner parties and gatherings where he delivered short speeches about recruiting and the progress of the black soldiers in camp. On one occasion, he arrived to meet with a ladies' committee which had formed to help the Fifty-fourth. This is likely the meeting referenced in the above article. It is mentioned in Russell Duncan's excellent book on Shaw and the Fifty-fourth called *When Death and Glory Meet*. Duncan gives us some wonderful insight into the human side of the man who would become a Civil War hero – Arriving for the meeting “with a light heart & jaunty step” and expecting four women, he later told his sister Effie that “stepping into the parlour, a fearful sight met my terrified gaze. There sat what seemed to me about 17,000 ladies & two men... I was brought forward, as to the slaughter, in a terrible perspiration.”