

OLLI Spring 2021

# FAMOUS TRIALS of History



Week 4: The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti

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# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Five Parts:

Historical Context

The Crime

The Arrest

The Trial

The Appeals and Aftermath

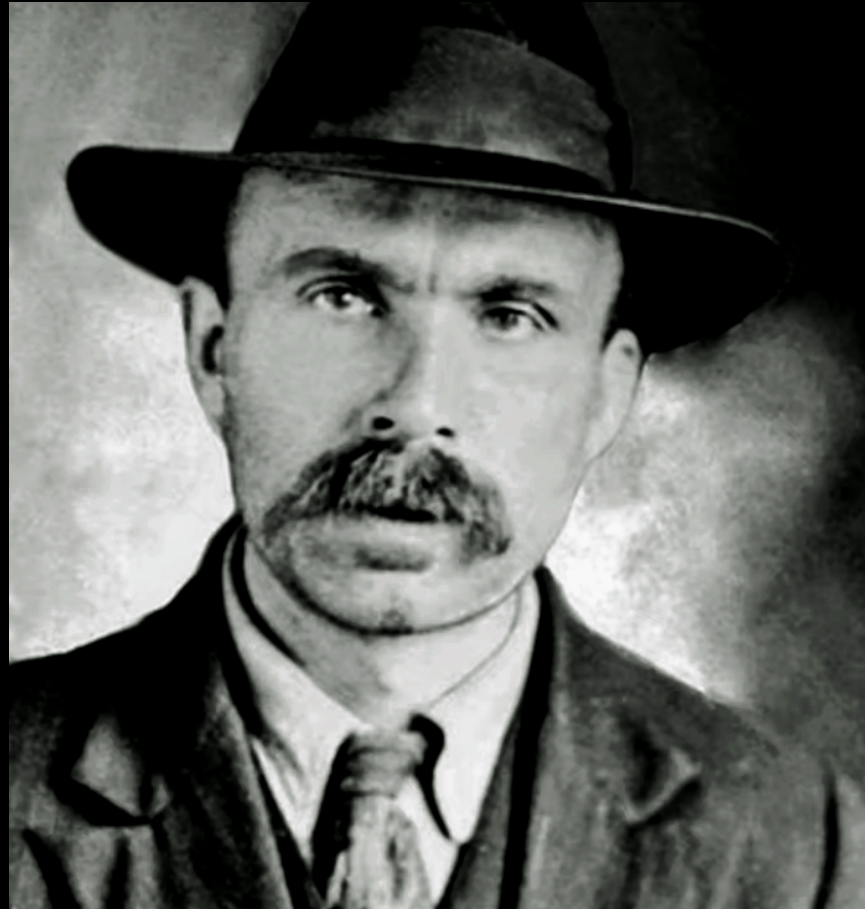
# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Discussion



Nicola, Rosa, Dante



Bartolomeo Vanzetti

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Historical Context

Chronology

Boston

World War

Immigration

Radical Movement

Red Scare

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Historical Context

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Chronology

**June 11, 1888**

Bartolomeo Vanzetti is born in Villafalletto in northern Italy



**April 22, 1889**

Nicola (nee Ferdinando) Sacco is born in  
Torremaggiore in southern Italy

**1908**

**April**

Sacco and his brother Sabino emigrate to the United States

**June**

Bartolomeo Vanzetti emigrates to the United States

**1917**

**April 6**

The United States enters the World War.

**June 5**

Selective Service Draft Act was authorized.

All men between the ages of 21 and 30 were required to register.

**1917**

**May**

Vanzetti and Sacco meet in Boston at a meeting of Galleanist Anarchists. One week later they depart for Mexico with other Italian anarchists to avoid conscription.

**September**

Sacco and Vanzetti return to the United States

**1918**

**February 22**

At the height of the Red Scare, the office of the *Cronaca Sovversiva*, an anarchist newspaper both Sacco and Vanzetti had written for and donated money to, is raided. The names Sacco and Vanzetti are for the first time linked by officials to anarchist activities.

**1918**

**November 11**

*Armistice Day: World War ends.*

**1919**

## **February**

“Go-Head!” --a circular attributed to “The American Anarchists”-- appears throughout New England. In it, the American Anarchists, presumably the Italian-American Anarchists, threaten to “dynamite” officials in retaliation for the ongoing deportations and repression the anarchists are enduring.

**1919**

**April**

A bomb plot is discovered. The plot involved sending over 30 dynamite bombs to persons on the anarchists' enemies list, including A. Mitchell Palmer, the U.S. Attorney General, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, and others.

.



**1919**

**June 2**

In another round of bombings Carlo Valdinoci (who had been in Mexico with Sacco and Vanzetti two years earlier) blows himself up outside the home of Attorney General Palmer. Sacco and Vanzetti are rumored to have taken part in the bombing.

**1919**

**November**

The Justice Department begins rounding up anarchists.

**1919**

**December 24**

Four men attempt to rob the payroll of the L.Q. White Shoe Company in Bridgewater. The bandits fire at the moving payroll truck. They are unsuccessful and no one is hurt. The would-be bandits escaped.

**1920**

**April 15**

Frederick Parmenter and Alessandro Berardelli are robbed and murdered in South Braintree, Massachusetts.

**1920**

**May 5**

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti are arrested for murder and are interviewed by District Attorney Katzmann.

**1920**

**May 9**

Aldino Feliciani and others establish the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee.

**1920**

**June 11 - August 31**

Indictment, trial, conviction, and sentencing of Vanzetti for December 24 .

**September 11**

Sacco and Vanzetti are indicted for murders of Parmenter and Berardelli.

**1921**

**May 31 – July 14**

Sacco and Vanzetti trial is heard in Dedham Supreme Court.

Both men are convicted of first degree murder.



**1921**

**November 5-8**

Motion for new trial on the weight of the evidence and 1st Supplementary Motion (Ripley) are filed.

**December 24**

Motion for new trial is denied by Judge Thayer.

.

**1922-1923**

**May**

Lawyers file six more motions for new trials over eighteen month period.

**1924**

**April 7**

New Trial League is formed by members of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee.

**August 27**

Fred Moore submits formal resignation to the committee.

**1924**

**October 1**

All motions are denied by Judge Thayer.

**November 8**

Fred Moore files legal notice of withdrawal as defense counsel.

**1924**

**November 20**

William Thompson assumes responsibility for the defense of Sacco and Vanzetti.

**1924**

**November 20**

William Thompson assumes responsibility for the defense of Sacco and Vanzetti.

**1925**

**November 18**

Confession of Celestino Madeiros (Carlos Medeiros) for the Braintree murders.

**1926**

**May 12-26**

Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts affirms conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Denies 1st, 2nd, and 5th Supplementary Motions.  
Thomson files 7th Supplementary Motion  
(Medeiros),



**1926**

**October 23**

Medeiros motion is denied by Judge Thayer.

**1927**

**April 5**

Supreme Judicial Court affirms denial of Medeiros motion.

**April 8**

Sacco and Vanzetti receive death sentence.

**1927**

**May 3**

Sacco and Vanzetti petition Governor Fuller for clemency.

**June 1**

Governor Fuller appoints Lowell Committee for clemency investigation.

August 3 - Governor Fuller denies clemency.

**1927**

**August 3**

Governor Fuller denies clemency.

**August 6-8**

Motion for new trial based on judge's prejudice filed. Judge Motion is denied by Judge Thayer.

**1927**

**August 23**

Sacco and Vanzetti are executed.

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Discussion

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti

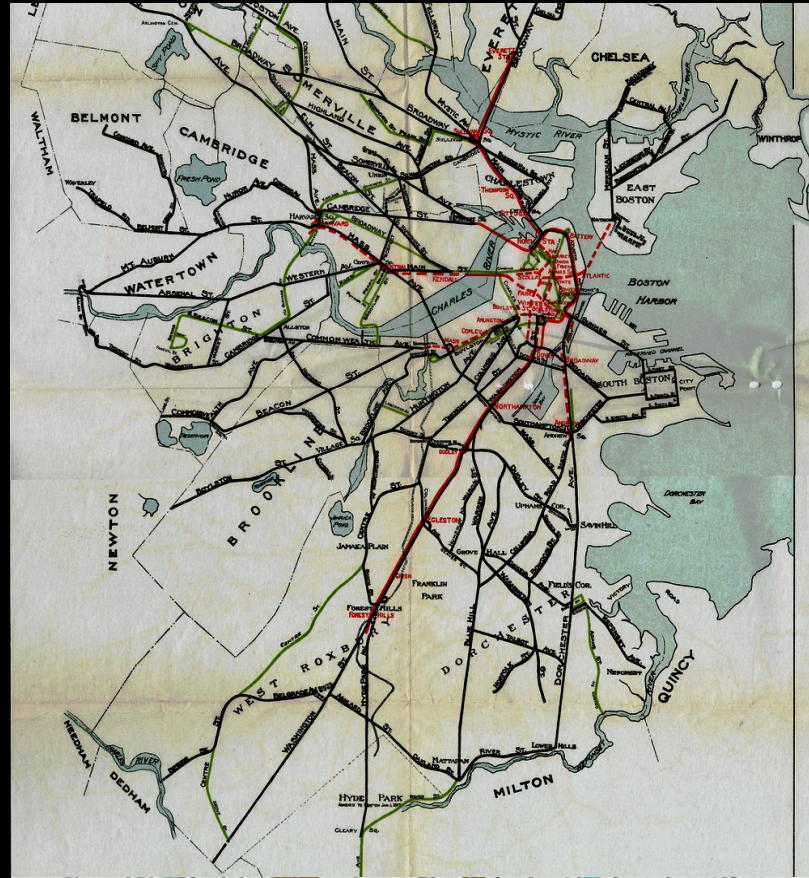


Boston Region



Boston Region 1925





Boston Streetcar System 1925



Bridgewater 1920





Bridgewater



Bridgewater



Bridgewater Factory

## 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic



The 1918 flu pandemic is still considered possibly the worst flu outbreak worldwide in history, infecting up to one fifth of the world's population.

In the United States, 670,000 citizens died.

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



World War





The United States Enters the World War



**26-1-34-C REGISTRATION CARD**

SERIAL NUMBER **1311** ORDER NUMBER **A633**

1 **Harriet Berd Soesbe**

2 PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: **118 E. 8th North Platte Lincoln Nebraska**

3 Age in Years **41** Date of Birth **February 10th 1877**

RACE:  White  Negro  Oriental  Indian  Chinese  Japanese

U. S. CITIZEN:  Native Born  Naturalized  Citizens by Father's Naturalization Before Registrar's Majority

ALIEN:  Declarant  Non-declarant

15 If not a citizen of the U. S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject?

16 PRESENT OCCUPATION **Lineman** EMPLOYER'S NAME **American Telephone & Telegraph Co.**

18 PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: **North Platte Lincoln Neb.**

NEAREST RELATIVE: Name **Pearl E. Soesbe** Address **118 E. 8th North Platte Lincoln Neb.**

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE  
 P. M. G. O. **Harriet Berd Soesbe** (OVER)

**REGISTRAR'S REPORT 26-1-34-C**

DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT

HEIGHT			BUILD			COLOR OF EYES	COLOR OF HAIR
Tall	Medium	Short	Slender	Medium	Stout		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>gray</b>	<b>black</b>

22  Has person lost arm, leg, hand, eye, or is he obviously physically disqualified? (Specify.)

23  **yes**

24  **no**

25 I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

Date of Registration **September 9, 1918**

**Gustav Sivors** (Signature of Registrar)  
 Chairman Local Board  
 Grand Island Neb.

Stamp: **Local Board for the County of Lincoln, State of Nebraska, North Platte, Neb.**

(The stamp of the Local Board having jurisdiction of the area in which the registrant has his permanent home shall be placed in this box.)



Daniel "Bert" Soesbe  
 Draft Registration  
 September 9, 1918



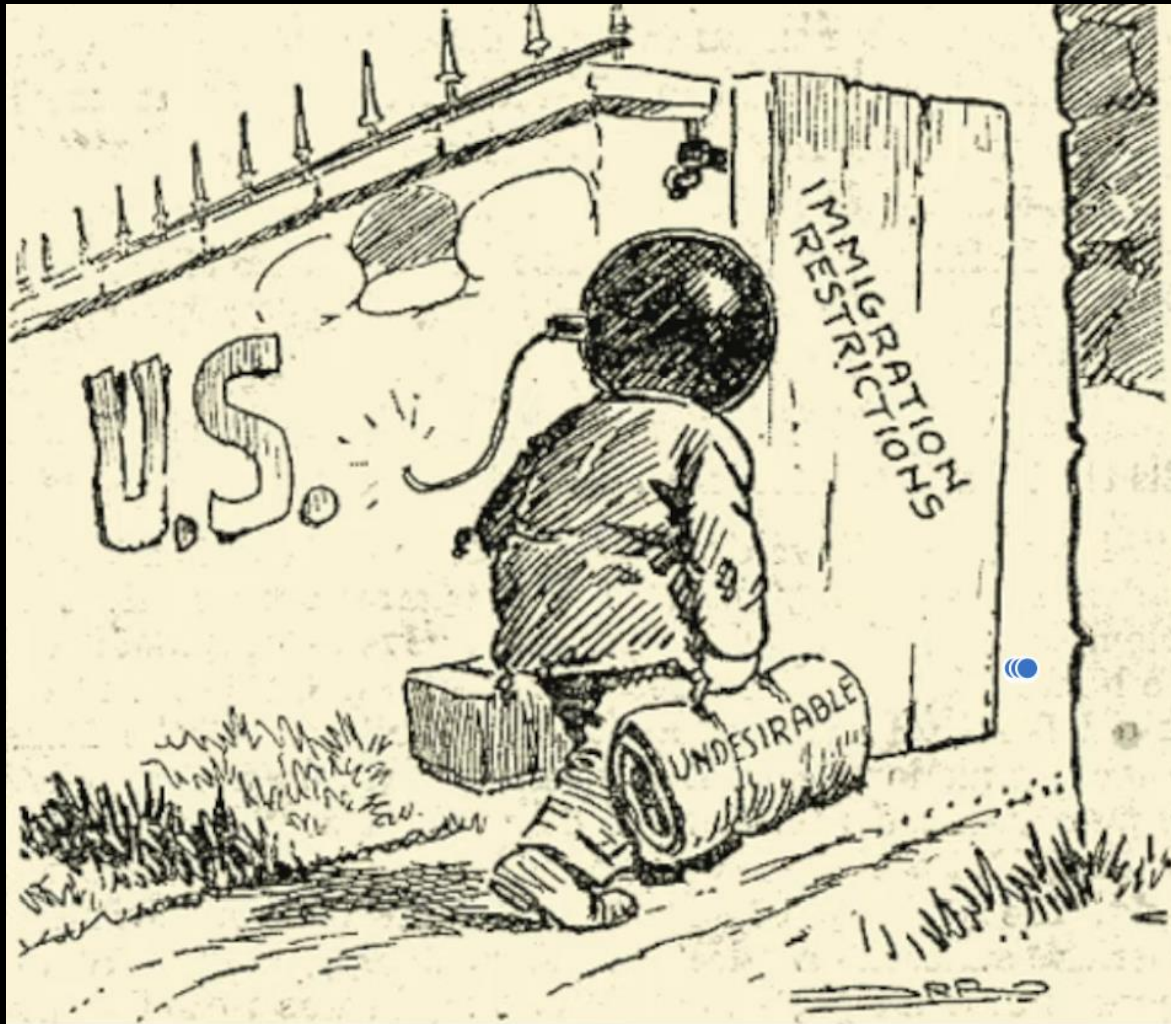
The World War

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



Immigration





Immigration

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



Radical Movement



Radical Rally





Luigi Galleani



GIROLAMO GRASSO,  
150 MARKET ST.,  
HARTFORD, CONN.

ANNO XV

LAZZI, MASS., MAY 6, 1917

NUM. 18



Corrispondenza, lettere, money orders debbono essere esclusivamente indirizzati "Cronaca Sowersiva", P. O. Box 678 - Lynn, Mass.

IERI

# PRIMO MAGGIO

DOMANI

Meglio interrarla pietosi nell'oblio la  
servata tradizione del Primo Maggio,  
alle plebi non in vedere il generoso fa-  
cilita di giustizia, il compito sacro de la  
mandata che al proletariato del mondo af-  
fidarono, se non trent'anni, dalle fucile  
repubbliche i martiri di Chicago; e mo-  
strare, e tenace ambite retaggio i pi-  
etari che di la dall'Occaso, confidanti, do-  
cili, l'innalzeremo estremo esultanza di  
ogni rivincita, di ogni città, propole  
unanime a fregue eroso della comune li-  
berazione.

Se dobbiamo vederla trascinata nel vi-  
cinosi naturali branci, leniente di  
cristiani essenti alla nicchia ad alla tri-  
da, sacraloga poetato alla confusa degli  
abbruttiti e dei disinfanti, meglio appoi-  
larne anche il ricordo.

Ditole noi, speranti compagni cari

il pane, il riposo, il diritto; a cominciare  
da oggi nessuno lavorerà più che otto  
ore al giorno: otto ore di lavoro, otto  
ore di riposo, otto ore di educazione.

Più fuori del campo e dei termini tra-  
dizionali — ahimè, superstiti sempre! —  
il conflitto tra sfruttati e sfruttatori non

di paziate abnegazione e di generosa an-  
dacia tentate ogni fibra.

Venne temebonda ed autuosa da prima,  
venne cinica e sberleffo poi, giungendo di  
infami e di distinzioni avvedute, giacche-  
de di irritazioni e di riserve, di rinvii e  
di draculo; dovranno vedere la rivoluzi-

surprenderi oltre ogni acervo distilli no-  
vissimo: noi avremmo potuto il 1 Ag-  
osto 1914 — che su la fronte della civil à  
borghese rimarrà stigma d'indelibile im-  
femia, e stigma di 1914 su la nostra —  
noi avremmo potuto scongiurare la  
guerra; noi sàli. Ed avremmo trovato nel

forente della giovinezza e della speranza,  
e passerò domani spietata la morte fal-  
ciando su le costole trincee, falciando per  
cavalari, per triviti, lente, incavata la fa-  
me.

L'aveva sola con cui potrebbero i seroi  
all'essa ipotesi scendere e la vita pra-  
tica e il pane dei figli e la gioia dei focu-  
lari; l'abbondanza delle mine, delle fabbri-  
che, delle darsene, delle usate a cui atten-  
ge la guerra il suo viatico macabro, l'  
sporcizia, bollata di comunista, dell'inter-  
ditto aquae et ignis che è maledizione dei  
traditori: nessuno scioperi finché la  
guerra duri!

E l'ultimo decreto del sindaco. Nessun  
sciopero, sia!

Ma la guerra non è ancora inonda,  
ciata ed il pane, la carne, quando urge al-  
la vita quotidiana da raggiato oramai



# Luigi Galleani





# Anarchist Collectives

## *The Trail of the Terrorist Bombs*



© International Film Service.

**Philadelphia**  
Rectory of the Church of Our Lady  
of Victory.

© International Film Service.

**Washington**  
A Mitchell Palmer's House in the  
Capital.

Tribune Photo.

**New York**  
Home of Judge Charles C. Nott, jr.,  
161 East Sixty-first Street.

# Hunt for Bombers



Wall Street





Wall Street





A. Mitchell Palmer Residence

**WEATHER:**  
Partly cloudy tonight  
and tomorrow. Little  
change in temperature,  
at 8 a. m., 70 degrees.  
Normal temperature for  
June 7 for the last thirty  
years, 71 degrees.

# The Washington Times

**FINAL  
EDITION**

NUMBER 11,188.

Published every evening (excepting Sundays)  
except on public holidays, at 10  
pennings at Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON, SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 7, 1919. [Closing Wall Street Prices]

PRICE TWO CENTS.

## POLICE LIST NAMES AND QUARTERS OF RADICALS FOR ROUND-UP HERE

**HOMeward  
MOVEMENT  
OF DRAFT MEN  
IS COMPLETE**

Homeward movement of national guard and national army men from France is complete, Chief of Staff Marsh announced today, all units having embarked for this country. The movement of regulars has been begun, he stated. The Sixth Division

**"Unkissed Bride" Who Says Love  
Was Spurned By Husband**



**SAY TREATY  
IN NEW YORK  
NOT COPY OF  
FINAL TERMS**

PARIS, June 7.—The document which Senator Lodge reports having seen in New York is not the one that will go down in history as the treaty of Paris, is the reply of those close to President Wilson to the Senator's charges that the full text of the

**Hero Who Wed Today, Bride  
and His Aged Mother**



**RADICALS WHO  
SYMPATHIZED  
WITH PLOTS  
ARE TRAILED**

After combing the Capital in the terrorist hunt, the police and Federal agents have, they believe, the names and headquarters of all of the local radicals, suspected of having anarchist tendencies, and are prepared to place their hands on

Radical Movement





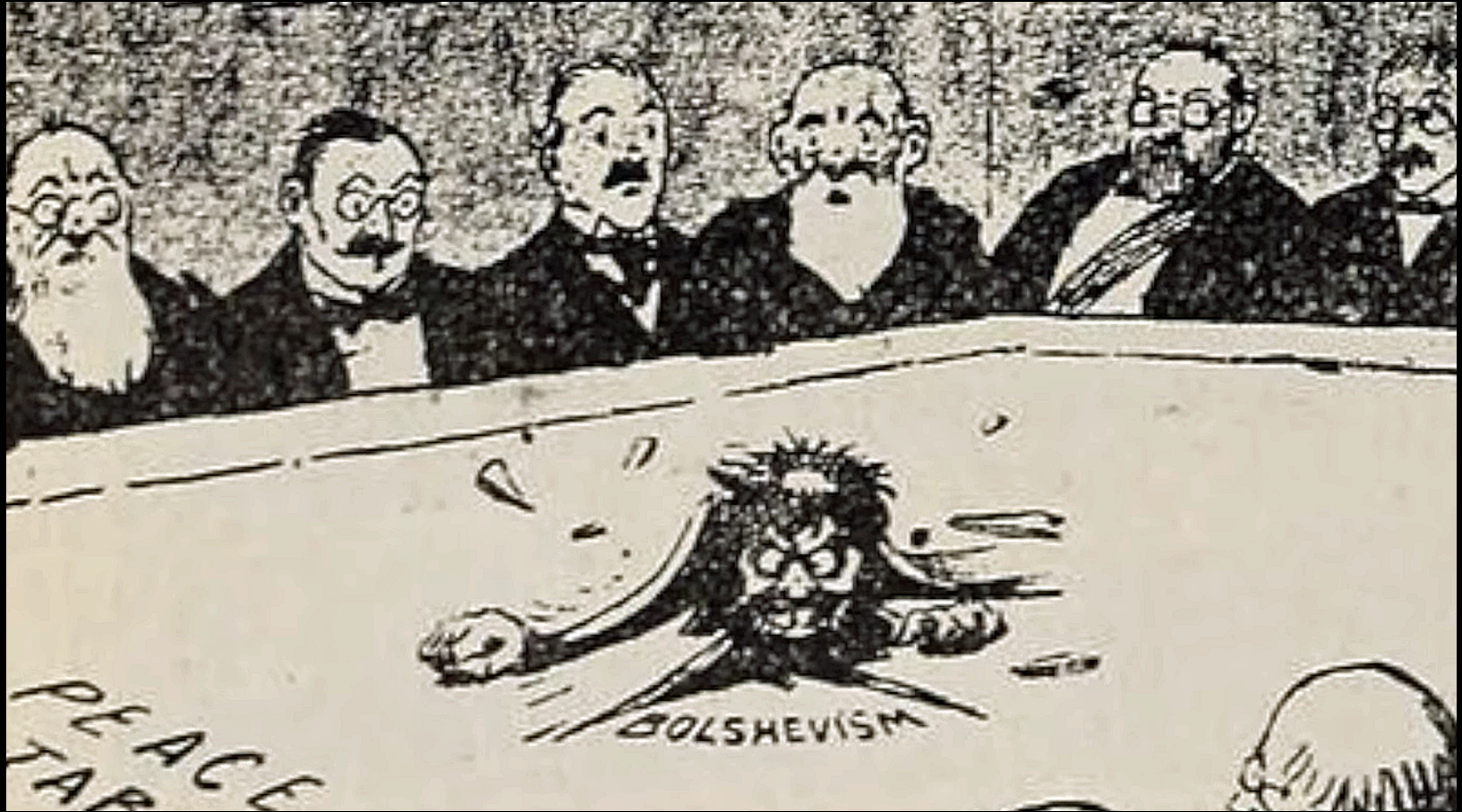
Rounding Up Radicals

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



Red Scare





Red Scare

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## The Crime

# Two Crimes

December 24, 1919 - Bridgewater

April 5, 1920 - Braintree



Andrea Salsedo







Buick and Overland



Mario Buda, aka Mike Boda

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Discussion



# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## The Arrest



Sacco Mug Shot





Vanzetti Mug Shot



Under Arrest





Under Arrest



In The Doc

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Discussion

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## The Trial

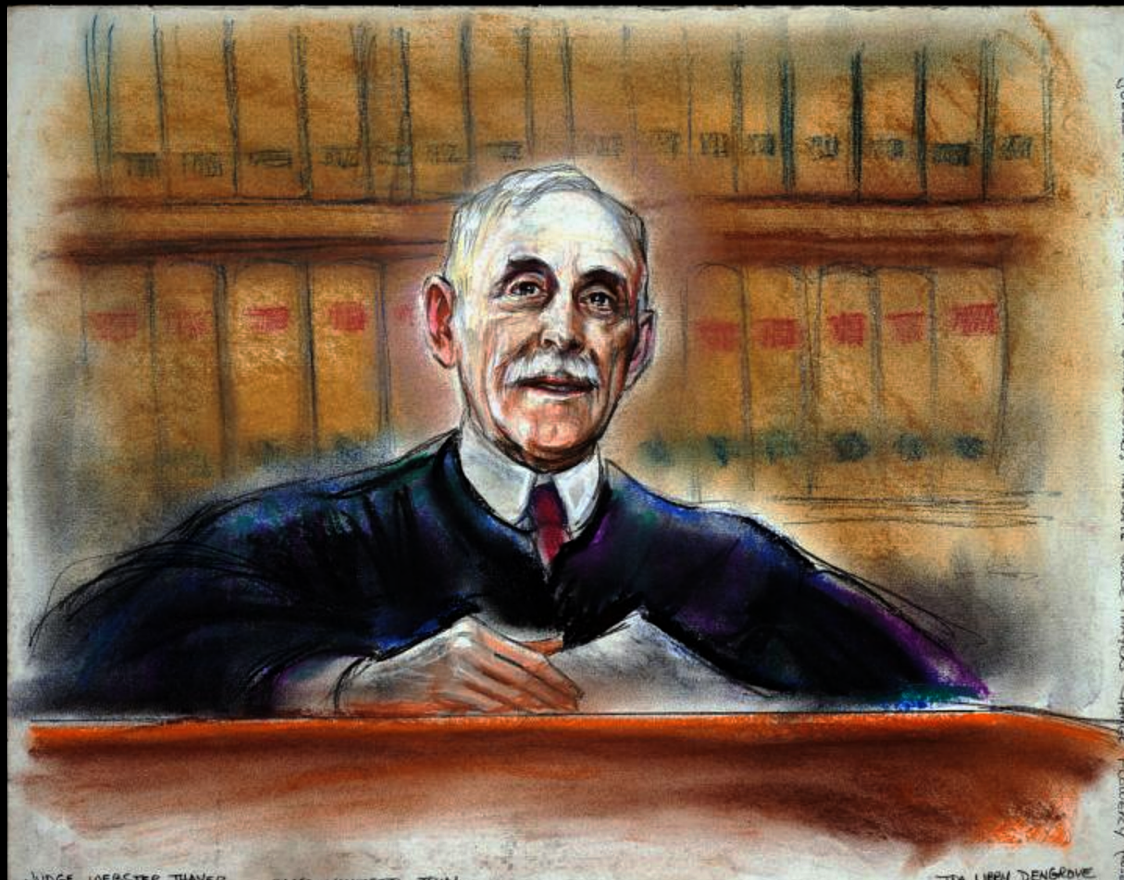




Ben Shan







Judge Webster Thayer



Judge Webster Thayer



The Prosecutors





**THE FOUR PROSECUTORS:** District Attorney Frederick G. Katzmann is second in line from the left, his assistant, Harold D. Williams, is first; and his other assistants, William F. Kane, George E. Adams are third and fourth.

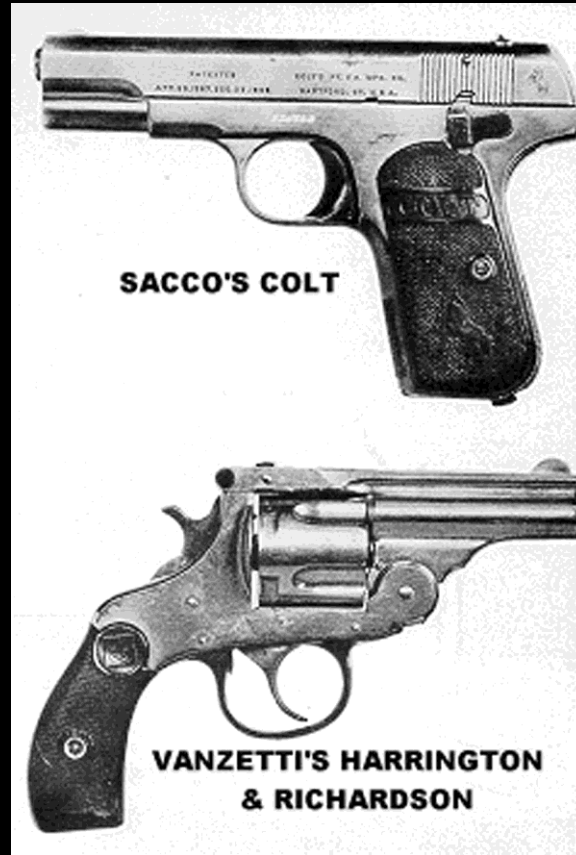
## The Prosecutors







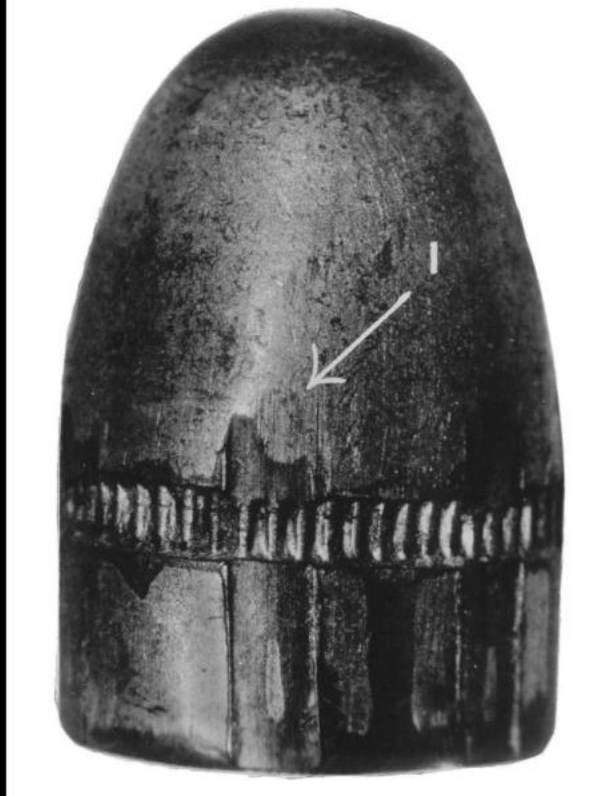
Defense attorney Fred Moore



**SACCO'S COLT**

**VANZETTI'S HARRINGTON  
& RICHARDSON**

# The Pistols



The Mortal Bullet



The Six Witnesses





The Supporters



# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



## Discussion

# The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti



# The Appeals and Aftermath

1776, Independence Number, 1927

One Union - One Label  
One Energy

Official Western Organ  
of the  
Industrial Workers of the World

VOL. 18, NO. 14 - TWELVE CENTS  
"SACCO-VANZETTI" SEATTLE, WASH., SATURDAY, JULY 8, 1927  
"SACCO-VANZETTI" SEATTLE, WASH., SATURDAY, JULY 8, 1927  
8 CENTS A COPY

# SACCO-VANZETTI GENERAL STRIKE CALLED JULY 7TH

**ELECTROCUTION IN BUTTE MINES GETS SMALL NOTE**

**ORGANIZATION**

**The Pinkerton Labor Spy**

**200,000 WORKERS IN NEW YORK CITY PLAN WALK-OUT FOR SACCO AND VANZETTI**

**EDUCATION**

**EMANCIPATION**

**WORKERS of the WORLD**



**ANITA WHITNEY OBTAINS PARDON**

Call for Strike

1925

November 18

Confession of Celestino Madeiros (Carlos Medeiros) for the Braintree murders.

1926

May 12-26

Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts affirms conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Denies 1st, 2nd, and 5th Supplementary Motions.  
Thomson files 7th Supplementary Motion  
(Medeiros),

1926

October 23

Medeiros motion is denied by Judge Thayer.





Daily Worker 1927



**MASSACHUSETTS—THERE SHE STANDS !**

*"There is only one thing this court can do. Sentence Stone and Vanzetti to the electric chair." —Judge Webster Thayer, 1927*

Poster



Protest





Protest Crowd



Daily Worker 1927





Poster August 22, 1927

"If it had not been for these things, I might have lived out my life talking at street corners to scorning men....

Our words--our lives--our pains--nothing!

The taking of our lives--lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler--all!

The last moment belongs to us--that agony is our triumph."

Vanzetti's statement when sentenced to death



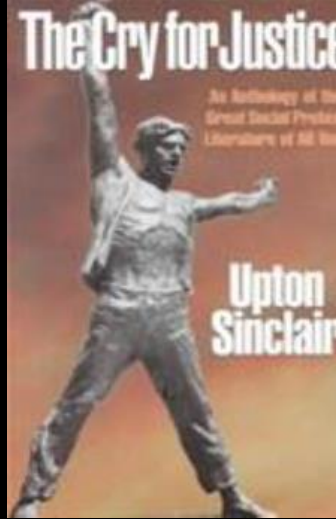
The Lowell Commission

1927

August 23

The Citizens National Committee is formed in order to prevent the execution and create national interest in the case.

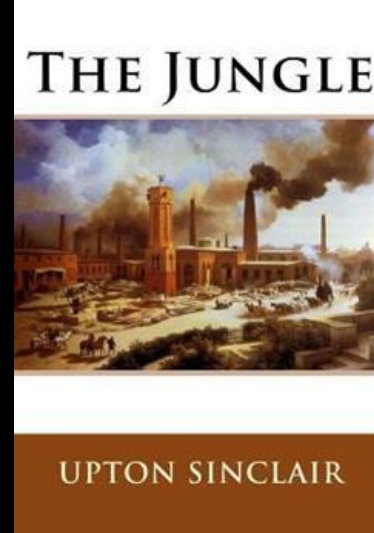
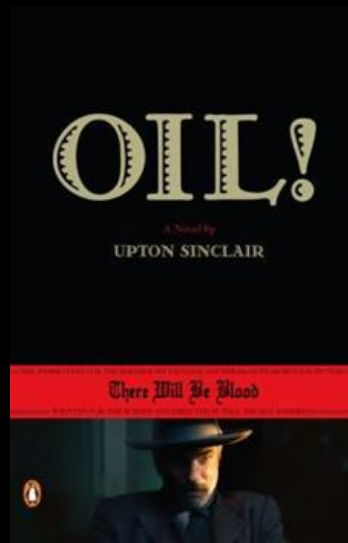
Sacco-Vanzetti National League (formerly the Citizens National Committee) is established to keep the memory of Sacco and Vanzetti alive.



Upton Sinclair King Coal A Novel



The Appalachian Heritage  
Series: Volume 1



**BOSTON**  
A Documentary Novel by  
**UPTON  
SINCLAIR**

With an Introduction by Howard Zinn

Upton Sinclair



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