

**LESSON WRITER:** Jennifer Frieman

**DATE:** November 2010

**COURSE/GRADE:** High School U.S. History and Government

**UNIT:** The Gilded Age

**LESSON TITLE:** The Great Railroad Strike of 1877: Were the Strikers Justified?

**TIME NEEDED:** One to Two 45-minute class periods

**LESSON OVERVIEW:**

Students will use historical newspaper accounts of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 to evaluate whether B&O Railroad workers had good cause to strike and whether the actions they took in protest were justified. Students will consider the issue of perspective when evaluating newspaper accounts, as well as legal, moral and ethical modes of protest in a democratic society.

**OUTCOMES:** At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- analyze and evaluate newspaper accounts as primary sources
- identify and evaluate the B&O Railroad's reasons for cutting wages in 1877
- identify and evaluate railroad workers' reasons for striking
- identify and evaluate the methods railroad workers used to protest

**OBJECTIVES:**

**Focus Question for the Lesson:** Were B&O Railroad workers' reasons for striking and methods of protest during the Great Strike of 1877 justifiable?

**Maryland State Curriculum Content Objectives:**

High School U.S. History

5.1.3.a Evaluate the impact of industrialization and laissez-faire policies on workers, such as the National Labor Union, Knights of Labor, American Federation of Labor, and the impact of events, such as the Haymarket Riot, Homestead Strike, and the Pullman Strike

5.1.3.b Evaluate the impact of industrialization on regional development, settlement patterns and quality of life

High School U.S. Government

2.C.3.a Describe the purpose, limitations, and impact of executive orders in maintaining order and providing safety for citizens

2.C.3.d Analyze the relationship between governmental authority and maintaining order under the rule of law

2.C.3.g Evaluate the role of state and national governments concerning issues related to public safety and maintaining order, such as crime prevention, changes in driver's license requirements, seat belt laws, and immunization shots (Unit 6)

## **MATERIALS:**

- Copies of Primary Sources A-E – 1 per student
- Worksheets – 1 per student
  - Note-taking: Modern Protests
  - Was the Strike Justified?
  - Were the Strikers' Actions Justified?
- Transparencies or Digital Images of each Primary Source
- LCD Projector & Powerpoint or Document Camera or Overhead Projector for modeling activity

## **PRIMARY SOURCES:**

**Source A:** Announcement of Wage Cuts by the B&O Railroad, July 11, 1877. From the Collections of the B&O Railroad Museum.

**Source B:** "Cause of the Strike and a Remedy," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 23, 1877, page 4.

**Source C:** "The Railroad Strike," *The (Martinsburg) Statesman*, July 24, 1877.

**Source D:** "The Firemen's Strikes," *The (Albany) Argus*, July 21, 1877.

**Source E:** "The Great [railroad] Strike [Pittsburgh, Pa. 1877]: Burning of offices and machine shops, PRR; Burning and sacking freight trains, PRR; and mob outside James Bown & Son gunworks," *Harper's Weekly*, August 11, 1877.

## **SELECTED VOCABULARY:**

- firemen
- justifiable
- primary source
- strike

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **MOTIVATION**

Several days to a week before teaching this lesson, ask students to browse the newspaper or surf the internet for homework and clip/print an article that describes a group exercising its right to protest. The article could describe citizens protesting government policy, workers protesting the actions of an employer, a minority group protesting infringements of its civil liberties, etc. Allow students several days to complete this assignment, as protest articles may not appear every day in newspapers.

On the day of the lesson, put students into groups of four. Have students summarize their articles for the other members of their groups. Students should record each group members' information on the Worksheet titled "Note-taking: Modern Protests." Their summaries should include the following information: What group was protesting? Who was the target of their protest? What issue were they protesting? What were they trying to achieve through protesting? What methods of protest did they use? Were they successful in achieving their goals? (This may not be answerable.) After all students in the group have shared their articles, ask students to have a brief discussion to decide which group's "cause" or protest issue was most valid or justifiable. Also ask them to decide which group's protest methods were the best.

Reconvene as a class, and ask each group to explain which protest issue and protest methods they selected and why. After all groups have shared, ask students what makes a protest justifiable. Then ask students what makes a protest method justifiable. If they don't go in this direction on their own, ask them to consider issues of legality, morality, and ethics. Have them name a few protest methods that they think are justifiable and a few that they think are not.

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### **Guided Practice:**

Tell students that civil protest has been a major theme in American history since the colonists protested British abuses and ended up declaring independence. Explain that labor protests began to occur in significant numbers in the second half of the nineteenth century with the rapid industrialization of the United States. Applying the maxim of "strength in numbers," workers began to unite and work together to protest abuses inflicted by companies who, at that time, operated under very few government regulations concerning their treatment of laborers.

In 1877, a railroad strike began in Baltimore among workers for the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad and spread quickly to railroads throughout the nation. The strike became violent, and the federal government eventually intervened with troops. Tell students that they will be examining primary sources -- primarily newspaper accounts -- of the Great Strike of 1877 to evaluate whether the strikers were justified in striking and whether the methods they employed to protest were justifiable and reasonable.

Tell students that they will continue to work in their groups of four and will first examine workers' reasons for protesting as well as the railroad's position. Distribute primary sources A-C and the Worksheet titled "Was the Strike Justified?", one per student. Direct the students to analyze each of the three sources and jot down any issues the strikers were protesting and any explanations of the railroad's position. Model this activity by completing the worksheet for Source A as a class.

#### **Independent Practice:**

Direct students to analyze Sources B and C in their groups to complete the worksheet.

Once students have completed the analysis, reconvene as a class. To review what they have learned from the readings, assign half of the groups to represent the perspective of the railroad owners and the other half to represent the perspective of the railroad workers. First, ask the “railroad owners” to articulate their reasons for cutting wages. Next, ask the “railroad workers” to explain why the wage cut was not acceptable and why they felt the need to strike. By asking probing questions of both groups, encourage the two groups to respond to each other’s statements and engage in an informal debate of sorts. Finally, end the simulation, and ask: Were the railroad workers justified in striking? Were their grievances legitimate? Were the railroad companies treating the workers unfairly?

Tell students that they should now set aside the issue of whether the strike was justified to consider whether the workers’ methods of striking were justified. Were the actions the strikers took to voice their protest legitimate and defensible? To help illuminate this question, students will reexamine Primary Sources B&C, this time reading to identify and evaluate the strikers’ actions. Then they will explore new Primary Sources D&E. As students identify each action taken by the strikers, have them list it on the Worksheet titled “Were the Strikers’ Actions Justified?” They should also note the source in which each particular action was found, and they should put a check mark next to those actions that they deem acceptable or justifiable.

Once all groups have finished their analysis, conduct a class discussion to evaluate the methods the protestors employed during the strike. Which actions seem reasonable? Which seem unnecessary, immoral, or unethical? Were any of the actions illegal? Ask students to predict whether the strikers were successful in forcing the railroad to meet their demands.

Explain that the strike rapidly escalated in violence and the numbers of people involved. As militias and National Guard units were called out to put down the strike, street battles ensued in Baltimore, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, and Reading, PA. Striking railroad workers were joined by mobs of angry men unemployed in other industries as they halted rail traffic, destroyed engines and rail cars, and burned railroad buildings, including part of Baltimore’s Camden Station. Numerous rioters and militia men were killed and wounded. The strike finally ended when, after more than a month of violence, President Rutherford B. Hayes ordered federal troops to suppress the riots.

Although the strikers’ demands were not met, the strike had lasting impact on labor. Unions sprang up more and more quickly across many industries, and strikes became more frequent and successful. Companies strongly resisted the organization of labor, and states enacted measures to help squash any future uprisings, such as new militia units and the creation of conspiracy laws. The stand-off between workers and business owners only fueled the continued growth of the labor movement, and the rest of the nineteenth century was a period of intense labor conflicts. Ultimately, the B&O Railroad did make some concessions to its workers. In 1880, the railroad created the Baltimore & Ohio Employees’ Relief Association, which provided benefits to sick and injured employees, as well as death benefits, and in 1884, the B&O became the first major company to offer a pension plan.

Before moving on to the assessment, take a moment to help the students evaluate newspapers as primary sources. Point out to them that newspapers can be considered primary or secondary

sources depending upon the nature of the article and the way in which the newspaper is being used. Propose this question to generate discussion: Is a newspaper article from over a century ago in which the reporter who was not actually on-site describes the strike by compiling information provided to him (see Source D) a primary or a secondary source?

Next, ask students to consider the strengths and deficiencies of newspapers as primary sources. [Possible strengths: a compilation of a vast amount of information from multiple sources in a single place, a snapshot of what the society considered most important, can use a series of issues to track how an event unfolded over time; Possible weaknesses: difficult to find the “emotional” piece of the story; usually impossible to hear the perspective of a single individual; newspapers have editorial policies that may slant coverage.] Draw special attention to the fact that news coverage is rarely truly as objective as it purports to be. News coverage is shaped by the news agencies editorial stances as well as by individual reporters’ interests and biases.

### **ASSESSMENT:**

Students will imagine that they are on the editorial board of one of a newspaper covering the Great Strike of 1877. Ask students to write an editorial for publication in the paper that assesses the strike. Students may comment on whatever aspect of the strike they wish – the reasonableness of the strikers’ demands, the financial conditions of the railroads, the strikers’ actions, the intervention by government troops, the involvement of mobs of people not affiliated with the railroads, etc. They may side with the strikers or the railroads or with neither. The editorials should support its positions with factual information gleaned from the Primary Sources read.

### **CLOSURE/EXIT SLIP:**

Ask students to respond to the following prompt on their exit slip: “If I had been living in Baltimore at the time of the Strike of 1877, my reaction would have been . . .”

### **LESSON EXTENSIONS:**

- Take students to both the B&O Railroad Museum and the Irish Railroad Workers Museum to learn more about work on the railroads and the people who performed it.
- In response to the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, the U.S. government deployed U.S. troops to quell the violence and disperse the strikers. The U.S. Constitution grants the President this and other powers in the case of domestic insurrection. Explore these special powers, and evaluate whether the federal government should have interceded in the Strike of 1877.
- Ask students to identify an issue that they would like to protest and design a protest campaign that will responsibly and effectively achieve their goals. Students can choose an issue that affects their community, the nation, or simply their school.

## NOTE-TAKING: MODERN PROTESTS

	ARTICLE 1	ARTICLE 2	ARTICLE 3	ARTICLE 4
What group was protesting?				
Who was the target of their protest?				
What issue were they protesting?				
What were they trying to achieve through protest?				
What methods did they use to protest?				
Were they successful in achieving their goals?				

PUT A CHECK MARK NEXT TO THE "CAUSE" WAS MOST VALID OR JUSTIFIABLE  
 PUT A STAR NEXT TO THE MOST APPROPRIATE PROTEST METHODS.

## **WAS THE STRIKE JUSTIFIED?**

DIRECTIONS: Read Primary Sources A-C and list each of the workers' grievances and reasons for striking in the first column and each of the railroad's justifications for the wage cuts in the second column.

	<b>WORKERS' PERSPECTIVE</b>	<b>RAILROAD'S PERSPECTIVE</b>
<b>SOURCE A</b>		
<b>SOURCE B</b>		
<b>SOURCE C</b>		



## PRIMARY SOURCE A

# Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company,

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

*Baltimore, July 11th, 1877.*

*To the Officers and Employees of the  
Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company:*

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, held this day, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

*WHEREAS—The depression in the general business interests of the country continues, thus seriously affecting the usual earnings of railway companies, and rendering a further reduction of expenses necessary; therefore, be it*

*RESOLVED—That a reduction of ten per cent. be made in the present compensation of all officers and employees, of every grade, in the service of the Company, where the amount received exceeds one dollar per day, to take effect on and after July 16th, instant.*

*RESOLVED—That the said reduction shall apply to the Main Stem and Branches east of the Ohio River, and to the Trans-Ohio Divisions, and that it shall embrace all roads leased or operated by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.*

*It is hoped and believed that all persons in the service of the Company will appreciate the necessity of, and concur cordially in, this action.*

The Board postponed action until some time after its great competitors, the Pennsylvania, New York Central and Hudson River, and New York and Erie Companies, had made general and similar reductions in pay, with the hope that business would so improve that this necessity would be obviated. In this they have been disappointed.

The President, in announcing the decision of the Board, takes occasion to express the conviction and expectation that every officer and man in the service will cheerfully recognize the necessity of the reduction, and earnestly co-operate in every measure of judicious economy, necessary to aid in maintaining effectively the usefulness and success of the Company.

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President.

From the Collection of the B&O Railroad Museum.

## **PRIMARY SOURCE A TRANSCRIPTION**

[BAL]T]IMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD COMPANY,  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.  
BALTIMORE,  
July 11, 1877.

[To the ] Officers and employees of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad company:  
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*JOHN W. GARRETT, President*

From the Collection of the B&O Railroad Museum.

## **PRIMARY SOURCE B**

### Cause of the Strike and a Remedy

The railroad strike in the East has reached the dimensions of a civil war, with its accompanying horrors of murder, conflagration, rapine and pillage. Before this condition becomes general, and the flames kindled at Baltimore and Pittsburgh spread through all the railroad centers in the country, it will be well to consider this matter reflectively, and see if there is not a remedy. There are two sides to every question. The railroad strikers are to blame for much, but not for all. For their acts of unnecessary and brutal violence, for their murder of militiamen and legal officials who were only fulfilling their sworn duty in trying to preserve public property and freight, for their burning of warehouses, cars and depots, for their pillage of store, The Tribune has no words except of severe condemnation. It has no sympathy with mob violence or mob rule.

Now let us look at the other side and see if there is not something to be condemned. During the past two years railroad companies have found their business shrinking up. Prices have fallen off. Freights have been reduced. Stocks have had their values squeezed out of them. They have been unable to pay dividends to their stockholders, rents for their hired roads, or interest on their bonds. The result has been that they have suffered from the effects of the general depression even more than other branches and scores of them have gone into bankruptcy. At this crisis of their affairs, when prudence, judgment, and conservatism were needed in the management, they have enormously aggravated their troubles by entering upon a frantic, reckless, cut-throat competition with each other, by which they have cut down the rates of moving the products and merchandise of the country to the bare cost in many cases of running the trains. The amount received for one train load of freight has scarcely paid for the wages and coal, and left nothing for repairs, wear and tear, capital and other charges. It has been a war of competition to the knife and the knife to the hilt. Combinations and compacts have been made only to be broken, almost the next instant. The Western crosscut bankrupt roads have maintained a Panic faith. They have broken every engagement. They have involved other lines in the conflict, and even the great trunk lines have not maintained their scales of rates, but, actuated by the same insanity as the rest, have engaged in the mad and disastrous work of trying to steal each other's profitless business. The great water highways from the head of Lakes Superior and Michigan to the mouths of the St. Lawrence and of the Hudson have also engaged in the same reckless work, and freight has been carried below cost to increase or retain business. The railroads have not only competed with each other destructively, but have also sought to cut off the business and steal the freight of the water-courses. This miserable process of throat-cutting has been going on for two years, and has been intensified during the past six months, until the transportation business has been plunged into utter confusion, and a crisis has come. Having destroyed their profits, to save themselves from still greater losses — if not to save their actual property — these companies have fallen upon their employees and razed their already two-or-three-times-reduced wages down to the starvation line. Trackmen, switchmen, and laborers who load and unload trains are cut down to \$1, and in some cases to 90 cents per day; brakemen and firemen to \$1.35; and

engineers to \$1.50. These men, in the majority of cases, are married, and have wives and children to support, and house rent to pay; and they claim, with truth, that it is a physical impossibility to live upon such wages. They ask, with pertinent force, if they receive \$9 per week, and have to pay \$6 per week for their own meals while on the road, how are they to pay rent and feed and clothe their families on what is left. As they cannot do it, they refuse to starve, and resist. One blow has brought on another, and the fire has rapidly spread through the combustible material.

The strikers are not only in a war with their employers, but with another class back of them,—the men whom the roads have heretofore discharged for want of work, who are living upon odds and ends and charity, and are in a desperate condition. With these wholly starved men, who are willing to take the places of the strikers, even at starvation prices, the half-starved men are at deadly war.

It adds to the exasperation of the strikers that they have discovered that the new scale of wages is lower than the general average of wages of mechanics in cognate departments of business where no danger exists. This has added fuel to the flames. As all the elements of exasperation have increased, so have the ranks of the strikers have been swelled by accessions of idle and discontented men from other branches of business, by tramps who have come in from the country, by the Communists, and by thieves and the riff-raff of the cities, who see in these uprisings of what is called "labor against capital" their golden opportunities for plunder and escape the confusion. . .

*The Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 23, 1877, page 4.

## **PRIMARY SOURCE C**

### **The Railroad Strike.**

#### **Full Particulars**

For sometime past there has existed among the employees of the B. & O. railroad a feeling of bitterness against the Company, growing out of the suspicion that the numerous reductions in their wages within the past year or two have been the result of mere greediness and selfishness on the part of the management of the road, having no reference whatever to diminutions in its earnings. These suspicions were not superficial or groundless. In the last report of President Garrett of the earnings of the road there appears to be the usual balance over and above expenses, and he took occasion in that report to congratulate the Directory upon the immensity of business that had been done in the previous twelve months. So far then as actual decrease in the earnings of the road was concerned, we have the testimony of Mr. Garrett that they were entirely satisfactory. No appreciative falling off could be discerned. Almost immediately, however, after that report appeared in the newspapers of Baltimore a reduction of the wages of all train hands, including engineers and employees in the shops along the line of the road was ordered. This the employees submitted to without a murmur. Hardly had this order gone into effect before it was superseded by another, still further reducing their wages, as if it was the purpose of the company to thumbscrew its employees by degrees. This further reduction was as cheerfully submitted to as the other, because it still afforded the means of subsistence with the practice of severe economy. Thus matters remained until Monday last, when another order of reduction went into effect, putting wages down to the starvation point. This last turn of the thumbscrew the employees determined to resist and it culminated in a general strike of the firemen and brakemen throughout the four divisions of the road. On Monday night last these train hands with their convoys arrived at Martinsburg, and refused to go further and the trains as each arrived were run upon the sidings and stopped. The whole procedure was quietly accomplished. The interruption however created a buzz of excitement throughout the town. Maj. A. P. Shutt, the mayor, was appealed to interfere and he endeavored to persuade the employees to pass on with their trains, but this appeal was a vain one. Failing in this he ordered the police to make arrests, but this was found to be impossible. The railroad authorities having been apprised of the condition of affairs appealed to Gov. Mathews, who seeming to have lost his head, ordered Col. C. J. Faulkner Jr., to assemble his company and protect any of the train men who were willing to proceed with their trains. . .

. . . What followed the orders of the governor we take from the report in the Balt. *Sun* of Wednesday last.

Martinsburg, W. Va.  
July 17th, 1877.

On Monday night when it was found that not less than twenty cars loaded with live stock had been stopped by the refusal of the striking firemen to allow them to pass, telegrams were sent to Baltimore giving the railroad company's officials notification of the situation. As stated in the dispatched of yesterday the mayor, Maj. A. P. Shutt, was appealed to and he used every endeavor to quiet the outbreak and relieve the embargo, but was overpowered and obliged to give it up.

Gov. Mathews, of West Virginia was then appealed to, and he, at about midnight, Monday sent the necessary orders for the intervention by the local militia of Martinsburg.

Colonel C. J. Faulkner, Captain of the Berkeley Light Infantry, of Martinsburg had his company in ranks at five o'clock this morning in obedience to the order of the Governor of West Virginia, who telegraphed the night before the render all necessary assistance and see that the men who were willing to run trains were not interfered with. In the meantime another attempt had been made to send out a freight train, but the fireman was taken off and the train halted. The military company was marched down to the railroad, in front of the train-dispatcher's office, to clear the way for all trains desiring to pass. As a precautionary step, and to avoid if possible any collision or serious difficulty, Capt. Faulkner made a very sympathetic speech to those who were engaged in the obstructive proceedings. He kindly and temperately endeavored to persuade the strikers not to longer resist the passage of the trains. To those appeals the crowd turned a deaf ear, and then, finding it was useless to reason with them further he read to the assemblage the Governor's orders. At the same time he made a statement of his duty as he understood it, and ordered the company to load their pieces and resist any attempt made to stop the trains.

The militia company was deployed on both sides of a train which was about starting, an engineer and fireman having volunteered to work. As the train reached the switch one of the strikers, William Vandergriff, seized the switch ball to run the train on the side of the track. John Poisal, a member of the militia company, jumped from the pilot of the engine and attempted to replace the switch so that the train should go on. Vandergriff fired two shots at Poisal, one causing a slight flesh wound in the side of the head. Poisal returned the fire, shooting Vandergriff through the hip. Several other shots were fired at Vandergriff, striking him in the hand and arm.

When the firing was heard a very large crowd of railroaders and citizens collected, and the feeling became intense. The volunteering engineer and fireman ran off as soon as the shooting commenced. Capt. Faulkner then made the statement that he had performed his duty, and if the trainmen deserted their post he could do nothing more. The company was therefore marched to its armory and temporarily dismissed.

Vandergriff is lying in a dangerous condition in consequence of his wounds. One of his arms had to be amputated.

Thomas R. Sharp, master of transportation, Frank Mantz, supervisor of trains, and several other of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad officials are here making every possible effort to conciliate the strikers and to move the trains, especially the live stock train, in which the poor animals are suffering very much from the excessive heat. Up to 6 P. M., no freight trains have moved either east or west, and the strikers show no signs of receding from their position. *The trouble, however, seemed to be confined to a number of men from Baltimore, some of them in no way connected with the railroad.* Very few of the railroad company's employees residing in Martinsburg have engaged in the obstructive resistance, but there seems to be no doubt that the strike will become general.

All passenger and mail trains have been allowed to pass unobstructed, only the freight trains being embargoed. The idea in this is to avoid amenability to the laws of the United States for

obstructing the mails. *No damage has been done to the property of the railroad company or attempted. The men engaged in the strike say they do not mean to molest any person. All they ask is a living compensation for their labor. They say that at the present prices the firemen cannot pay their daily expenses, much less support their families.*

*The (Martinsburg) Statesman, July 24, 1877.*

# PRIMARY SOURCE D



## THE FIREMEN'S STRIKES.

They are Spreading in all Directions.

The Baltimore and Ohio—The Firemen of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Road Likewise Strike—Strikes on Three Divisions of the Erie—Threatening Movement at St. Louis—Additional Troops Called Out in Pennsylvania and Ohio—Incendiarism.

BALTIMORE, July 20.—George Zepp, who so courageously volunteered to take charge of the engine at Martinsburg, is a brother of the ring-leader of the strikers. Commercial interests, especially the oil trade, suffer by the railroad strike. In order to fill engagements starting early next week for European transportation, the blockades must be immediately broken.

KEYSER, July 20.—The strikers are the force here and the dozen United States troops that came up on the freight train are powerless.

GRAFTON, W. Va., July 20.—The strikers have resolved to send assistance to their comrades at Keyser. The strikers here are over 100 strong, and entirely beyond the control of the civil authorities. The telegraph wires have not been cut at any point between Martinsburg and Wheeling. The operators among the strikers have tapped the wires to get information.

BALTIMORE, July 20.—The first west-bound train yesterday was met at Cumberland by several hundred roughs, probably canal men. They opened the switch and the locomotive was thrown from the track. Col. French has instructed the troops to protect the trains at all hazards.

KEYSER, W. Va., July 20.—Freight trains are arriving from Martinsburg. As they come in the firemen are taken off. Thirteen soldiers came with the first train.

WASHINGTON, July 20.—The 8 o'clock train which left this morning for the west, was accompanied by a military guard. Up to 9 o'clock no disturbances were reported on the line.

MARTINSBURG, W. Va., July 20.—Fireman Zepp was slightly injured by the attack on the train at St. John's Run. The assault was probably made by canal boatmen who have been in the habit of riding on freight trains, which privilege was denied them on that train. Torpedoes were placed on the track near Keyser, but could do no damage.

WHEELING, W. Va., July 20.—The men who came from Steubenville, to fill the places of the strikers, were warned off. The strikers are quiet but determined.

COLUMBUS, O., July 20.—At Newark large crowds are awaiting the arrival of troops, but no violence is offered. Several attempts have been made to get trains out without success. Two companies of militia will proceed to-night to Newark from here, and two companies are expected there from Mount Vernon and Zanesville.

The Pan Handle officials authorize the statement that no attempt has been made to interfere with the movement of either freight and passenger trains on the Pan Handle road, and not a man has struck.

It is feared that the men on the Indianapolis division of the Pan Handle will quit work at 12 o'clock to-night.

BALTIMORE, July 20.—The depot at Camden station is afire, and it is said the railroad office has been cleaned out. The telegraph office in the depot building has been destroyed, the wires cut and the instruments removed.

LATER.—The fire at the depot at Camden station has been extinguished with but little damage. The telegraph office cleaned out was the dispatcher's office on the station platform, and not the office in the main building. All the Baltimore and Ohio wires have been cut.

KEYSER, W. Va., July 20.—George Zepp, the fireman on the first train from Martinsburg, yesterday, was taken from the train here and the strikers fired on the train, which brought up the first detachment of troops; and one of the train hands was slightly wounded.

BALTIMORE, July 20.—At ten o'clock the dispatcher's house at the lower end of the depot was fired and totally burned. The depot was also badly burned. A lamp and oil house at Barre and Howard streets, was destroyed. About 10:30 an old building, used as a stable, was fired and totally destroyed. About 11 o'clock some cars at the Riverside round-house were burned.

CUMBERLAND, July 20.—A train of empty coal cars has just come in from Martinsburg. The crowd dragged off the firemen, after which the train was taken to the yard, unable to proceed further. A messenger has been sent hence to Martinsburg to invite those who still hold out to join the strikers here. The police having arrested Renck, one of the ringleaders, an attempt was made to release him. The police drew revolvers. Some one in the crowd fired. The police returned the shot, and some half a dozen shots were fired. No one was hurt. Renck and three others were taken to the station, but released till to-morrow. The streets are crowded.

"The Firemen's Strikes," *The Argus*, July 21, 1877. Albany, New York.

# **PRIMARY SOURCE D TRANSCRIPTION**

## **THE FIREMEN'S STRIKES**

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They are Spreading in all Directions

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Keyser, July 20 - The strikers are in force here and the dozen United States troops that came up on the freight train are powerless.

Martinsburg, W. Va., July 20 - Fireman Zepp was slightly injured by the attack on the train at St. John's Run. The assault was probably made by canal boatmen who have been in the habit of riding on freight trains, which privilege was denied them on that train. Torpedoes were placed on the track near Keyser, but could do no damage.

Columbus, O., July 20 - At Newark large crowds are awaiting the arrival of troops, but no violence is offered. Several attempts have been made to get trains out without success. Two companies of militia will proceed to-night to Newark from here, and two companies are expected there from Mount Vernon and Zanesville.

Baltimore, July 20 - The depot at Camden station is afire, and it is said the railroad office has been cleaned out. The telegraph office in the depot building has been destroyed, the wires cut and the instruments removed.

LATER - The fire at the depot at Camden station has been extinguished with but little damage. The telegraph office cleaned out was the dispatcher's office on the station platform, and not the office in the main building. At Baltimore and Ohio wires have been cut.

Keyser, W. Va., July 20 - George Zepp, the fireman on the first train from Martinsburg yesterday, was taken from the train here and the strikers fired on the train, which brought up the first detachment of troops; and one of the train hands was slightly wounded.

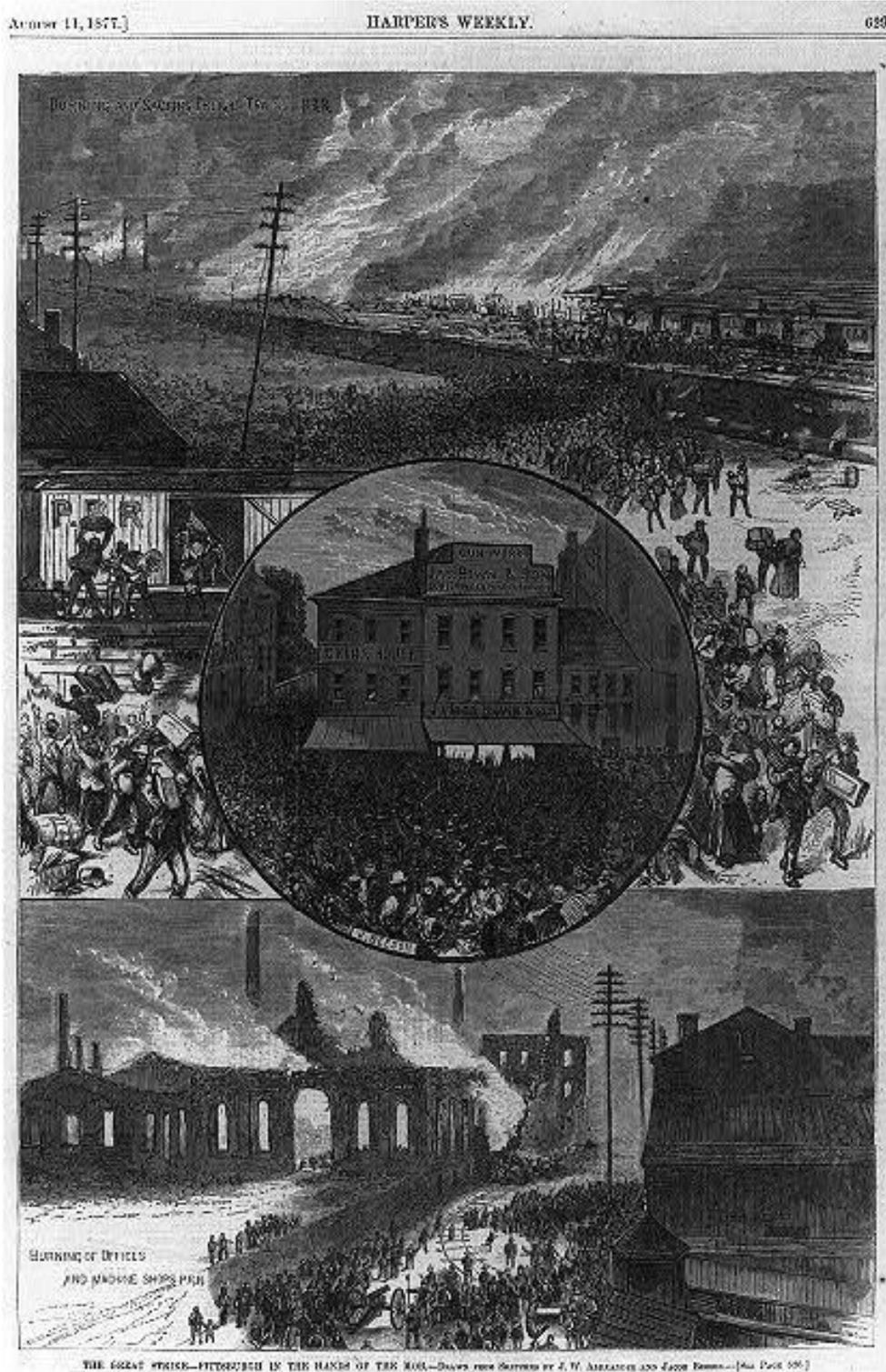
Baltimore, July 20 - At ten o'clock the dispatcher's house at the lower end of the depot was fired and totally burned. The depot was also badly burned. A lamp and oil house at Barre and Howard streets was destroyed. About 10:30 an old building, used as a stable, was fired and totally destroyed. About 11 o'clock some cars at the Riverside round house were burned.

Cumberland, July 20 - A train of empty coal cars has just come in from Martinsburg. The crowd dragged off the firemen, after which the train was taken to the yard, unable to proceed further. A messenger has been sent hence to Martinsburgh to invite those who still hold out to join the strikers here. The police having arrested Renck, one of the ringleaders, an attempt was made to release him. The police drew revolvers. Some one in the crowd fired. The police returned the

shot, and some half a dozen shots were fired. No one was hurt. Renck and three others were taken to the station, but released till to-morrow. The streets are crowded.

“The Firemen’s Strikes,” *The Argus*, July 21, 1877. Albany, New York.

# PRIMARY SOURCE E



“The Great [railroad] Strike [Pittsburgh, Pa. 1877]: Burning of offices and machine shops, PRR; Burning and sacking freight trains, PRR; and mob outside James Brown & Son gunworks,” *Harper’s Weekly*, August 11, 1877.