

AFD Ep 452 Links and Notes - Burlington railroad strike of 1888 [Bill/Rachel] - Recording Dec 11, 2022

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burlington_railroad_strike_of_1888
- <https://web.archive.org/web/20170423151357/http://publications.newberry.org/cbq/?p=872>
- Newspaper articles from the Chicago Tribune
- [Intro - Rachel] At time of recording, we are few weeks past the fall 2022 vote by the union representing railroad engineers not to strike by very narrow margins and the almost equally narrow vote by the union representing train conductors to reject a proposed contract and potentially strike; however this was also quickly followed by Congress passing a law banning such a strike and enforcing the contract proposal anyway, which President Joe Biden immediately signed. As we have discussed on past episodes about labor unrest on US railroads historically, one of the factors that most often seemed to doom any strike action – no matter how many people decided to walk off the job – was whether or not the engineers and firemen decided to support or lead a strike, instead of continuing to operate trains normally while supporting workers picketed. In [our November 20, 2022 episode \(#449\)](#) on the Great Southwest Railroad Strike of 1886 by the Knights of Labor, we noted that while many unions participated in that strike and had the sympathies of many engineers and firemen, those key unions did not end up refusing to work, and so the trains continued to move more often than not, as long as the railroad could get them operational and ready to roll out without the usual support workers. The engineers and firemen in 1886 had remained reticent to strike after the failures of the nationwide Great Railroad Strike of 1877, which we covered in [episode 315 in July 2020](#). Less than two years after the 1886 strike on the Gould lines in Missouri and Texas and nearby, a smaller strike broke out on a different railroad, and this time the engineers and firemen both decided to give striking another shot, but once again things quickly fell apart, and it made them reluctant to participate in further strikes yet again, including quite famously the attempted industry-wide railroad strike in 1894, known as the Pullman strike. The unsuccessful 1888 strike is the subject of today's episode and it played out on a single railroad: the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy, also known as “the Q” or “the Burlington,” a railroad that provided extensive cattle freight service into Chicago's meatpacking industry, lumber deliveries to Chicago, as well as some suburban Chicago commuter rail service. This was a relatively small strike, focusing on the most elite workers on the railroad, but it was an extremely influential affair because of how the experience shifted the views of one particular leader at the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, a certain Eugene V. Debs, future Pullman strike leader, who had been until then an advocate for labor peace with management and a firm defender of specialized craft unionism, instead of industrial unionism covering all occupations within a single business or even an entire industry. The 1888 strike was also significant because it was an early test for the newly created Interstate Commerce Commission, since the strike affected a number of states, including Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, and some others, and because the strikers had hoped they might rally sympathy actions on other nearby lines.
- [Bill] So, why did the Burlington engineers and firemen decide to strike in 1888, instead of backing down, as their unions typically did? While many other railroads deliberately promoted good relations with their unionized engineers and firemen in order to secure their cooperation against the other unions during strike actions, this approach was not shared by the (even more than typical) anti-union leadership of the CB&Q, which especially smelled blood in the water after the defeat of the nearby 1886 strikes by the Knights of Labor, organizing among the other craft unions in the industry. The crux of the issue on the Q for engineers and firemen considering going out on strike was that

railroad's strong commitment to using a different wage formula for paying them than nearby competing peer railroads, whose simplified miles-operated formula tended to pay engineers and firemen better overall. While other railroads, particularly in the past, would have decided it was safest to reach a compromise with them and keep them onside against other unionists, Burlington President Charles Elliot Perkins and General Manager Henry B. Stone decided to correctly gamble that the unions were weak and vulnerable and that they could win a showdown against even their most skilled workers. Although they were taken by surprise by the strike actually breaking out in late February 1888, and although they were even more surprised by a near-total walkout by the two unions instead of a significant share remaining at their posts, the railroad's management nevertheless managed to hire enough skilled replacement workers quickly enough to put the whole matter to bed in less than two months, and no amount of protests over the rest of the year were able to move them, eventually leading to a total surrender by the two unions, whose workers had all been permanently replaced already. The company also heavily relied on Pinkerton Agents both for security and to infiltrate and provoke the striking workers into taking actions the public would reject, such as dynamite attacks.

- [Rachel] Timeline of events:

- January 23, 1888: A grievance committee meeting of the B of LE in Burlington, Iowa, joined by the adjusting committee of B of LF. The two bodies met separately to list their individual concerns before a joint meeting with 14 delegates from each body on January 25. The B of LE's chief concern was the termination of an engineer for failing to keep a schedule. The terminated engineer was a major member of the B of LE's previous grievance committee. The joint grievance committee failed to get the fired engineer reinstated by CB&Q's General Manager Henry B. Stone, leaving a lot of ill will towards the railroad on the part of the Brotherhoods.
- February 15: The grievance committee brought forward a proposal for a change in pay for employees. Pay was determined by the condition of the routes and the seniority of employees. Neighboring railroads were paid based on mileage, which resulted in a higher pay rate than CB&Q. The committee proposed a switch to a mileage-based rate, which Stone refused via a letter sent on February 22. A series of face-to-face meetings followed between Stone and labor leadership, where Stone continued to reject the workers' proposal. The head of the B of LE Peter M. Arthur and the head of the B of LF Frank P. Sargent met with Stone on February 23, where they noted that 90% of neighboring roads used a mileage-based pay rate, and they were asking no more than what those other engineers and firemen received. They even offered a lower rate that was previously proposed - 3.5 cents/mile for passenger lines rather than their initial demand of 4 cents/mile, but Stone stood firm. After this failed meeting, Arthur and Sargent sent a telegram to CB&Q President Charles Elliot Perkins stating their intention to strike, but also noting that they were prepared to negotiate in good faith to prevent a strike from occurring. "Will accept the same terms we made with the Chicago & Alton and Santa Fe systems, three and one-half cents per mile passenger service, four cents per mile freight service; 60 percent of the above rates for firemen."
- February 24: Perkins sends his response: "At this distance, and without knowing more than I do about the merits of the grievances complained of, it is impossible for me to have definit [sic] opinions or give definit [sic] orders ... The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy is ready and expects to pay at least as good wages as are paid by its neighbors, but the railroad situation is not such as to justify any general increase at present, and I fear an attempt to force it would only aggravate

this situation. I have felt and still feel confident that a way can be found for satisfactorily adjusting any real grievances which may have grown up since matters were settled two years ago, and I hope for the sake of all concerned that nothing will be done hastily. I expect to be in Chicago next week.”

- February 24-26: The joint committee is dissatisfied with Perkins’s telegram and votes for a strike, set to begin Monday, February 27. The delegates go home to announce the strike to their fellow workers in person, and to begin preparations for the strike. On February 26, the company is informed of the impending strike. The announcement was delayed in the hopes that a resolution would be found before the announcement went live.
- February 27: At 4 am, engineers and firemen abandoned their engines at their terminal point. If they were on the road, they returned to the nearest terminal point. CB&Q, were taken by surprise by the short notice of the strike, and quickly scrambled to keep the suburban passenger lines running as their top priority, as they were the second largest commuter line in the region. No freight would run until full passenger service was restored. There was an almost total walkout among enginemen; only 22 engineers out of 1052 and 23 firemen out of 1085 remained on the job after the strike deadline. This left the company scrambling to find people who could work the engines. They called on employees including the Superintendent of the Iowa lines, the superintendents of the telegraph and water service, 14 conductors and several brakemen. Only four new engineers were hired as strikebreakers in the first three days of the strike. However, the company quickly began recruiting strikebreakers to work on the engines to replace the emergency enginemen pulled from management. Perkins also hired Pinkerton agents
- March 3: A striking engineer, George Watts, was fatally shot by a deputized Burlington foreman in Brookfield, Missouri.
- March 5: The union asked union members on other lines to boycott CB&Q by refusing to load freight on its trains.
- March 8: Perkins sought a federal injunction that would force other lines to load freight on CB&Q trains.
- March 13: The federal court issued the injunction, and almost every aspect of labor relations on every railroad involved in interstate commerce came under court control.
- March 30: Riots in Aurora, Illinois, where strikers burned company buildings and a passenger coach.
- April 28: In Galesburg, Illinois, a strikebreaker named Albert Hedberg shot two strikers. One of the men, Burlington engineer Herbert W. Newell, died from his wounds.
- May - July 1888: A series of small dynamite explosions on CB&Q tracks. Nobody is hurt in these explosions, but 6 men are arrested in the ensuing investigation.
- July 13, the trial for the 6 men accused of sabotaging the tracks begins. One of the defendants, “J.Q. Wilson”, is identified as a Pinkerton infiltrator named Mulligan, and his charges are dropped. The leader of the plot, John A. Bauereisen, is convicted and receives the longest sentence of the group, two years.
- January 1889: The strike is officially ended by the B of LE and B of LF, a complete failure for the unions. All of the striking enginemen were successfully replaced by the company.
- [Bill] Newspaper clippings notes: As we often do now when we cover historical railroad strikes, we have gathered some contemporary news clippings from newspapers of the

relevant time and place, to get a sense of what the general public was reading about these events, whether positive coverage or more frequently negative coverage...

- [Bill] Tuesday Feb 28 (Chicago Tribune)

- Page 1:

- Much of the coverage of the first day of the strike, the previous day, focused on the spectacular crash in Naperville IL (outside Chicago) by a runaway locomotive under a replacement crew called up from the shops into a mail car it was supposed to be linking up to and moving. The most severely injured person was a clerk in the mail car who happened to be the half-brother of a Chicago Congressman, adding another layer of sensational newsworthiness. After the locomotive collided with the mail car at about 40 miles per hour, according to eyewitnesses, that man ended up pinned in the wreckage for an hour and a half. Given the strict contracts railroads had for providing federal mail service, it seems likely that the untrained engineer, who had made several mistakes leading up to the collision, was feeling under pressure to try to get back on his way, further compounding mistakes.
- The paper also emphasized that the union had managed to take the company by surprise by announcing the strike on a Sunday afternoon barely more than 12 hours before it would commence in the early hours of Monday.
- Colorfully commenting on the white-collar company employees being called up to service as trainmen on short notice, the paper wrote "It is a safe surmise that their slumbers were broken by nightmares in which a horrible railroad disaster formed the central figure." On the other hand, a lot of coverage simply noted that these employees had managed to deliver various suburban morning and afternoon commuter trains into and out of Chicago well enough, even if they were in some cases still wearing the retail tags on their new overalls. (continues page 3)
- The Tribune interviewed Burlington President Charles Elliot Perkins about the impasse in negotiations. He remarked, "We cannot turn over the control or management of the road to our employees..." Perkins was asked how many engineers and firemen worked for the railroad, and the answer was about 1000 each, consistent with the overview Rachel presented earlier, which gives us a sense of the relatively small scale of the strike compared to some others we have discussed on the show. Perkins was asked where he thought he could find that many replacement workers quickly and he commented that a recent failed strike attempt on the Reading Railroad in Pennsylvania had left a great number of engineers unemployed and that there was a large pool of engineers working on New England short lines who might be eager for more work at better pay on a bigger railroad. (Note: I actually looked up the strike attempt mentioned in Pennsylvania, and it seems that Perkins might have been somewhat mistaken on the details, because in fact the Brotherhood of Engineers there stood very enthusiastically with the railroad against certain other workers, organized in the Knights of Labor, and it was some of these non-engineers who reportedly

ended up relocating to the midwest to work for the Burlington in retaliation for the gleeful Brotherhood of Engineers actions on the Reading, at least according to a footnote in [an article from 1968 on labor unrest in Pennsylvania coal country in 1887 and 1888.](#))

The Reading situation comes up again in later Tribune articles.

- The union leaders recounted to the Tribune what they perceived as weeks of bad-faith negotiations from the company in the run-up to the strike.
- Management at other peer railroads were quoted anonymously as believing that the strike would fail if it did not spread beyond the Burlington and that therefore they were prepared to take very careful measures to ensure that it did not spread to their own railroads and undermine the general cause of railroad management everywhere in the region.
- The Tribune asserted that the strike was partially caused by the more militant, pro-striking wing of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers gaining control of leadership, which they had previously not been able to control.
- Page 2:
 - The Tribune quotes extensively here from a Knights of Labor railroad worker from a different union saying that the Brotherhoods would lose the fight and be replaced by Knights of Labor members retaliating for 1886. This was a theme repeated throughout the Tribune's coverage on February 28th, especially on page 3, as we will discuss.
 - On the other hand, a different worker observing the events of the previous day enthusiastically predicted a general strike of engineers across the region beginning within a week, which of course did not materialize.
 - The Tribune summarized the views of various newspapers from around the region about the first day of striking, with some expressing hostility to the strike, some staking out a neutral view wishing for labor peace to return, and a few arguing that the railroad either should or would make concessions to end the strike and that the rarity of an engineers strike pointed to the Burlington being out of line with peer railroads.
 - Another smaller wreck was reported in Iowa where a train operated by a mechanic failed to stop at a crossing point with a different railroad and hit a locomotive from that railroad.
 - One passenger train going from Nebraska to Chicago saw most of the passengers hurriedly get off the train at the first station they stopped at because of how roughly the replacement crew was running it.
 - It is mentioned that service out in Wyoming stopped completely for lack of replacement crews. The railroad was mostly concentrated across Illinois and oriented to Chicago but did have trackage out to Colorado and Wyoming.
- Page 3:
 - The company management emphasized to the Tribune that they were completely confident of victory, deluged by job applications, and holding the enthusiastic loyalty and cooperation of the train

- conductors. They also accused strikers of interfering with train operations by jumping onto stopped trains and setting the brakes.
- One alleged statement to the Tribune from an applicant outside one of the Burlington offices was that he had lost his job during the 1886 strike nearby and blamed the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers for that defeat and his loss of work, so he was prepared to take a job from one of them in response. However, the Knights of Labor, including local leadership, was careful to emphasize to the Tribune that as an organization they were standing in solidarity with the two Brotherhoods, and although they were not joining them on strike, they were also not supplying scabs in retaliation for the events of 1886. The District Assembly 24 of the KofL passed a resolution formally discouraging scabbing to help the Q.
 - The company claimed they did not have a lot of perishable freight sitting around when the strike began. Unclear if this is accurate. They did apparently prioritize dealing with a trainload of hogs as quickly as possible, according to the Tribune. Typically the Burlington handled 2,500 head of cattle per day through Chicago.
 - Hundreds of contingent workers who handled freight loading and unloading, especially on the Chicago end and particularly for lumber cargos, were laid off as soon as the strike began, although they weren't connected with it, because of the expectation of reduced need for their services.
 - One sort of odd feature mentioned throughout the coverage in the Tribune of the first day of strike action is the apparent absence of visible striking demonstrations, such as picketing, in Chicago or indeed other towns (as mentioned on page 2). It was repeatedly emphasized that no one seemed to be stopping or even attempting to talk to any person approaching a train to serve as a replacement crew. This might be explained by the relatively smaller size of these two unions, but it also might be explained by a couple passing lines in the coverage about how the unions were holding continuous local assemblies to discuss the situation and maintain morale, which had the side effect of keeping disgruntled strikers away from the railroad properties. The exception not the rule were stories of scab crews being entreated on day one to abandon their trains. There's no mention of any meetings or rallies open to the public either, which might have helped boost support. Closed sessions for members only, all day long, seems like it would be a tactic doomed to failure. Perhaps this was due to the long shadow of the Haymarket bombing in 1886 and the big trial.
 - Passenger trains were prioritized for continued operations before freight trains as a way of triaging the small number of replacement crews to run trains.
 - One of the other strike demands was elaborated in the Tribune coverage and they interviewed both union members and management employees on other railroads to get a perspective on the nature of the dispute. The reason they were seeking a less complicated pay formula was not just for improving wages by going to a per-mile system but also to eliminate certain seniority wage benefits, which they believed were having the opposite

effect of their supposed perks for more experienced enginemen: Instead of getting paid better after a few years of service, these workers were getting consistently fired for phony pretexts as soon as they qualified for better pay, so that the railroad could replace them with someone less experienced and thus less expensive. By pushing for a more consistent system, or at least having experience bonuses kick in much earlier in a worker's career, it would be harder to lay off experienced workers to save money... The unions noted that basically all the nearby railroads had already changed the compensation system. The Q held out.

- The unions also sought a just-cause clause on terminations with a process for investigating the alleged cause. And they emphasized a view that the railroad was under-staffing the number of crews relative to the workload, a familiar contention to our present-day ears. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen gave an example of a particular section of Burlington trackage uphill where each fireman would need to physically shovel four tons of coal in under two hours to get there and then immediately shovel four tons of replacement coal at the top of the hill.
- One interesting point the Tribune made was that the actual membership of engineers and firemen in their respective unions was a small fraction of all those working in those jobs nationwide, which left strikes like this vulnerable to the railroad importing non-union but experienced engineers and firemen from elsewhere who didn't care about the Brotherhoods. Skilled engineers were not necessarily easy to come by, but not impossible.
- Eugene Debs is mentioned among the names of national leadership present in Chicago for the strike on the first evening, and in his capacity as the union's treasurer he is quoted on the financial preparations of the union to try to win the strike. Apparently the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers had a very large treasury banked up when the Burlington strike broke out at the end of February 1888, something that was confirmed when the Brotherhood offered to pay potential scab engineers not to work at all for the duration of the strike. Later in another article, a scheme is discussed to even try paying other railroads to divert traffic, although it is not clear if this was a real idea or fanciful rumor. But it would seem that even a large war chest was no guarantee of success on strike.
- [Bill] Mar 3 Morning Edition
 - The Tribune reported that after several days of striking, the CB&Q's passenger service seemed to have been almost fully restored, even if freight was still reduced, and the railroad's strategy appeared to be a "success" while the strikers' approach focused around assembly meetings appeared to be "ineffectual"
 - Supposedly the railroad managed to hire some 450 replacement engineers in less than a week to cover the roughly 1000 on strike. The Tribune's analysis was that if the replacement engineers remained at their new posts, the strike was already functionally over, but if the strikers changed tactics and found a way to get the replacement workers to leave their new jobs, then the strike might find new life.

- The Brotherhood worked to reach an agreement with the Knights of Labor in Pennsylvania to try to stop Brotherhood members there from scabbing against Knights members on the Reading who were in turn scabbing against the Brotherhood on the Burlington, but both railroads seemed to be eager to work together to make sure the workers would be maximally pitted against each other in these two ongoing disputes. The Reading said they wouldn't hire back any of their former employees, and the Burlington said they would pay a great deal to keep them.
- The unions alleged that 12 nearby railroads were violating pronouncements of neutrality by secretly carrying Burlington freight over their own lines to ease the pressure on the Burlington in their dispute.
- Lumber customers of the Burlington reported that with the exception of a few urgent shipments that had been fouled up by the opening of the strike, they did not feel they were being particularly hurt by it and that service was starting to resume at the required pace. One commented that the brief lull had given his company time to catch up on other tasks that needed doing anyway.
- Emphasis on non-violence and minimal confrontation of any kind continued to be mentioned. Pinkerton agents riding on board locomotives were described by the Tribune as being more for "ornamentation" than anything else. In fact one Superintendent was quoted denying that any of the railroad's locomotives had been disabled at all.
- The Brotherhood of Engineers released a lengthy statement to the press re-outlining their position in the dispute and what their grievances were. Nothing really new came up except a mild expression of resentment that the press had perhaps not fairly represented the case to the public.
- [Bill] Mar 4: A more editorial-type column appeared on the first Sunday since the start of the strike on Monday the 27th. The Tribune argued that the general public rejected 9 out of 10 of the two Brotherhoods' grievances against the Burlington as "unreasonable." Worse, it was supposedly becoming clear that despite the frequent repetition of the existence of a long list of demands, only two of them seemed to be the real point of contention leading to a strike. The Tribune editorialized that in fact the Burlington was unique relative to nearby railroads and thus had cause to maintain a different compensation formula for engineers and firemen, particularly because adopting the standardized system would cause certain minor branch lines (of which they reportedly had many) to become unprofitable to operate, as they were long in miles but low in customers. The editorial also opined that the public would not tolerate the spread of the strike to other railroads who had actually already conceded to Brotherhood demands.
- [Rachel] Mar 5: NY and Brooklyn-based B of LE members met in Tammany Hall to endorse the CB&Q strike, and to throw their support behind the expansion of the strike to neighboring lines if there isn't a speedy resolution to the strike. St. Paul engineers also endorsed the strike, and took up a collection of money to support the strikers. They also supported a boycott of "Q" freight. Rumors of strikes on neighboring lines start to circulate, but none are confirmed. Burlington's passenger lines are running normally in most locations, but freight is still backed up and struggling to resume normal service. Scab workers are replacing the striking workers at a quick rate in some locations on the lines.
- [Rachel] Mar 9: A call for arbitration, even suggesting that the railroad can afford a wage increase with their great profits! But they also point out that management is claiming a problem with the discipline of the employees. They propose that the

Government issues licenses to the railroad employees, with the ability to revoke those licenses if the employees threaten to strike and block commerce. The government would have the authority to arbitrate all grievances under such a system.

- [Rachel] Mar 11: The Santa Fe engineers threaten a strike unless a boycott of the "Q" is allowed. There is much talk of the impending federal injunction. Engineers on other lines don't intend on running afoul of it and ending up in jail for contempt. There is an open letter from the wife of a railroad employee, talking about how a general strike would make her family suffer, and calls the strikers selfish and unthinking of how the strike impacts families like hers.
- [Rachel] Mar 14: Calls for a Congressional ban on railroad strikes, similar to the existing ban on strikes stopping oceanic commerce. Says workers are holding the economy hostage and that the general public is injured by the strikers.
- [Rachel] Mar 20: Rumors of strikes on other Roads abound. Iowa Central was on strike, with many other threatening. The Burlington strikers were hoping for a quick resolution, with a potential end coming that week.
- [Rachel] Apr 1: The Ft. Wayne and St. Paul lines suffer strikes of their own, and St. Paul commuter lines are stopped for the day, leaving suburbanites without service. On the other hand, the Lake Shore Road handled "Q" cars without incident. Arthur of the B of LE states that there are no intentions for a general strike, and he denounced the actions of the Santa Fe engineers, saying that he only approved of Burlington engineers leaving their post.
- [Rachel] Apr 3: The B of LE offer to seek arbitration to settle the strike. They are willing to accept any reasonable offer from the company. Although there are rumblings about switchmen and enginemen on neighboring lines to boycott CB&Q freight, they are handling transfers as usual. There are some confrontations between them and the scab workers, but nothing major happens.
- [Rachel] Apr 4: The Tribune reports on the Congressional investigations into the "Q" strikes, and again calls for a radical solution to this strike and any future rail strikes: a Congressional ban on strikes for railroad workers.
- [Rachel] Apr 5:
 - Switchmen on other lines (Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul and Ft. Wayne) tried to start a boycott, but enginemen don't join in, forcing the switchmen to end their efforts to support the CB&Q strikers. The freight lines were still running on reduced capacity, but they were able to handle 60% of a normal day's work. Company officials expressed their readiness to handle any business that came their way, and their lumber freight had bounced back. The Tribune foresees the strike ending soon.
 - On an interesting note, there was a report about a court case where a striking engineer testified against his own father. The father, E.P. Sammis, had run a locomotive from Aurora to Galesburg on Feb 27 while drunk to the point that he needed assistance to board the engine. The striking son, W.C. Sammis wanted to demonstrate through his testimony the need for CB&Q to employ qualified, competent engineers, implying that the company needed to agree to the union's demands, end the strike and bring the strikers back to work.
- [Rachel] Apr 8: The strike is effectively over at this point. Striking doesn't pay, and the workers struck in vain. The opinion of the author was basically ~They effed around, and they found out.~ Arbitration would be the better path to resolving grievances, and supply and demand is the natural and immutable law of the land.

- [Bill] Apr 16: By April 16, the Chicago Tribune estimated that the railroad had lost \$1.8 million in traffic receipts and spent \$180,000 on private security, \$50,000 on scab workers, \$50,000 on repairs to damaged property, and so on. They also estimated hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost wages to the workers.
- [Bill Apr 21: This Chicago Tribune article promised that the unions were about to spend significantly on some complicated venture to incentivize diversion of freight traffic away from the Q and over rival lines. This didn't really transpire, but it does underscore the interesting reality that there were so many rail lines going into Chicago that shipping customers were not particularly threatened long-term by a strike after the initial opening confusion because they could simply move their business to competing railroads if need be. Presumably that means they didn't feel a need to add pressure for a settlement. The same article from April 21 also reported that the strikers were very confident that the new Interstate Commerce Commission would investigate their situation and favorably recommend a bill to Congress supporting arbitration, which would in turn surely be passed immediately. This was also far too optimistic, as it turned out.
- [Bill] A June 8 1888 poster in support of the strike, alluding to the big crash under a strikebreaker's operation on the first day of the strike:
 - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:88-cb%26q-scabroute-poster.jpg> *Take the Great American Scab Route: The C.B.&Q. ☠☠ Prepare to Meet Thy God! ☠☠ Close Connections with the Hereafter | Through Tickets to Points on the Styx! N.B. - - - Death Claims Promptly Settled. Paul Morton, General Prevaricator and Monumental Liar. From the Wymore Democrat [of Nebraska]: "The strike is not off, nor will it be until the C.B.&Q. recognizes the fact that it must pay as good wages as its competitors and then sign a treaty with its old engineers and firemen who had worked and been so successful in bringing it up to its former standing and standard of excellence. The public realize the fact that a railroad like the C.B.&Q. cannot be run with threshing machine engineers and vagrants and drunkards in the places of their old reliable engineers and firemen; and the working men and their friends, or the business public of good judgment, will not patronize a road which is at present a menace to life and property, and a road which seeks to crush out an organization which has done more to make traveling a safety than all the companies on this continent combined, by placing competent and sober men on the engines, and an organization which practices industry, sobriety, truth, justice and morality."* COMMITTEE. St. Joseph, June 8, 1888.
- [Bill] Miscellaneous note: Unlike many of his peers among railroad executives at the time, CB&Q President Charles Elliott Perkins was not a former Civil War officer by background and as far as I know he did not serve at all, despite being squarely in the age bracket for normal service or conscription in the war. He was instead a railroad clerk at his uncle's railroad. In 1886, during the Great Southwest Strike on the Gould railroads nearby, he ordered all CB&Q workers to quit the Knights of Labor or be fired. By the start of 1888, he was committed to ending all unionization of any kind on his railroad. His intense hostility is often credited with shifting Eugene Debs's views on labor relations permanently, as mentioned at the beginning of the episode.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Elliott_Perkins