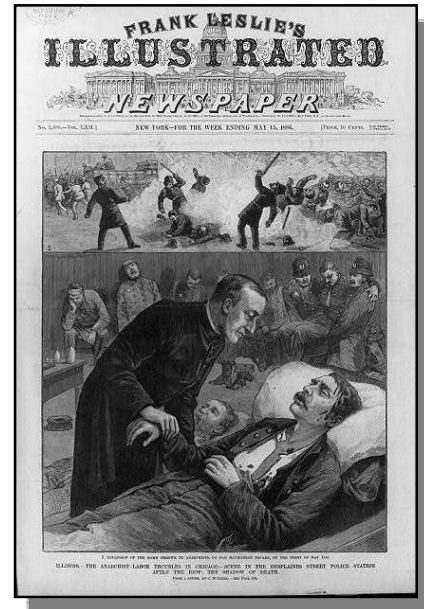


The Primary Sources

Primary Source Document 1

Source Information: A cover for Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, May 15, 1886. It depicts the explosion of the bomb in Haymarket Square and a priest giving the last rites to a policeman. The caption reads: "Scene in the Desplaines Street police station -- After the riot: the shadow of death." Library of Congress, Prints and Photos Division, LC-USZ62-75191.



Primary Source Document 2

Source Information: An illustration in Harper's Weekly, May 15, 1886, that was supposedly drawn from sketches and photos. Its caption reads: "The Anarchist Riot in Chicago - A Dynamite Bomb exploding among the police." Reports of the incident indicate the anarchist speaker had actually stepped down when the bomb was thrown. Most of the dead died of gunshot wounds. Library of Congress, Prints and Photos Division, Hay.LC-USZ62-796.



Primary Source Document 3

Source Information: A letter by Albert Parsons published in *The Alarm*, August 11, 1888, after Parsons had already been executed. Parsons was from an old New England family. He grew up in the South and fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War. After the war, he changed his mind about the South, slavery and much else. He and his wife Lucy moved to Chicago where both became active in the labor movement, in socialist parties and in key anarchist groups. By the time of the Haymarket incident, Parsons was one of the best-known anarchist organizers in Chicago.

"There is no evidence that I or any of us killed, or had anything to do with the killing of, policemen at the Haymarket. None at all. But it was proven clearly that we were all of us anarchists, socialists, communists, Knights of Labor, unionists. It was proven that three of us were editors of labor papers; that five of us were labor organizers and speakers at workingmen's mass meetings. They, this class court, jury, law and verdict, have decided that we must be put to death because, as they say, we are "leaders" of men who denounce and battle against oppression, slaveries, robbery and influences of monopolists. Of these crimes against the capitalist class they found us guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, and, so finding, they have sentenced us."

Primary Source Document 4

Source Information: Carl Sandburg, *Always the Young Strangers* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1952), pp. 132-33. Sandburg was not himself an anarchist at any time. In this passage, he recalls from a distance of many years the mood in Chicago in 1886.

"Then came the murder trial of the eight men and we saw in the Chicago papers black-and-white drawings of their faces and they looked exactly like what we expected, hard, mean, slimy faces. We saw pictures of the twelve men on the jury and they looked like what we expected, nice, honest, decent faces. We learned the word for the men on trial, anarchists, and they hated the rich and called policemen 'bloodhounds.' They were not regular people and they didn't belong to the human race, for they seemed more like slimy animals who prowl, sneak, and kill in the dark. This I believed along with millions of other people reading and talking about the trial."

Primary Source Document 5

Source Information: From the statement by Haymarket defendant Oscar Neebe just before his sentencing. Neebe was not condemned to die. Instead he was sentenced to the State Penitentiary at Joliet at hard labor for a term of fifteen years.

"We Socialists hope such times [as the violence of the French Revolution] may never come again; we do everything in our power to prevent it by, reducing the hours of labor and increasing wages. But

you capitalists won't allow this to be done. You use your power to perpetuate a system by which you make your money for yourselves and keep the wage-workers poor. You make them ignorant and miserable, and you are responsible for it. You won't let the toilers live a decent life.

"We want to educate the masses and keep them back from destroying life and property, but we are not able to hold the masses when starvation brings them out of their holes like rats. I have walked along the streets of this city and I have seen the rats come from their holes by the hundreds in the basements, where they pay five and ten cents for lodgings. I have seen the miserable wretches lying there in the day begging for a piece of bread, and in the night they lie there in an air that nobody hardly could live in. I have been in there at 10, 12, and 2 o'clock at night, and when those rats are let out of their holes once and get desperate I would not like to be near them. The time will come that you will see them. You rich men don't want the workingmen educated. You don't want anybody to be educated. You want to keep them down in the mud so you can squeeze the last drop of blood out of their bones."

Primary Source Document 6

Source Information: Albert Parsons on dynamite, from *The Famous Speeches of the Eight Chicago Anarchists in Court* (2d ed, Chicago: Lucy E. Parsons, 1910), p. 82.

"It [dynamite] is the equilibrium. It is the annihilator. It is the disseminator of power. It is the downfall of oppression. It is the abolition of authority; it is the dawn of peace; it is the end of war, because war cannot exist unless there is somebody to make war upon, and dynamite makes that unsafe, undesirable and absolutely impossible. It is a peace-maker; it is man's best friend; it emancipates the world from the domineering of the few over the many, because all government, in the last resort, is violence; all law, in the last resort, is force."

Primary Source Document 7

Source Information: George Schilling in a letter to Albert Parson's wife Lucy, December 1, 1893, Schilling Papers. Schilling was a long-time Chicago-based union organizer, a member of many labor organizations and socialist political parties, and a leader of the defense association for the Haymarket anarchists.

"At Waldheim sleep five men - among them your beloved husband - who died in the hope that their execution might accelerate the emancipation of the world. Blessed be their memories and may future generations do full justice to their courage and motives, but I do not believe that the time will ever come when the judgment of an enlightened world will say that their methods were wise or correct. They worshipped at the shrine of force; wrote it and preached it; until finally they were overpowered by their own Gods and slain in their own temple."