

PRIMA FIGHE

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THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF SACCO AND VANZETTI

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FOREWORD

Well over a half-century ago in Massachusetts, two Italian anarchists, convicted of armed robbery and murder, went to the electric chair. Despite the passage of so many years, the case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti refuses to die. Books as well as essays reflecting antithetical conclusions continue to appear, and meetings over the years have continually drawn large crowds. While sustained interest in some historical topics is not in itself unusual, the passion that surrounds the Sacco-Vanzetti case is unique. Even as the actual participants and spectators disappear, the emotions created during the seven-year ordeal seem to pass on from generation to generation.

This collection is largely composed of extensive excerpts from the transcript of the trial and subsequent appeals. Contextual information is provided by the introduction, which presents the principal figures in the drama and sketches the context within which they moved. In addition, the many tangled elements of the case are described. Additional materials include many of the haunting letters that the two men wrote from jail, and a sampling of contemporary magazine articles.

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INTRODUCTION

THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF NICOLA SACCO AND BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI

Many elements of this celebrated tragedy are ordinary. On 15 April 1920 a gang of thugs intercepted the delivery of a shoe company payroll in the Boston suburb of South Braintree, killed the paymaster and his guard, and escaped in an automobile with a strong-box containing about \$15,000. Three weeks later at about 10:30 on the evening of 5 May two area men, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were arrested while riding on a trolley car; both were armed. Sacco carried a .32-cal. Colt automatic pistol loaded with a full clip. In his pocket were several loose cartridges. Vanzetti had a fully loaded .38-cal. Harrington & Richardson revolver. In his pocket were three or four unexploded shotgun shells for a 12-ga. shotgun. None of the automatic bullets or shotgun shells were marked for identification by the police; no descriptive notes were made of the manufacture, type, or caliber; and there was no exact recording of the number of cartridges recovered.

Although long-time Massachusetts residents, both men were Italian nationals. Both were, they admitted, anarchists. Recovered from Vanzetti was the draft of a speech prepared for an anarchist meeting the following Sunday. Even though they were armed, which was not uncommon among Italian workers in those days, neither Sacco nor Vanzetti had been implicated in the South Braintree crime; each had a clean police record. After their initial interrogation, however, they were marked as prime suspects.

The events of the first twenty-four hours of the captivity of the two Italians contributed enormously to their eventual conviction and execution. On the night of their arrest they were questioned by Chief Michael Stewart of Bridgewater, a small-town official who had involved himself heavily in the antiradical Red scare then being directed from Washington by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Stewart took an immediate and intense interest in Sacco and Vanzetti because he already had developed a theory about the crime and needed only to fit in the right suspects. He needed two Italian anarchists who knew a man named Mike Boda.

Two years previously Stewart had arrested for deportation an Italian radical named Ferruccio Coacci. Assorted delays postponed Coacci's departure until 15 April 1920 (the South Braintree crime occurred on that same day), when he was scheduled to report to the Immigration Department. Coacci did not appear. Stewart found him

living in a Brockton rooming house inhabited by other radicals, including a man named Mario Boda who also called himself Mike Boda. After arranging for Coacci's place on the boat for Italy, Stewart continued to watch the rooming house. He learned that Boda owned an automobile, which was not common for working-class Italians. The chief discovered that the car was then under repair at a nearby garage owned by Simon Johnson.

After he questioned Boda, Stewart began to make some mental connections. Boda, a friend of the deported Coacci who had not turned up on the day of the South Braintree crime, was associated with a radical circle. Also, he owned a car. Stewart returned to the rooming house the next day, but Boda had disappeared. The chief immediately notified Johnson to call the police if anyone turned up for Boda's car. On 5 May four men appeared at Johnson's house in the evening. The garage owner, roused from his sickbed, told the men that the car lacked plates and could not be taken. Meanwhile, Mrs. Johnson hurried to a neighbor's house and telephoned the police. Boda and Riccardo Orciani left the scene on Boda's motorcycle. The other two men walked to a streetcar stop, boarded the Brockton trolley, and about 10:10 P.M. on Main Street in Brockton Officer Michael J. Connolley of the Police Department arrested Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

That same night Stewart put the two men through a series of loosely related questions, never once indicating that they were suspects in a murder case. Sacco and Vanzetti, who were not under oath and not obligated to reply to questions, responded with false and evasive answers. Norfolk County District Attorney Frederick G. Katzmann appeared the following day and conducted a long and highly detailed examination. Once again, Sacco and Vanzetti were not told that they were being held for suspicion of murder, and once again, they lied: the two had been out that evening visiting a friend. No, they saw no motorcycle. Boda? Coacci? They did not know them.

For the two anarchists this was an exercise in protecting comrades during a political reign of terror. As the Palmer raids continued, authorities fished for more names and addresses, seeking for radicals to throw out of the country. They would receive nothing useful from Sacco or Vanzetti. For the police and the district attorney, the lies confirmed their belief that they had found the killers. Katzmann later would tell the jury over and over again that all these lies only contributed to the defendants' clear "consciousness of guilt."

For the next seven years and three months Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti remained in jail throughout the trial and conviction, a thicket of appeals and denials, a confession to the crime by a professional criminal, clemency petitions, the report of a select governor's Advisory Committee, an international protest movement, and attention from the highest courts in the nation. On 23 August 1927 they were executed.

From then until now the case has continued to provoke emotions. Books, reviews, and essays have been published, reaffirming innocence or guilt, finding unexplored angles, and rebutting, proclaiming, and redoing the entire chain of events over and over again. In 1977 Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis issued an official proclamation

removing the "stigma and disgrace" from their names. Two years later at a Boston Sacco and Vanzetti conference that attracted over three hundred, a consensus formed around the argument that the proclamation did not go nearly far enough. New scholarly studies would finally prove the popular theory that the two men were killed as part of a conspiracy to eliminate anarchism and quiet dissent. From the opposite direction a counterforce of opinion continues to appear, insisting that whatever the legal insufficiencies in the trial *per se* the defendants, or at least Sacco, were guilty as charged.

The two central figures at a first glance are very ordinary. Like millions of their countrymen, Sacco and Vanzetti had migrated separately to the United States in search of changed circumstances and new experiences as well as to escape from the constraints of a frozen class structure. Born in 1891 as the third of seventeen children of a well-to-do peasant family, Sacco arrived in Boston at the age of seventeen with an older brother. Sabino Sacco, quickly disenchanted with immigrant life, returned to Torremaggiore within a year, but Nicola stayed. After a few months' work as a waterboy on a construction site, he spent a year in a foundry before taking up the specialized craft of edge trimming at a shoe plant in Medford. There he remained for about seven years before fleeing in 1917 with other Italians, including Vanzetti, to Mexico to escape military service. Returning a few months later, Sacco held a succession of low-paying jobs before finding work as an edge trimmer and part-time night watchman at the 3-K Shoe Factory in Stoughton. He settled into the town's Italian section with his wife Rosina and their young son, Dante. By 1920, he owned his home and had accumulated \$1500 in a savings account.

Vanzetti also had arrived in 1908, reaching Ellis Island from the north Italian province of Cuneo. The twenty-year old immigrant immediately began upon a succession of jobs that allowed him to indulge in his real interests. Over the years Vanzetti was a dishwasher, a farm worker, and a laborer in quarries, brickyards, and on railroad gangs. Yet always more important than his job was his passion for social exploration. He loved to talk, expound, and analyze. Vanzetti's heart belonged to those like himself--workers, displaced persons, and victims of the impersonal and oppressive forces of capitalism. Except for his brief Mexican adventure, he had settled into the town of Plymouth, sometimes peddling fish or laboring and other days discussing radical social theory or planning agitation that would involve Nick Sacco and his other anarchist friends. Vanzetti neither married nor showed much interest in women or family life. Politics were his passion and responsibility.

Both the fiery Vanzetti and the stolid Sacco were intensely political, not in the familiar American sense of observing, discussing, running for office, or seeking a job but as men of ideas who were committed and serious followers of a well-defined and emotionally articulated philosophy. Their mentor was the most important exponent of Italian anarchism in America--Luigi Galleani, publisher of Cronaca Sovversiva, a newspaper devoted to anarcho-communism and the organizing of violent revolution. Galleani attracted continuous police attention, his publications were periodically suppressed, and he himself was deported in May 1919.

Sacco and Vanzetti were active for years in the Boston area Galleanist movement, which also enjoyed devoted support among Italians in New York, Paterson, and elsewhere. Both men were deeply committed students of anarchist theory and active participants in strikes and labor agitation. Throughout his long prison years Vanzetti wrote complex analyses and criticisms on obscure doctrinal points. Sacco, while holding firmly to his beliefs, more quietly accepted the truth of his ideology--that the Massachusetts legal system eventually would destroy him because he was a radical.

Four months passed before the imprisoned Sacco and Vanzetti were indicted. During this period law enforcement authorities halted all attempts to pursue other leads despite promising information that linked the South Braintree crimes to the notorious Morelli gang of Providence. District Attorney Katzmann and Chief Stewart sought only to produce evidence against the two jailed Italians.

Within two weeks, however, Vanzetti had been summoned to a preliminary hearing involving an entirely separate crime. On 24 December 1919, almost five months before the South Braintree murders, a gang in Bridgewater had attempted to rob a payroll truck en route to the L. Q. White Shoe Company. The resulting incidence featured a traffic jam at a major business intersection, the off-chance emergence of a streetcar between robbers and payroll truck, men firing guns wildly while running down the street, and a great deal of shrieking but no injuries. So poorly planned was this caper that even if the bandits had reached their goal, they would have found a heavily sealed iron payroll box securely locked to the floorbed of the truck. In all the confusion the gang merely escaped. Chief Stewart immediately theorized that a band of Reds had struck, and now he had two of them locked up. Sacco, protected by his factory time-clock card, owned a tight alibi. On 11 June Vanzetti was indicted for the Bridgewater crime and charged with robbery and attempted murder.

In a trial that lasted from 22 June to 1 July, Vanzetti was convicted despite the prosecution's formidable problems with evidence. Eyewitness identification of the criminals and their getaway car was inconsistent, although potential government witnesses had been allowed to go to the prison to look at Vanzetti. Three eyewitnesses, including a town constable, were L. Q. White employees. Another, a fourteen-year-old boy, testified that he could identify a foreigner by the way he ran. Reports from Pinkerton detectives, which were not made available to the defense, contradicted identifying testimony. Moreover, Vanzetti himself could present a strong alibi. He had spent 24 December in Plymouth selling eels from door to door. This Italian tradition of buying eels on Christmas Eve permitted the defense to call several witnesses who swore that they purchased eels from Vanzetti at the time when he was supposed to be at the scene of the crime in Bridgewater twenty-eight miles away.

District Attorney Katzmann tore into the testimony by confronting the mostly non-English-speaking defense witnesses with complex questions that produced shaky replies. Mixing clear disbelief with obvious derision, Katzmann managed to establish the clear inference that Vanzetti's Plymouth neighbors were merely seeking to protect one of their own. The defendant himself did not take the stand since he

was convinced by his attorney that any exploration of his political ideas and activities would seriously prejudice his case. The jury heard enough to convict Vanzetti for assault with intent to rob and assault with intent to murder.

Before the trial judge imposed his sentence, it was revealed that during its secret deliberations members of the jury took apart and examined the shotgun shells that they assumed were the same as those found on Vanzetti at the time of his arrest. The amateurs' decision that the shells were actually Vanzetti's and that the caliber of the shot matched with a shell discovered at the Bridgewater crime scene persuaded the jury that Vanzetti was guilty. Their actions were blatantly prejudicial, however, and Judge Webster Thayer obviously had cause to declare a mistrial. Instead, after pondering for six weeks Thayer announced on 16 August a decision that undercut Vanzetti from several angles. On the charge of assault with intent to murder, the judge merely "filed" the indictments. Since the defendant received no sentence on this charge, Vanzetti could not claim that he had been penalized by the jury's actions in considering any evidence not introduced in court. On the second charge, assault with intent to rob, Thayer sentenced Vanzetti from twelve to fifteen years, an unusually severe term for a man with no previous criminal record and for an event in which nothing actually was stolen and no one was injured.

Events moved swiftly after Vanzetti's trial and conviction. On 11 September 1920, over four months after their arrest, Sacco and Vanzetti were formally indicted for the South Braintree crimes. In this crucial interim Vanzetti had become a convict, and now he and his close personal friend and political associate faced a charge of first-degree murder.

The trial in Dedham lasted from 31 May until 14 July. The daily drama centered on the personal and professional behavior of Judge Webster Thayer, who actively had sought the assignment despite having just presided over Vanzetti's first case. Massachusetts legal practice conferred an extraordinary amount of discretionary authority on its trial judges. Only the narrowest range of technical criteria existed for appeal. The judge would be reversed only for committing error in the statement and application of the law. Consequently, judicial mechanics far outweighed all other considerations. Technical performance was equated with justice. In effect, there would be no one beyond Judge Thayer.

Two distinct impressions of Superior Court Justice Thayer have remained vivid since the trial. One of these emerges from the trial record, which is replete with references to justice, the greatness of the law, and Massachusetts's guarantee of an absolutely fair trial of any human being whatever his circumstances or his alleged offense. Throughout the printed proceedings Thayer seemed to preserve a proper stance toward the defendants. On more than one occasion his words almost leapt from the printed page with the majesty of democratic commitment, belying observation of at least one veteran Boston newspaperman, who found Thayer to speak "with the air of prejudice and scorn." As the judge once asked another reporter, "did you see what I did with those anarchist bastards the other day?"

The sixty-three-year-old, sharp-featured 5'2" Judge Thayer sought to defend the social system that meant so much to him. Born in Blackstone, Massachusetts, into modest circumstances and educated in the local schools, Thayer nevertheless made Dartmouth College. More athlete than scholar he went on to graduate in 1880, settled into a Worcester law practice, and married early and well. For thirty-five years he built a practice, established a solid reputation for predictability, and dabbled in Republican party affairs. Appointed to the bench in 1917, by 1920 Thayer had achieved no particular judicial distinction beyond staunch regularity. To some observers the judge seemed personally insecure; to others he was merely vain and always inviting comment about himself; and to one and all he talked freely about his judicial performances and the cases before him, revealing the usual social biases that would be expected in a contented Superior Court Justice who had risen from his father's butcher shop. Even beyond his establishment sensibilities, Thayer perceived an extraordinary crisis stemming from the rise of revolutionary eruptions. Purported radicals would find little comfort in his courtroom. As the diminutive jurist put it, "no bolsheviki could intimidate Web Thayer."

In April 1920 Attorney General Palmer had issued another warning about the rising tide of revolution in America. Throughout New England, as in much of the rest of the country, Palmer's words were heeded. Investigations and roundups of suspects continued. In Dedham, Thayer himself recently had presided over one trial in which an admitted anarchist named Segris Zagroff, who was charged with advocating the overthrow of the government, faced a solid Yankee jury. Inexplicably, the jury refused to convict. Thayer exploded, excoriating the jury and hectoring the foreman:

Mr. Foreman, did you take into consideration the testimony that was given us here by the police officers that the defendant told them he believed in the overthrow of the government? Didn't you hear the testimony to the effect that the defendant said in the presence of witnesses and in the conversations he had with officers that he did not like this form of government and that the only true government was the kind run by working-men? How did you arrive at the verdict that you announce?

Purely by chance Thayer had presided over the case in Plymouth in which Vanzetti was convicted of the Bridgewater crime. His carefully calculated sentencing strategy, which robbed Vanzetti of a new trial and marked him as a convicted felon, indicated Thayer's keen interest. Although he was scheduled to be rotated on the circuit, the prospect of the Sacco-Vanzetti case in Dedham became irresistible in spite of the judge's decisive role in the Plymouth trial. Thayer sent a special request to the Massachusetts Chief Justice, a fellow Dartmouth alumnus. When Commonwealth v. Sacco and Vanzetti opened in Dedham on 31 May 1921, Thayer presided.

Before Judge Thayer sat an interesting collection of American types. Prosecuting the case for the people was District Attorney Katzmann, whose life and values closely paralleled those of the judge. Born to very poor German and Scotch parents in Hyde Park (an industrial

backwater of Boston), Katzmman had struggled his way to Harvard. Forced to work while in school, he left little trace after graduating with the class of 1896. Financially unable to proceed to Harvard Law, Katzmman took odd jobs while pursuing night-time law studies at Boston University, where he received his degree in 1902. Like Thayer a generation earlier, this once indigent, small-town American lawyer would follow a tested success formula: Republican politics, civic involvement, fraternal organization activities, and a hard-driving courtroom practice. Elected Norfolk County district attorney in 1916, the rotund, fortyish Katzmman won reelection in 1919. A contemporary described him as "average--an average district attorney, a little tricky like most of them, but no worse than most out to get a conviction." Katzmman's courtroom style featured a baroque vocabulary and a decided tendency to attack directly, relentlessly, and full force ahead.

At the defense table sat an improbable set of partners. Large-scale fund raising, spearheaded by the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, permitted the retention of excellent defense counsel. The decision had been taken to appoint counsel for each of the defendants on the theory that such division would give the accused two separate yet cooperative defense agencies. Chaos quickly developed.

The Leftist Defense Committee had followed conventional wisdom and acquired for Vanzetti's defense the services of the McAnarney brothers, Jeremiah and Thomas of Quincy, both of whom were respected members of the local legal establishment. Directing defense strategy, however, and setting its tone was the flamboyant Fred H. Moore, a Californian with an equally strong attachment to left-wing causes and to what was then known as "bohemian" life style. His frequently expressed political beliefs were distasteful enough to the Republican Yankees, and his long hair, casual dress, and habit of wearing sandals in the courtroom provided daily provocation to the proper gentlemen of Norfolk County. Even before the trial began, Moore had thoroughly scandalized the small-town New Englanders.

Mrs. Angelina DeFalco was a Norfolk County court interpreter and so-called courtroom "fixer," an openly tolerated function through which she and many others throughout New England served as intermediaries between Italian defendants and the Wasp legal world. In January 1921, Mrs. DeFalco and an in-law, who provided similar services for Italians in Providence, approached the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee. They allegedly claimed that for \$40,000 an acquittal could be arranged, providing that Moore relinquish his principal role to two local attorneys, one a brother of District Attorney Katzmman. Outraged, Moore refused to allow the plot to continue, arrested an intermediary, and received front-page publicity throughout the Boston area, which had implicated Katzmman and some other leading members of the local bar. The trial of Mrs. DeFalco and her associates produced nothing incriminating and led to an acquittal. It also produced a vengeful mood on Main Street. However slightly he may have been affected by the DeFalco affair, Katzmman could prove his incorruptibility by convicting Sacco and Vanzetti. The district attorney built his case on a bedrock belief in the guilt of the two Italians, and for the remaining thirty years of his life Katzmman would never change his mind.

In the days immediately following the crime, witnesses easily agreed that the gang appeared to be Italians of short-to-medium stature, wearing dark clothes and caps. Police photographs revealed a favorite suspect who turned out to be a criminal who had spent the day of the crime in prison. For several days no suspects were identified. Then prospective witnesses were taken to Dedham jail to observe Sacco and Vanzetti who were compelled to simulate such actions as pointing pistols, pulling caps down over their heads, and assuming physical stances supposedly taken during the crime. Vague and hesitant identifications quickly became sharp and positive.

Nonetheless, contradictions persisted. Michael Levangie, gate tender at a South Braintree railroad crossing, identified Vanzetti as the driver of the getaway car, although Vanzetti could not drive and Levangie had told another story at the initial inquest and at a state police hearing. All the same, Katzmann was satisfied with any testimony that placed the defendant in the gangsters' car whatever the inconsistencies. Other eyewitness accounts involving Vanzetti were also called into strong question by defense counsel. Of all prospective eyewitnesses prior to the trial, only Louis L. Perry was called as a prosecution witness, but on the stand Perry unexpectedly expressed doubts. Another witness, who at first leaned toward an identification of Sacco, was later called as a defense witness. Both witnesses were unable to identify Sacco. Long-time employees of the Slater and Morrill Shoe Factory, they soon lost their jobs.

Material remains from the crime produced similar discrepancies and disagreements. A cap found on the street sometime after the murders was passed through several hands before reaching the prosecutor. Braintree Police Chief Jeremiah F. Gallivan later admitted ripping a part of the inside of the cap in search of an identifying mark, although this fact was not revealed during the trial. Katzmann managed to present the cap as "Sacco's cap" by establishing the fact that the defendant was a habitual cap wearer and routinely placed it on a nail above his workbench. This persistent action, Katzmann argued, easily could produce a telltale tear. The defense countered by comparing the 6 7/8" cap in evidence with Sacco's head size of 7 1/8".

The Commonwealth presented firearms and ballistics experts who testified that the weapons found on the defendants at the time of their arrest were the same weapons used in the crime. Later, defense firearms experts produced their own testimony and visual studies in rebuttal. The arcane and confusing data tended to obfuscate further an aspect of the case that will never be resolved. Indeed, a half-century later Sacco's pistol was still being fired and the results debated.

Trying another approach, Katzmann suggested that the gun taken from Vanzetti when he was arrested actually belonged to the slain guard, Berardelli, and had been picked up by the defendant during the crime. More confusing testimony indicating that the guard's pistol was actually in a gunsmith's shop for repair on the day of the crime did not entirely erase the district attorney's repeated claims that the weapon used in the killing and that found on Vanzetti were one and the same. Katzmann depended on eyewitness identifications and the tests and testimony of ballistics experts to tie the defendants

to the scene of the crime as well as to the lethal weapons. He also used similar means to involve Sacco's gun. The district attorney's ballistics experts testified that at least one of the murder bullets came from the same pistol found on the defendant at the time of his arrest. This fact produced lengthy countertestimony from the experts for the defense. In the process, Katzmman quite possibly may have found a star witness--William H. Proctor.

Proctor was captain of the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety, the supervisory arm of the state police. At the outset of the case he had been in charge of the investigation, but he had made it clear that he was not satisfied with the evidence against Sacco and Vanzetti and wished to pursue other leads. Just two days after Vanzetti's conviction for the Bridgewater crime, however, Katzmman removed the twenty-three-year police veteran and chose as his chief investigator the small-town novice Michael Stewart, who knew Katzmman had the killers.

When Proctor appeared as a prosecution ballistics expert at the trial, as he had in over one hundred previous capital cases, he already knew the questions that Katzmman would put to him. The pre-arranged dialogue left the impression that Proctor believed that one of the fatal bullets had come from Sacco's gun. Yet, as the veteran lawman would admit months after the trial, "I should have answered then, as I do now, without hesitation, in the negative." This startling contradiction emerged only during the appeal process. Katzmman issued a generalized denial, and Thayer ruled that Captain Proctor's "misunderstood testimony" had not been injurious to Sacco's defense. Proctor, increasingly indignant at the way in which Katzmman had used him, slowly involved himself in subsequent appellate strategy. His sudden death in 1924 harmed continuing efforts to reverse the impression that Sacco's gun had fired a fatal shot.

Katzmman outmaneuvered the defense in several other ways. Two important sources of evidence in the possession of the Commonwealth were not made available to the defense. The Pinkerton Detective Agency's investigative reports of the crime had been compiled in the days immediately afterward, when memories were fresh and before potential witnesses were taken to view the two suspects. These Pinkerton reports, which were finally made public in 1926, held potential value for the defense. Similarly, minutes of an inquest held in Quincy District Court on 17 April 1920 were withheld by the prosecutor on technical grounds. The district attorney also had initiated an investigation by Boston agents of the Department of Justice, which failed to produce evidence against the two men. In fact, Justice Department findings convinced at least some of the Boston agents that Sacco and Vanzetti had had nothing to do with the crime and that the job seemed obviously the work of professionals. No mention of these circumstances emerged in the Dedham courtroom.

Secure in his convictions Katzmman went forward, sharing in the obvious unpopularity of what the two men represented. The big Red scare still reached the small New England towns. Chief Stewart had been out all night on 1 January rounding up suspects in the Palmer raids that spread over Massachusetts. Cruel irony dictated that it was this same political dragnet that unknowingly brought Sacco and Vanzetti to their fate.

The defense explained Sacco's and Vanzetti's movements on the night of their arrest as a response to the fear that affected radicals throughout the northeast. Before his arrest, Vanzetti recently had returned from New York, where he had been sent to gather information from anarchist groups. They soon learned of the death of an anarchist named Andrea Salsedo, who fell from the fourteenth floor of New York City Police Headquarters while in police custody. Immediately, the word went out to New England radicals: protect yourselves and your friends; destroy anything incriminating. According to the defense, the four radicals went to Simon Johnson's garage on the night of 5 May to recover Boda's car and use it to gather radical literature from the homes of political associates. When Johnson refused to release the car and while Mrs. Johnson slipped away to telephone the police, Boda and Orciani left on the motorcycle; Sacco and Vanzetti boarded the streetcar.

Neither defendant could produce an impregnable alibi for the day of the crime. Sacco claimed to have spent the entire day in Boston, where he had gone to the Italian Consulate to seek a passport to return to his homeland. A deposition was secured by the defense stating that a consular official believed that Sacco had indeed been there that day. Italian and Italian-American acquaintances similarly testified to his presence in Boston. For Vanzetti, the defense produced evidence that he had been around and about Plymouth on 15 April. Katzmman vigorously attacked both stories, advancing other theories, throwing doubt on defense witnesses' contentions, and exploiting discrepancies. His presentation was effective.

The defense also emphasized that after the crime neither defendant changed his normal routine. Not only did they remain settled in the familiar patterns but also continued with their political activities. Furthermore, there was no indication that either Sacco or Vanzetti, or any of their associates in New England or New York, had received any money from the stolen payroll. Their circle had continued to try to raise small amounts to continue agitation.

Meanwhile, as the give and take filled each day in the courtroom, Moore's long-range strategy was aimed at elevating the case far beyond Dedham. He worked through the Boston-based Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, which attracted international support, both emotional and financial. The dynamic Californian insisted that the case was primarily an example of capitalist oppression of the working people. While this stratagem succeeded in mobilizing vast support, its effects on the trial itself were decidedly different. However, in the tight world of the Massachusetts legal establishment, and quite probably in the minds of most ordinary Yankees, the tactic backfired. Innocent or guilty, the jury's foreman allegedly remarked: "Damn them, they ought to be hanged."

Throughout the six-week trial the charged atmosphere prevailed. A heavy police guard led the manacled men through the streets each day from their cells to the packed courthouse, where the two Italians sat in an iron cage surrounded by four officers. When first Vanzetti and then Sacco took the stand, they told their entire life's stories, including full explanations of their political beliefs and activities. On cross-examination, the district attorney subjected each man to some of the most withering examination in the history of American legal proceedings.

In summary, in repeatedly asserting that the key to acquittal was the inadequacy of eyewitness identification, Moore and Jeremiah McAnarney each spent two hours reviewing the now familiar events and evidence. Katzmann continued to pull out his many stops against the defendants, maligning their patriotism and pounding on discrepancies that proved "consciousness of guilt." And Judge Thayer's twenty-four-page charge to the jury mixed English legal maxims, themes of American national honor, a review of the case, and instruction in the application of the law. He finished near the noon hour, and the jury retired for deliberation. They returned at 7:30 that evening to announce, for each defendant, the verdict of guilty in the first degree.

The trial's verdict on 14 July 1921 completed only the preliminary part of this historic saga. For the next six years a complex series of appeals were filed, argued, and rejected before the dramatic execution of August 1927. In the first three years alone after the verdict, seven motions for a new trial and several supplementary motions introducing new evidence were filed with Judge Thayer. On 1 October 1924, Thayer denied all of them. Subsequent appeals were then directed through the following eighteen months to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Consequently, since Massachusetts law permitted no review of cases on their substance, the High Court on 12 May 1926 unanimously upheld the judge, saying that his technical performance in stating and interpreting the law had been correct. Furthermore, Thayer's subsequent rejection of the several appeals for a new trial fell entirely within his discretionary powers. The High Court ruling left the defense forces disappointed and in some disarray, but not without hope.

Moore by this time had fallen out of favor with the defendants, and efforts to save their lives were now being directed by William G. Thompson, an esteemed Boston corporation lawyer. Even the court's adverse decision could not diminish the hopes raised by a startling development that Thompson and his associates were investigating. They had discovered that during the period when the Supreme Judicial Court was considering defense appeals, a convict in Dedham jail had the following note slipped to Nicola Sacco: "I hear by confess to being in the south Braintree shoe company crime and Sacco and Vanzetti was not in said crime."

Celestino Madeiros, the writer, was a twenty-four-year-old thug from the Portuguese slums of Providence with a long record, a violent temper, and a casual regard for the truth, who had been convicted of a murder committed during a bank robbery in November 1924. Summoned by Sacco, Thompson interviewed Madeiros. What emerged was a detailed narrative, implicating but not quite naming the South Braintree murderers as the Morelli brothers, the leaders of a Providence gang of professional crooks. While the defense dug for corroboration into the Providence underground, the Commonwealth counterattacked with a flurry of affidavits and interrogations that had the effect of ridiculing Madeiros's veracity and questioning his sanity.

Meanwhile, Thompson attempted to inspect Boston's Federal Bureau of Investigation files on the case. Denied access, he managed to secure affidavits from two former FBI agents that indicated the bureau had been biased during the entire case. On 13 September 1926, Thompson brought these statements and the Madeiros confession before Judge

Thayer, arguing that the verdict should be set aside. Five weeks later Thayer issued a 25,000-word refusal, which was so emotionally charged that the old-line Republican Boston Herald editorialized "that it carried the tone of the advocate rather than the arbitrator." The Herald shocked State Street by calling for a new trial, as the appeal of Thayer's rejection once again went to the Supreme Judicial Court.

On 5 April 1927 the court once more upheld Thayer. The appellate process was finally at an end. The defendants were summoned for sentencing. The drama of the scene in that packed courtroom in Dedham on Saturday morning, 9 April 1927 still resonates through the words of the defendants. In their long imprisonment both men had become eloquent users of the English language. For about five minutes Sacco spoke in tones of a barely controlled rage, attributing his perilous situation to class oppression working through a disingenuous legal system that was personified by Katzmann and Thayer. Vanzetti spoke at length, seizing the opportunity to express his long years of frustration and bitterness: "What we have suffered during these seven years no human tongue can say." He finished:

. . . I have already say that I not only am not guilty of these two crimes, but I never commit a crime in my life--I have never steal and I have never kill and I have never spilt blood, and I have fought against the crime, and I have fought and I have sacrificed myself even to eliminate the crimes that the law and the church legitimate and sanctify.

. . . I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low and misfortunate creature of the earth--I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things that I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I was an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian . . . ; but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn again two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already. I have finished. Thank you.

Thayer immediately began pronouncing sentence, ordering Sacco to the electric chair. He had turned to Vanzetti and had begun to impose the same sentence when Sacco interrupted: "You know I am innocent. . . . You condemn two innocent men." But Thayer kept talking, finished the sentencing, and announced a recess. Only one chance remained for the defense. Appeals from the influential and the famous, both Americans and foreigners, poured into the Governor's Mansion of Alvan T. Fuller. The fifty-year-old chief executive, perhaps the wealthiest man in the entire Commonwealth, had accomplished the American dream. From poor boy to Packard automobile salesman to millionaire, Fuller moved on to great political success as well. Still young for an ambitious and successful public figure, he looked forward to the 1928 Republican National Convention that would select a candidate to replace one of Fuller's predecessors in the State House, Calvin Coolidge.

The Massachusetts governor's views on capital punishment were both well known and fully exercised. Just months before he had refused, despite large-scale emotional appeals, to intercede in the cases of three young Boston Irish-Americans, all of whom were veterans of World War I who had been convicted of murder and were electrocuted. Fuller undertook his own comprehensive but private review of the case, reading the records and interviewing most of the principals, including Sacco, Vanzetti, and Madeiros. By May the governor's mail on the case amounted to 17,000 pieces; petition signatures numbered over 500,000. On 11 June Governor Fuller made an unexpected announcement: a three-man Advisory Committee would review the case in its entirety and make a recommendation to the governor.

President Abbott Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University headed the group, which also included retired Probate Judge Robert Grant and President Samuel Stratton of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The three venerable gentlemen reviewed the parade of witnesses. According to the committee's rules, defense attorneys were allowed to be present only on the condition that they hold the proceedings in confidence. The major figures in the Commonwealth's case testified in secret, although Katzmman made himself available for cross-examination by Defense Attorney Thompson.

As the committee proceeded, substantial evidence had emerged elsewhere that suggested that Vanzetti had been wrongfully tried and convicted for the Bridgewater Christmas Eve robbery attempt. Defense counsel produced confessions signed by two small-time hoodlums named Frank Silva and James Mede, who not only admitted their own guilt but also indicated that Vanzetti's defense counsel realized the defendant's innocence. On 27 July Mede saw the governor and made a complete disclosure of his role in the crime. He had been assured, according to Thompson, that his confession would not be communicated to the state police, thereby jeopardizing Mede's license as a boxing promoter. At the conclusion of the interview, Fuller called into the room a state police captain, asked Mede to repeat his confession, and clearly suggested that he was disgusted with the entire complication. Mede left the building.

On the same day the Advisory Committee presented its findings and recommendations to the governor, but no immediate announcement was forthcoming. Days passed. Not until a week later, with the suspense overwhelming, was Fuller's official written statement relayed to the band of newsmen who were permanently encamped at the mansion. The governor simply announced that his own findings were the same as the unanimous conclusion of the Advisory Committee. Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty as charged; the sentence would stand. Execution in the electric chair was scheduled for 10 August. Only after great exertion was defense counsel, with less than one hour to spare before the execution, able to gain a twelve-day stay. A final protest campaign was mounted at the governor.

At one point in the summer's developments Fuller had appeared open-minded. By mid-August, however, he had become absolutely convinced of the defendants' guilt and adamantly opposed to any further delay. Numerous callers to the State House were assured by the governor that the defendants actually had enjoyed three fair trials--Thayer, the Advisory Committee, and himself. He remarked that he

would not expect a fairer trial for his own son than the hearing given Sacco and Vanzetti by the Lowell committee. However, the steady stream of petitioners to Fuller continued as the corps of defense lawyers exhausted the appellate process. On the morning of 22 August, with the executions only hours away, Fuller received Edna St. Vincent Millay, whose poem, "Justice Denied in Massachusetts," had appeared in that morning's New York Times. Later, his former congressional colleague Fiorello LaGuardia arrived on a chartered plane. The governor also endured a painful encounter with Sacco's wife and Vanzetti's sister, who had come from Italy. Fuller's determination held through the day.

At Charlestown Prison, Vanzetti spoke for the last time with Thompson. It was a wrenching philosophical discussion of justice, belief, evil, and forgiveness that reminded the Yankee lawyer of a Socratic dialogue. Thompson had entered the case as a perfect model of the Boston establishment but would henceforth never be able to escape a haunting reality of justice denied.

In the final preparation before the execution, law enforcement officers went on full alert. Bomb squads were assembled in Boston and most other cities as protests escalated. The area around the prison was sealed off. A squad of machine gunners guarded the main gate, and police sentries walked the walls. Surrounding streets stood silent as night fell upon the barricades and gun crews. Firemen with high-pressure hoses commanded the street abutting the death house. Mounted troops patrolled the bridges. Small gunships of the harbor police cruised the rivers. Police with fixed bayonets and machine guns and state and railroad police stood at the city's major sites.

Eleven minutes after midnight Sacco entered the room where the electric chair moments before had killed Madeiros. He looked about wildly and shouted in Italian: "Long live anarchy." Then, more calmly he said, "farewell, my wife and child and all my friends." "Good night, gentlemen." The strapping had been completed. "Farewell." "Mother." A few moments passed while Sacco's body was removed on a litter. Then Vanzetti strode into the room and at once addressed the warden: "I wish to say to you that I am innocent. I have never done a crime, some sins, but never any crime. I thank you for everything you have done for me. I am innocent of all crime, not only this one, but of all, of all. I am an innocent man." He then shook hands with several of the officials and sat in the chair. As the equipment was being attached, Vanzetti spoke for the last time, saying in a soft voice: "I now wish to forgive some people for what they are doing to me."

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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ehrmann, Herbert B. The Case That Will Not Die: Commonwealth vs. Sacco and Vanzetti. Boston, 1961.

A lively and passionate defense of the men is given by an attorney who was involved in the case.

Felix, David. Protest: Sacco-Vanzetti and the Intellectuals. Bloomington, IN, 1965.

Convinced of their guilt, the author indicts both Sacco and Vanzetti and the many intellectuals and academics who have supported them.

Frankfurter, Felix. The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti. Boston, 1927.

Written when Frankfurter was a young Harvard instructor, this first classic defense outraged the Massachusetts establishment.

Frankfurter, Marion Denman, and Jackson, Gardner, eds. The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti. New York, 1928.

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Morgan, Edmund M., and Joughlin, Louis. The Legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti. New York, 1948; Chicago, 1964.

The results of an exhaustive examination of all available evidence that finds the defendants innocent.

Russell, Francis. Tragedy in Dedham. New York, 1962.

An engagingly written account that introduces the controversial theory that Sacco was guilty and Vanzetti innocent.

CHAPTER I

OPENING OF THE TRIAL: DAYS 1 THROUGH 5, 31 MAY-6 JUNE 1921*

The trial opened in Superior Court in Dedham, Massachusetts, on 31 May 1921. The first days included Judge Thayer's statement to prospective jurors and the eventual swearing in of the jury, which took place at an unusual postmidnight hour. The process of jury selection was protested by the defense in the first major clash between the judge and defense attorneys. The indictments were formally read, the prosecution's opening statement presented, and the parade of witnesses began.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1929), 1:1ff.

CHAPTER II

THE PROSECUTION'S CASE BEGINS DAYS 7 THROUGH 10, 8-11 JUNE 1921*

Through these early days District Attorney Katzmann unfolded the essentials of the prosecution's case. Witnesses testified to the make and model of the killers' automobile, described suspicious loiterers who had been at the crime scene earlier that day, and depicted (often from afar) the events of the crime itself. One witness provided the first direct identification of Sacco as the killer. As this testimony evolved the defense parried, seeking to qualify the evidence and diminish the credibility of the witnesses.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1929), 1:115ff.

CHAPTER III

THE PROSECUTION'S CASE CONTINUES DAYS 11 THROUGH 16, 13-18 JUNE 1921*

The prosecution's case continued to unfold, punctuated by defense attempts to shake witnesses' credibility. As is usual in such proceedings, witnesses were smoothly led to definite conclusions by the one side, then subjected to compromising interrogation that demanded the most precise recollection of minute detail and sequence by the other. The standard result of this exercise tends toward antithesis.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1929), 1:369ff.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROSECUTION RESTS AND THE DEFENSE OPENS DAYS 18 THROUGH 25, 21-29 JUNE 1921*

Crucial and provocative developments marked the seven days of testimony represented in this chapter as the prosecution rested and the defense opened. Each side introduced two ballistics experts whose elaborate and conflicting testimony of the prosecution's witnesses sought to tie the defendants directly to the murder. Both Sacco and Vanzetti were armed at the time of their arrest, and each also was carrying extra ammunition. Nonetheless, the police had failed to mark any of the bullets or shells for later identification and had not even established an accurate count of the actual ammunition seized. Thus, what was later offered in evidence was subject to great dispute.

This arcane and argumentative testimony, as well as the competence and veracity of some of the experts, has remained a contentious element of the case ever since. For instance, State Police Chief Captain William H. Proctor later revealed a prearranged understanding with District Attorney Katzmann by which Proctor would seem to suggest without actually saying so that the fatal bullet had passed through Sacco's gun, a fact that he himself doubted. Many other witnesses also testified over this period, with the established pattern of thrust and parry on questions of identification and alibi continuing.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 2:873ff.

CHAPTER V
TESTIMONY OF BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI*

This chapter contains the testimony of Vanzetti in its entirety. After being led through the pertinent chronology of facts and interpretations by his attorney, Vanzetti faced the cross-examination of the district attorney. Katzmann attacked several points, most notably Vanzetti's admissions of draft evasion. The defendant made no secret of this episode, and the district attorney did not dispute the facts. What Katzmann leveled was an emotional charge, an admission of ideas and actions that must have jolted the patriotic men of the jury, particularly within this context of political bigotry. Katzmann also contested Vanzetti's stated reasons for lying in pretrial interrogations. He attempted to prove that the defendant's lies and suspicious behavior were not attempts to shield radical friends or explained by his radicalism.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 2:1689-1812.

CHAPTER VI
TESTIMONY OF NICOLA SACCO AND ROSE SACCO*

District Attorney Katzmann's cross-examination of Nicola Sacco was an extraordinary event in the history of American jurisprudence. Katzmann developed a comprehensive and complex tactical argument that focused on Sacco's beliefs, which the defendant freely and passionately proclaimed. The district attorney's skillful questions elicited responses from Sacco that, like Vanzetti's, ran counter to the patriotic sensibilities of the jury. Even more importantly, however, Katzmann charged that Sacco, indeed both defendants, had lied in their initial interrogations for the simple reason that they were conscious of the crimes they had committed. Katzmann argued that radical beliefs and the professed desire to shield their political allies had nothing to do with these admitted lies. Consequently, both the ideological radicalism that Sacco confessed and the "consciousness of guilt" that Katzmann proclaimed were presented as evidence by the prosecution. Soon after her husband left the stand, Rose Sacco briefly attempted to corroborate his testimony.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 2:1817-1979, 2021-23, 2052-69.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEFENSE CONCLUDES, 13 JULY 1921*

The two defense counsels present their concluding arguments to the jury.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 2:2122-79.

CHAPTER VIII

JURY CHARGE AND VERDICT, 14 JULY 1921*

On the morning of 14 July Judge Webster Thayer delivered a lengthy charge to the jury. During the afternoon the jury retired for deliberations, returning a few hours later with their verdict.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 2:2239-66.

CHAPTER IX
THE MADEIROS CONFESSION*

In November 1925, as the various appeals on behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti extended the case's history to five and one-half years, a startling development occurred. A professional criminal named Celestino Madeiros, already convicted of murder, confessed his participation in the South Braintree crime.

The text of this chapter consists of Judge Thayer's fifty-five-page decision, dated 22 October 1926, denying the defendants' motion for a new trial based on the Madeiros confession. Thayer devotes his decision to a review of the trial, dismisses Madeiros's story, and proceeds to write a comprehensive defense of his own actions and those of District Attorney Katzmann, while citing the various decisions of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court as final confirmation. Thayer then proceeds to excoriate the defense counsel for questioning the integrity and wisdom of the legal officers of the United States and of Massachusetts, "these two great governments."

*Documents in this chapter were taken from The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York, 1928-29), 5:4722-23, 4726-77.

CHAPTER X
LETTERS FROM PRISON*

Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested on 5 May 1920 and incarcerated at the Dedham jail. For over seven years, until their execution in August 1927, they were never free a single day. Sacco remained at the Dedham jail almost continuously until shortly before his death; Vanzetti spent nearly all of his time at the Charlestown State Prison. This chapter includes selections from letters written by the prisoners during the period prior to their final appeals in mid-1927 as well as the brief autobiographical statement of Vanzetti, which was published in 1924 as The Story of a Proletarian Life.

*Documents in this chapter were taken from Marion Denman Frankfurter and Gardner Jackson, eds., The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti (New York, 1928), pp. 6ff; and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, The Story of a Proletarian Life (Boston, 1924), pp. 9-24.

CHAPTER XI

CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC OPINION: POPULAR MAGAZINES, 1921-30

The Sacco-Vanzetti case has never ceased to attract public attention. Throughout the 1920s newsmagazines almost continuously reflected the nearly insatiable interest in the case. The following small selection represents the range of opinions that flourished as the case proceeded to its conclusion.

The documents in Chapter XI were taken from the following sources:

- Doc. 1: "The Sacco-Vanzetti Case," Survey 46 (16 August 1921): 584.
- Doc. 2: "Our Communist 'Martyrs' Disturbing the World," Literary Digest 71 (10 December 1921): 34, 36, 38-40, 42.
- Doc. 3: Elizabeth Glendower Evans, "Sacco and Vanzetti," Survey 56 (15 June 1926): 364-65, 393.
- Doc. 4: "The Cobbler and Pedler Whose Fates Stir the World," Literary Digest 93 (23 April 1927): 5-6.
- Doc. 5: "The Sacco-Vanzetti Case," Literary Digest 94 (13 August 1927): 9.
- Doc. 6: "The Law's Delay," Outlook 146 (24 August 1927): 530-31.
- Doc. 7: "A Trial of the Law," Outlook 146 (31 August 1927): 562.
- Doc. 8: A. A. Berle, Jr., "Commonwealth vs. Sacco and Vanzetti," Survey 58 (1 September 1927): 489.
- Doc. 9: "What Does the Sacco-Vanzetti Case Teach?" Literary Digest 94 (3 September 1927): 5-7.
- Doc. 10: "The Progress of the World," The American Review of Reviews 76 (September 1927): 227-33.
- Doc. 11: Paul U. Kellogg, "One Show of Hands," Survey 58 (15 August-15 September 1927): 533-34, 571.
- Doc. 12: "On the Sacco-Vanzetti Case," Outlook 147 (7 September 1927): 16-18.
- Doc. 13: Louis Start, "The Grounds for Doubt," Survey 59 (27 October 1927): 38-41, 55-57.
- Doc. 14: Edna St. Vincent Millay, "Fear," Outlook 147 (9 November 1927): 293-95, 310.
- Doc. 15: Silas Bent, "Checking Up the Vanzetti Story," Outlook and Independent 150 (7 November 1928): 1099-1101.
- Doc. 16: Waldo L. Cook, "A Celebrated Trial," Survey 62 (1 August 1929): 490-91, 507, 509.
- Doc. 17: "Governor Fuller in Berlin," Living Age 339 (November 1930): 320.

CHAPTER XII

FINAL DAYS, APRIL-AUGUST 1927*

This chapter contains both the official and the personal documents that marked the last six months of the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti.

The documents in this chapter were taken from the following sources:

- Doc. 1: Statements by Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Transcript of the Record of the Trial and Subsequent Proceedings, 6 vols. (New York: Holt, 1928-29), 5:4896-4905 (hereafter cited as SVT).
- Doc. 2: Statement by Bartolomeo Vanzetti to Governor Alvan T. Fuller and to Council of Massachusetts, 3 May 1927, SVT, 5:4910-23.
- Doc. 3: Nicola Sacco to Ines Sacco, 27 July 1927, The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti, ed. Marion Denman Frankfurter and Gardner Jackson (New York: Viking Press, 1928), pp. 67-69.
- Doc. 4: Vanzetti to Alice Stone Blackwell, 27 July 1927, Letters, pp. 310-12.
- Doc. 5: Vanzetti to Mrs. Evans, 27 July 1927, Letters, p. 313.
- Doc. 6: Report of the Advisory Committee to His Excellency Alvan T. Fuller, 27 July 1927, SVT, 5:5378h-78z.
- Doc. 7: Official transcript of Governor Fuller's decision and Advisory Committee's report on the appeal of Sacco and Vanzetti, 3 August 1927.
- Doc. 8: Vanzetti to the Defense Committee, 4 August 1927, Letters, pp. 313-14.
- Doc. 9: Vanzetti to Mrs. Evans, 4 August 1927, Letters, pp. 314-16.
- Doc. 10: Sacco to friends and comrades, 4 August 1927, Letters, p. 69.
- Doc. 11: Farewell letters: Vanzetti to Mary Donovan, Mrs. Evans, and Mrs. Winslow, 6-12 August 1927, Letters, pp. 317-18.
- Doc. 12: Nicola Sacco to Dante Sacco, 18 August 1927, Letters, pp. 70-74.
- Doc. 13: Vanzetti and Sacco to the Defense Committee, 21 August 1927, Letters, pp. 320-21.
- Doc. 14: Vanzetti to Dante Sacco, 21 August 1927, Letters, pp. 321-23.
- Doc. 15: Vanzetti to H. W. L. Dana, 22 August 1927, Letters, pp. 324-26.
- Doc. 16: Record by W. G. Thompson of Vanzetti's last statement, 22 August 1927. Reprinted in Atlantic Monthly (February 1928).