

***Teacher's Lesson Plan***  
***The Lawrence Textile Workers Strike***  
***“What happened in Lawrence, Massachusetts in the winter of 1912?”***  
***Grade 11***

This lesson is appropriate for units on: immigration, industrialization, and labor movements.

**Key Questions:**

What difficulties did immigrant workers face in organizing the Lawrence textile mills in the early twentieth century?

How do historical documents reflect their creator's point of view and influence a reader's perspective of events?

**Aim:**

Students will be able to:

- explain the causes of the Lawrence textile strike of 1912
- describe the results of the strike
- identify and analyze the perspective of an account of the strike

**Vocabulary:** militia

**Activities**

I. Opening activity

Examine photos and read the captions for them.

What is being shown (the topic)? What is the impression that it gives you about the strike and those involved? From these images what can you deduce was happening in Lawrence, MA in the winter of 1912?

II. Discuss the opening activity

What happened in Lawrence, Massachusetts in the winter of 1912? What questions do the photographs raise?

III. Read together the introduction to the strike

IV. Group activity: document analysis

A. Divide the class into small groups. Each group should have a reader, reporter, recorder, and materials handler.

B. Each group carefully reads the document or excerpt given to it. Underline the phrases that address the focus questions for your reading. Circle words that you feel give an especially strong image of the people and actions involved.

C. After reading your document and answering the questions, who would you support – the strikers or the mill owners and why?

D. With whom (strikers, mill owners, police and militia) does the author seem to sympathize and how can you tell?

Group 1: Read the first five paragraphs of the *Proclamation of the Striking Textile Workers of Lawrence*.

Focus Questions

Who is the author and why was it written?

How does the author(s) describe the workers' working and living conditions?

What does the author(s) list as the workers' demands?

How are the textile workers portrayed?

How are the mill owners portrayed?

Why do the workers think they need a union?

Group 2: Read paragraphs 6 through 12 of the *Proclamation of the Striking Textile Workers of Lawrence*.

Focus Questions

Who is the author and why was it written?

How are the various government officials and agencies portrayed?

- the local judge
- the police and militia
- the city and state governments

How do the workers respond to the actions of the government officials and agencies?

What is the tone of the document?

Group 3: Read the first three paragraphs and the editorial note of the article by Walter Merriam Pratt.

Focus Questions

Who is the author and why was it written?

How are the residents of Lawrence depicted?

How are the businesses portrayed?

How are the textile factories and the work done in them described?

Group 4: Read paragraphs four through nine and the editorial note of the article by Walter Merriam Pratt.

Who is the author and why was it written?

How are the strikers portrayed?

How are the police, security and militia portrayed?

Group 5: Read paragraphs ten through fourteen and the editorial note of the article by Walter Merriam Pratt.

Who is the author and why was it written?

How are the strikers portrayed?

How are the police and militia portrayed?

Group 6: Read *From The Battlefield: Lawrence*.

Who is the author and why was it written?

How are the strikers portrayed?

How are the mill owners portrayed?

What are the results of the strike?

## V. Share learning

Each group's reporter briefly describes the group's document and reads the answers for the group's focus questions.

Write the responses on a large paper or board that is visible to the entire class.

#### V. Discuss group findings

How and why are the depictions of the strikers, mill owners, police and militia different in the various documents?

How did the words you circled affect your a) opinions about the strike and b) your view of the author's perspective?

#### VII. Assessment options

A. Photo analysis: Select one of the photographs from the introduction. How does it support what you learned from the document you read? How does it contradict it? Based on the accounts that were read and discussed in class, what perspectives are missing from the photos? What type of photo would be needed to reflect one of these "missing" perspectives?

B. Diary: Write a diary entry as if written during the strike. Choose the perspective of someone directly involved in or affected by the strike: a) striker, b) child of a striker, c) textile mill owner, d) militia member or police officer. Be sure to include details about the strike itself (who, what, where, when, why, and how) and the opinions of the author about the strike and people involved.

#### Materials to be used:

- A. For Do Now (for everyone): Photos of Lawrence Strike
- B. Introduction to the Lawrence Textile Workers Strike 1912 (for everyone)
- C. *Proclamation of the Striking Textile Workers of Lawrence* (Groups 1 and 2)
- D. *The Lawrence Revolution* (Groups 3 and 4)
- E. *From The Battlefield: Lawrence* (Group 5)
- F. *Ettor and Giovannitti Flyer and Photo (Extension Activity)*

#### Possible Extension Activities:

- A. Read the transcript from the *History Detectives* segment on a billy club from the Lawrence strike. What additional information does it provide? How do the perspective and sympathies expressed in it compare to those in the other readings? How does it affect your views on the Lawrence textile strike? ([http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/investigations/403\\_lawrence.html](http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/investigations/403_lawrence.html) provides an introduction and the link to the transcript).
- B. Read chapter 16 of *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow. Identify a passage that you find especially important or moving. Rewrite it from the perspective of a mill owner, militiaman, police officer, or someone opposed to the strike.
- C. Research the Industrial Workers of the World and make a presentation on other major actions carried out by them.
- D. Examine the photograph and flyer of Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti. What do you think were the creators' opinion of the men? What leads you to that conclusion? Create a cartoon or flyer about the men which represents a different point of view.

### Chart to Share Learning

How are they portrayed?	Proclamation	Pratt	The Battlefield
Strikers			
Mill owners			
Government officials and agencies			
Police and militia			

Document A: Photos of Lawrence Strike



Women strikers marching in support of the strike  
*Courtesy of George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, #1422*



Massachusetts militiamen with fixed bayonets surround a parade of peaceful strikers  
*Courtesy of George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, #1425*

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Some of over 100 children of Lawrence strikers preparing to travel  
to New York City to find temporary homes  
*Courtesy of George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, #1421*

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## Document B: Introduction

### Lawrence Textile Workers Strike 1912

Lawrence, Massachusetts, the center of the textile industry in the United States, was home to the American Woolen Company's four giant mills. The textile industry employed nearly 60,000 of the town's approximately 85,000 residents, many of whom had recently immigrated from southern and eastern Europe. The Industrial Revolution had created a shift in the work force of textile mills from skilled to mostly unskilled labor. Skilled textile jobs in Lawrence went mostly to the native born or workers of English, German, and Irish descent, who were likely to be affiliated with the conservative American Federation of Labor's craft unions. These workers were being replaced by large numbers of unskilled, immigrant laborers from Italy, French-Canada, Portugal, and Poland, who earned wages of less than \$9 per week.

Labor conditions in the mill were harsh. Half of the 40,000 workers in the American Woolen Company's four Lawrence mills were girls between the ages of 14 and 18. Workers paid high rents to live in small rooms in tenement houses; their pay provided a diet of bread, beans, and molasses. Factories were extremely hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Many workers died before the age of 40. The introduction of the two-loom system in the textile factories increased the pace of work and enabled the companies to reduce staff and impose pay cuts. Machinery that was already dangerous to operate became even more so given the increased speed of production. In an effort to ameliorate the lives of workers by reducing the number of hours exposed to such harsh working conditions, the Massachusetts state legislature approved legislation reducing the workweek from 56 to 54 hours beginning in 1912. A consequence of this "labor improvement" however was a reduction in wages by 22 cents per week, as the American Woolen Company refused to maintain the same pay for working two fewer hours per week. This pay cut cost workers the equivalent of three loaves of bread.

On January 12, 1912, Polish immigrant women closed their looms and took to the streets in protest against the pay cut. They were soon joined by men and women, both teens and adults, speaking more than a dozen languages. The AFL denounced the strike as revolutionary and anarchistic and its impact looked to be weak. However, the radical Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), whose aim was to unite all workers in one big union, sent in union organizer, Joseph Ettor, who helped provide food and clothing to strikers and their families. Large numbers of workers marched and carried banners declaring, "We want bread and roses too." They demanded respect as workers and a decent wage to feed their families. During a confrontation between strikers and the police and state militia, two protesters were killed. In response, children of striking workers were sent by train to other cities to be safely taken care of by families sympathetic to the strike. Public opinion toward the strike turned in favor of the workers when police attacked and arrested departing children and their mothers. Newspaper accounts of the attacks compelled President William Howard Taft to order a congressional investigation into industrial conditions in Lawrence and elsewhere in the country. In March, the American Woolen Company capitulated to the union's demands, granting a 15% pay raise, double pay for overtime, and amnesty for strikers. Soon afterward, other textile companies in Lawrence and New England complied with these terms.

"Proclamation of the Striking Textile Workers of Lawrence," Charles P. Neill, ed., *Report on the Strike of Textile Workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1912*, 62nd Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Document 870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912), pp. 503-04.

<http://www.alexanderstreet6.com/wasm/wasmrestricted/law/doc1.htm>

Introduction: This Proclamation was published by workers associated with the radical Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies). These largely immigrants workers earned lower wages than the more skilled and respectable members of the American Federation of Labor.

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## PROCLAMATION OF THE STRIKING TEXTILE WORKERS OF LAWRENCE.

We, the 20,000 textile workers of Lawrence, are out on strike for the right to live free from slavery and starvation; free from overwork and underpay; free from a state of affairs that had become so unbearable and beyond our control, that we were compelled to march out of the slave pens of Lawrence in united resistance against the wrongs and injustice of years and years of wage slavery.

In our fight we have suffered and borne patiently the abuse and calumnies of the mill owners, the city government, police, militia, State government, legislature, and the local police court judge. We feel that in justice to our fellow workers we should at this time make known the causes which compelled us to strike against the mill owners of Lawrence. We hold that as useful members of society and as wealth producers we have the right to lead decent and honorable lives; that we ought to have homes and not shacks; that we ought to have clean food and not adulterated food at high prices; that we ought to have clothes suited to the weather and not shoddy garments. That to secure sufficient food, clothing and shelter in a society made up of a robber class on the one hand and a working class on the other hand, it is absolutely necessary for the toilers to band themselves together and form a union, organizing its powers in such form as to them seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that conditions long established should not be changed for light or transient causes, and accordingly all experience has shown that the workers are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves, by striking against the misery to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and ill treatment, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them to a state of beggary, it is their duty to resist such tactics and provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these textile workers, and such is now the necessity which compels them to fight the mill-owning class.

The history of the present mill owners is a history of repeated injuries, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these textile workers. To prove this let facts be submitted to all right-thinking men and women of the civilized

world. These mill owners have refused to meet the committees of the strikers. They have refused to consider their demands in any way that is reasonable or just. They have, in the security of their sumptuous offices, behind stout mill gates and serried rows of bayonets and policemen's clubs, defied the State, city, and public. In fact, the city of Lawrence and the government of Massachusetts have become the creatures of the mill owners. They have declared that they will not treat with the strikers till they return to the slavery against which they are in rebellion. They have starved the workers and driven them to such an extent that their homes are homes no longer, inasmuch as the mothers and children are driven by the low wages to work side by side with the father in the factory for a wage that spells bare existence and untimely death. To prove this to the world the large death rate of children under one year of age in Lawrence proves that most of these children perish because they were starved before birth. And those who survive the starving process grow up the victims of malnutrition.

These mill owners have charged the strikers with violence and then in the best of times they have paid the workers a starvation wage. They have built large mills within the last 10 years, and paid annual dividends, and they ask the workers to submit to a wage that even a coolie [A] would despise. They have pitted the women and children against the men and so brought wages down to a level where an honest living is beyond the average textile worker. They have introduced improved machinery into the factories and thrown the workers out on the streets to starve, or used the surplus labor created by labor-saving machinery to grind the lives out of those who were fortunate enough to have a job.

These mill owners not only have the corrupting force of dollars on their side, but the powers of the city and State government are being used by them to oppress and sweep aside all opposition on the part of those overworked and underpaid textile workers. The very courts, where justice is supposed to be impartial, are being used by the millionaire mill owners. And so serious has this become that the workers have lost all faith in the local presiding judge. Without any attempt at a trial, men have been fined or jailed from six months to a year on trumped-up charges, that would be a disgrace even in Russia. This judge is prejudiced and unfair in dealing with the strikers. He has placed all the strikers brought before him under excessive bail. He has dealt out lengthy sentences to the strikers as if they were hardened criminals, or old-time offenders. He has refused to release on bail two of the leaders of the strike, while he released a prisoner charged with conspiracy and planting dynamite, on a thousand dollars' bail. He sentenced, at one morning's session of court, 23 strikers to one year in jail on the fake charge of inciting to riot. This judge has declared he is opposed to the union that is conducting the strike.

The brutality of the police in dealing with the strikers has aroused them to a state of rebellious opposition to all such methods of maintaining order. The crimes of the police during this trouble are almost beyond human imagination. They have dragged young girls from their beds at midnight. They have clubbed the strikers at every opportunity. They have dragged little children from their mothers' arms and with their clubs they have struck women who are in a state of pregnancy. They have placed people under arrest for no reason whatsoever. They have prevented mothers from sending their children out of the city and have laid hold of the children and the mothers violently and threw the children into waiting patrol wagons like so much rubbish. They have caused the death of a striker by clubbing the strikers into a state of violence. They have arrested and clubbed young boys and placed under arrest innocent girls for no offense at all.

The militia has used all kinds of methods to defeat the strikers. They have bayoneted a young boy.[B] They have beaten up the strikers. They have been ordered to shoot to

kill. They have murdered one young man, who died as a result of being bayoneted in the back. They have threatened one striker with death if he did not close the window of his home. They have threatened to stay in this city until the strike is over. They have bayoneted one citizen because he would not move along fast enough. And they have held up at the point of the bayonet hundreds of citizens and Civil War veterans.[C]

The city government has denied the strikers the right to parade through the streets. They have abridged public assemblage by refusing the strikers the use of the city hall and public grounds for public meetings. They have turned the public buildings of the city into so many lodging houses for an army of hirelings and butchers. They have denied the strikers the right to use the Common for mass meetings, and they have ordered the police to take little children away from their parents, and they are responsible for all the violence and brutality on the part of the police.

The Massachusetts Legislature has refused to use any of the money of the State to help the strikers. They have voted \$150,000 to maintain an army of 1,500 militiamen to be ready to shoot down innocent men, women, and children who are out on strike for a living wage. They have refused to use the powers of the State for the workers. They have appointed investigation committees, who declare, after perceiving the signs of suffering on the part of the strikers on every side, that there is no trouble with these people.

All the nations of the world are represented in this fight of the workers for more bread. The flaxen-haired son of the North marches side by side with his dark-haired brother of the South. They have toiled together in the factory for one boss. And now they have joined together in a great cause, and they have cast aside all racial and religious prejudice for the common good, determined to win a victory over the greed of the corrupt, unfeeling mill owners, who have ruled these people so long with the whip of hunger and the lash of the unemployed.

Outlawed, with their children taken away from them, denied their rights before the law, surrounded by bayonets of the militia, and driven up and down the streets of the city by an overfed and arrogant body of police, these textile workers, sons and daughters of the working class, call upon the entire civilized world to witness what they have suffered at the hands of the hirelings of the mill-owning class. These men and women can not suffer much longer; they will be compelled to rise in armed revolt against their oppressors if the present state of affairs is allowed to continue in Lawrence.

Walter M. Pratt, "The Lawrence Revolution," *New England Magazine* 46 (March 1912), pp. 6-16.

<http://www.alexanderstreet6.com/wasm/wasmrestricted/law/doc19.htm>

### Introduction

Walter Merriam Pratt was a First Lieutenant of the Massachusetts Eighth Regiment on the staff of its commander Colonel Sweetser, which was sent to Lawrence during the strike.

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## NEW ENGLAND MAGAZINE

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### The Lawrence Revolution

*By* WALTER MERRIAM PRATT

Lawrence in Massachusetts has been the scene of a small sized Civil War the past two months. Insignificant as it is, this is really what the great textile strike amounts to. And many students of social and civic conditions fear that it is the beginning of a wage war, which will spread throughout the country. The conditions which exist in this New England city today are largely the result of our emigration laws. For years the off-scourings of Southern Europe have been pouring into the city, and working for wages which Americans could not compete with. They will not be assimilated, have no sympathy with our institutions, skimp, scrape, starve themselves to save a little pile of money and then hurry back from whence they came. Their presence here is often due to the avarice of their employers, who are bound to sooner or later reap what they sow.

Socialism has long had a firm grip on Lawrence and for years a struggle between the "Haves" and the "Have-Nots" has been smouldering. Of late it has been getting much keener and both sides have resorted to more desperate methods with less fear of consequences. The masses have seen the trusts and large corporations, both in and out of court, show their utter contempt for the law and those who would enforce it, and have been actuated by it. The spark which set off this smouldering struggle was the signing of the "Fifty-four hour bill" by Governor Foss. This bill went into effect January 1, 1912, and when the first pay day came around the mill employee found pay for fifty-four hours instead of for fifty-six as the politicians had told them would be the case, and the great strike throwing 25,000 persons out of employment was the result. The strikers made no definite demands and at first no one seemed to know just what this strike was about. Failure to get just the same pay as before was the real reason. Once out on the street the strikers greatly amplified their demands.

A large majority of these strikers were Italians, Poles, Greeks, Syrians or other untutored people. These poor people did not understand the economic situation; they did not even understand English and were an easy prey to the agitation. About this time Joseph J. Ettor appeared upon the scene. Ettor is only twenty-six years of age but has been a leader in frightful outbreaks in Brooklyn and Patterson and prominent in the bloody riots of Schoenville, Pa. He is a man of unlimited physical vitality and wonderful capacity for leadership and a pronounced Socialist. In a few days he had become the idol

of the workers of all the races, who believed every word of his incendiary speeches. He even fooled the general public and until he advocated the use of violence, which resulted in bloodshed he had the majority of the people with him. His misstatements were so cleverly made that at first they were believed. And it was generally taken for granted that the mill operatives were a much trodden, badly treated and under paid lot of people. This is not a fact. Instead of receiving five dollars a week as has been stated, the average wage, not including the higher officials, is between nine and ten dollars and it is largely a man's own fault if he receives only the average wage. Any intelligent person may become a skilled weaver and receive twenty to twenty-five dollars. The conditions under which the operators work are pleasant and everything possible is done to protect their health and bodies. Most of the mills are new and of modern construction and no expense has been spared to make the ventilation, light and sanitary condition the best. Some of the mills have escalators to the top floor and restaurants where an ample dinner may be purchased for ten cents, while most of the mills have shower baths. The American Woollen Company has built some two hundred houses, each seven rooms and bath which rent for eighteen dollars per month. The un-Americanized foreign element, however, are not educated up to things of this kind and if their pay was many times what it is they unquestionably would prefer to live as they do. Half a dozen families in one small tenement, eight or ten in a room wallowed in dirt.

The strike started when the mills closed Saturday, January 13. The strikers gathered at their various meeting places during Sunday and listened to inflammatory speeches by the imported strike agitators. The outlook by sunset was so serious that the three local militia companies were called to the Armory, where they spent the night ready for any emergency.

The mills were enveloped in a blinding snow storm when the trouble started in the darkness of Monday morning. The starting time was 6.40 o'clock but it found only a small percentage of the help present. Outside thousands shouted, hissed and booed. The Prospect mill on the South Lawrence side was the first to have its windows smashed. A crowd of perhaps a thousand gathered in front of it and contented itself with throwing ice and rocks at it. One shot was fired and Corporation Detective Flynn promptly nabbed the man who fired it and who when searched, was found to have a pistol, twenty-two cartridge s and two stilettos on him. While this was taking place about a thousand strikers entered the Wood Mill and rushed into the workrooms waving red handkerchiefs as flags, cut the belts of the machinery, shut off the power, dragged the women operators from their benches, and beat them with clubs, and after smashing everything in sight drove all hands from the mill with pistols and knives. Meanwhile several thousand men and women rushed the Pacific Mills on the North Lawrence side, lines of hose were turned on them and forced them back. The pressure was so great that those in front were knocked down and went rolling over and over across the bridge. Those who succeeded in getting through the gates found themselves prisoners.

By 8.30 there had been cases of rioting in all parts of the city and yelling mobs openly paraded the streets with clubs and revolvers, smashing windows at will. Mayor Scanlon appeared at the Armory about this time and signed the precepts calling out the militia and in a very few minutes the local companies were clearing the mill district, and the Adjutant General in Boston had been notified. By noon Colonel Sweetser and his staff of the Eighth Massachusetts Infantry and eight infantry companies, 502 men and officers were on the scene or had started for it, together with 20,000 rounds of ammunition. The worst mix-up took place in front of the Atlantic Mills, where a mob of five or six thousands were yelling, throwing ice or shooting revolvers at the mill. Into this

crowd, amid a shower of missels [missiles] the soldiers went, and the mob gave way before the butt ends and the bayonets. Another riot occurred in the afternoon near the city hall, and again the soldiers had to resort to their bayonets, but as night began to fall conditions became normal. During the day between forty and fifty arrests were made. Revolvers, knives or clubs were found on most of those arrested and one or two years was the sentence imposed by Judge Mahoney of the Municipal Court on most of them in an all night session. This prompt and fearless action of the judge, not only brought forth favorable comment throughout the country, but was a great assistance to the police and militia in keeping down further demonstrations. During this first day there were many broken heads and a number were badly injured by the bayonets. Several of the soldiers were bruised by being hit with flying missels, and one militia-man was twice stabbed in the arm. . . .

A number of times during this day, as was also true during the first two trying weeks, bloodshed was narrowly averted by the good judgement and patience of the militia officers.

The first two weeks parades and occasional clashes with the soldiers were daily events.

Ettor, Haywood [“Big Bill” Haywood, leader of the I.W.W.] and the other agitators daily made revolutionary speeches to crowds estimated at from fifteen to twenty thousands, from the band stand on the Common. In the confusion of tongues these gatherings made a veritable Babel. Speeches were made in Syrian, Italian, Greek, Lithuanian, Armenian, French, Russian and other languages. And the excited masses would frequently burst forth in noisy approval of the violent threats of the speakers.

The militia gave the strikers a great many privileges and allowed them much leniency the first two weeks, and apparently the strikers thought it indicated weaknesses. They forgot that the soldiers were present to shoot if necessary. The condition, therefore, reached an acute stage of development on Monday, the twenty-ninth. Between five and seven the city was the scene of the wildest disorder, car windows were smashed, wires cut, women knocked down and kicked and many people hurt by flying missels. The demonstration was participated in by several thousands of the strikers and was apparently well organized and seemingly had leaders. Most of the trouble occurred away from the mill district and the soldiers. Frequently, however, the mob made a demonstration against them, but the latter kept cool. The ice was pretty thin at times, however, and more than once a squad or company threw a cartridge from the magazine into the barrel of their rifles upon the command of the officer in charge. The click of the bolt as the cartridge was thrown into the chamber sounded so ominously significant to the mob that they each time backed away. Rioting continued throughout the day by the inflamed multitude of frenzied aliens, with blind fury. The soldiers, police and detectives had a hard time of it but by night had restored order. One woman had been shot and killed, a policeman stabbed and many injured, twenty-four electric cars demolished and many windows smashed and other property destroyed. It was a new experience for Massachusetts and public sentiment which up to now seemed to be with the strikers, changed abruptly and demanded that the enemies of the state be stamped out.

Three or more persons on the street would be considered a crowd and everyone was advised to [stay off the streets.] Tuesday morning they found a sentry on every corner and patrols on every street. The strikers resented this and trouble ensued. One crowd of several hundred gathered about five A.M. on White Street in the Syrian quarter. A squad

of soldiers ordered them to disperse but instead of doing so they commenced throwing ice and rocks. Windows on both sides of the street were opened and a fusillade of coal, sticks, tin cans, and even iron window weights reigned down upon the soldiers. Something had to be done, and done quick. The order to charge bayonets was given and into the crowd the little squad went. They drove back the crowd but in doing so one man was killed. The law was maintained and order was restored throughout the city. So well has the militia performed its duty that no outbreaks have since occurred. This is because the strikers have not had a chance to get together to start anything. Hundreds of operators began to return to work when they found it was safe to do so, and at the end of two weeks about one-half of the help were back in the mills.

During the fourth week of the strike four people were found murdered in a house on Valley street and no clue to the murder could be found. While these murders could in no way be traced to the strike it tends to show the lawlessness which existed in the city. On the same night a stick of sixty per cent dynamite with cap attached was hurled over a passing freight train at a squad of soldiers. The dynamite landed in a snow bank and did not explode.

The cost to the Commonwealth has been great, the militia has cost in the vicinity of \$4,000 a day, but the fact that they succeeded in keeping down violence after they took over the entire city, thus saving millions of dollars' worth of property, indicates that the outlay is attaining its result. It is hoped that a settlement may be reached before this article appears. Meanwhile the military force is gradually being reduced. At this writing, however, it is quite certain that if it were entirely withdrawn trouble would at once break out again.

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Walter Merriam Pratt, who contributes this article on the strike situation in Lawrence is a First Lieutenant of the Eighth Regiment and Battalion Adjutant on Colonel Sweetser's staff. He went to Lawrence the day the trouble broke out and remained on duty until relieved at the end of twenty-six days.

Mr. Pratt's new book, "Tin Soldiers?" which deals with the militia, from various standpoints, is in the hands of the printer at the present time and will be out the last of March.

## Introduction

This article, written in a pro-labor newspaper, offers an account of the final settlement of the strike. The strikers were victorious; however, they had to accept a compromise with the owners. They did not receive their specific demands. At the time this article was written, Giovannitti and Ettor were still in prison. They would only be released in November after a two-month trial when a Salem, Massachusetts jury acquitted them of the charges of being accessories to the murder of Annie LoPezzo. [Spelled Lo Pizzo in the document.]

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## From The Battlefield: Lawrence

After nine weeks of continuous, aggressive man-to-man fighting, finally the battle has been won in a way quite satisfying to the strikers. The owners of the factories had to comprehend that fighting against the strikers, directed by the organizers of the I.W.W., was like colliding with a mountain of metal; they had to comprehend that their adversaries were [men] of many actions and few words and that therefore it was better to surrender.

They comforted themselves with the idea that they were dealing with a shapeless mass, ignorant, unaware of their very state; but they had to undeceive themselves when they saw the resolute attitude of the strikers who were ready for any sacrifice in order to obtain the laurels of victory. They [the owners] had sworn that they would never have anything to do with the powerful workers' organization, the Industrial Workers of the World; but after nine weeks of continuous fighting, they had to bow down before the I.W.W., because that is what the force of the strikers wanted. And so, this demonstrated that the people can do anything when they put their minds to it, and that against their firm, resolute will, laws, armed force, established powers and everything else that a government can arrange are powerless.

In fact, what was the point of stamping on constitutional rights and laws; assassinating two unhappy members of the population (Anna Lo Pizzo and the young Syrian Remy); planting dynamite to put the strikers in a compromising position; beating innocent women and children; putting the city in a state of siege, filling the prisons with strikers and their leaders; having the city of Lawrence become the Moscow of the United States; torturing the strikers in prison with the Russian system; reducing the finances of the city to the extremes; compromising those that have the upper hand in front of the whole world; insanely spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and committing many other disgraceful, cowardly acts? The enemy still had to go to Canossa [figuratively meaning to humble oneself],[A] still had to settle the strike with those of the Industrial Workers of the World, that is, with those whom they absolutely swore never to have anything to do with.

The owners of the factories are just realizing that those who ate their money, (newspapers run by riotous people and ex-pimps; colonial low-life that advances always by intrigues, betrayals, humiliations and crimes, plagues and abuses of every nation; spies, policemen, judicial machines who did everything imaginable, etc..., etc..) what I'm

saying is that they realized only now that all of this social refuse did not have any power or superiority over the strikers and they had to be virtuous out of necessity.

The victory of the Lawrence strikers also meant victory for an additional three hundred thousand workers of other localities. The owners of the factories have understood that other workers would have followed the example of those from Lawrence and therefore they tried to anticipate a very disastrous movement for them. . .

The strongest enemy, the American Woolen Company, held the last conference with the Strikers Committee on the ninth day of the month in the Boston State House. The company offered a wage increase ranging from a 5% increase for the higher wages up to 22% for the lower ones and a quarter [extra pay] for overtime.

The premium system was cut in half. Everyone has to be rehired without exception, without taking any account of their attitude during the strike.

At the time of this writing, only the Everett, Pacific, and Arlington Mills had not associated with the settlement of the American Woolen Company and therefore it was decided to continue the strike in these factories which will eventually be obligated to surrender, like it or not.


In the afternoon of the eleventh day of the month, a mass meeting of the strikers was held in the park in spite of the mayor and all the other authorities who remained disheartened by the victory reported by the strikers. "Big Bill" (W.D. Haywood) [a leader of the Industrial Workers of the World] and the other organizers communicated to the strikers everything that had been obtained from the owners, asking them if they intended to return to work. The strikers accepted, although reluctantly, promising to resume the strike in two weeks if Ettore, Giovannitti and all the other prisoners jailed because of the strike were not released.

Bouquets of white carnations and roses were offered to Ettore, Giovannitti, Big Bill and others by the strikers. The jailers did not promise that the flowers offered by the strikers would reach the two prisoners, so it was decided to lay those flowers on the graves of the two victims of the police and militia, the Italian Anna Lo Pizzo and the Syrian Remy.

In the meantime we wait to see if the authorities will be wise and liberate the champions of the strikers and all the other prisoners.

# STRIKE

## Quash The Indictment Against Ettor & Giovannitti



### The Spirit of Lincoln

Fellow Workers - Citizens - Comrades

Do not let the Capitalist Editors befog the present situation for you. In the present disclosures revealing the Dynamite Planting by the Contemptible WOOD and his Gang of Hirelings, do not forget the real motive of the PLANT. Capitalist Editors say it was to discredit the strikers- that was only part of it- the bigger motive was TO GET EXCUSE TO ARREST ETTOR AND GIOVANNITTI. The Dynamite Planter was sent to plant the dynamite in Ettor's headquarters- only his unfamiliarity with the building caused it to be left on the other side of the partition in the cobbler's shop.

This was a week before Ettor and Giovannitti were arrested for murder. When one PLANT failed- the dastardly crew put up another. They started the disturbances that led to the killing of Anna LaPizzo. The whole thing is now exposed.

Innocent men have spent 8 months in jail. Demand an IMMEDIATE special session of the court and the quashing of the indictment against Ettor and Giovannitti.

And furthermore demand of Governor Foss and your state government a thoro investigation of the conduct of Judge Mahoney, Judge Brown and Dist. Attorney Attwill who are accused of "white-washing" and shielding these criminals of wealth. Demand these things- and DEMAND THEM NOW.

If Ettor and Giovannitti are not released from jail by September 30, all the workers, whether organized or unorganized ARE URGED TO STRIKE until these innocent union men are released.

Ettor-Giovannitti Defence Committee,  
Central Bldg. Lawrence, Mass.

Flyer distributed in Lawrence, September 1912  
*Courtesy of the American Textile History Museum*



Giovannitti and Ettore returned to Lawrence after their acquittal on all charges  
*Courtesy of George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, #1426*