

FALSE REPORT OF MOB BRINGS CALL TO POLICE

Officers Hurry To Salisbury When Told Of Projected Clash At Berlin

NEGROES AVOID WICOMICO SEAT

Lynching Is Blamed On Baltimore Communist Group's Activity

By LOUIS J. O'DONNELL
(Continued from Page 1)

to have been a mob had dispersed and they remained in this city.

Only two of three of Salisbury's Negro population of 1,500 appeared on the principal streets of the town last night.

Their scarcity was the result of efforts made during the day with the cooperation of Negro leaders to curtail the customary Saturday night influx of Negroes as a precaution against racial reaction to the lynching of Matthew Williams Friday night.

Of the citizens here who would volunteer opinions on the case, few voiced any regret at the hanging of the 35-year-old Negro who killed Daniel J. Elliott, his employer, five hours before he was lynched.

Attitude On Trial Changes

There has been a complete reversal, however, in the attitude of many of Salisbury's citizens toward the trial of Yuel Lee, Negro, accused of killing a family of four at Taylorsville. Where feeling has been strong on the point of holding the trial in an Eastern Shore county, the lynching of Williams has caused people here to believe that the trial would cause a new outbreak of one kind or another.

Deny Racial Prejudice

Responsible persons, who either were at home or in other parts of Wicomico county when the mob of 150 men took the Negro from the colored ward of the Peninsula General Hospital and marched him to the scene of the hanging, asserted there is no race prejudice in this section of the Eastern Shore.

This demonstration, they said, is the direct outcome of a meeting staged here Thursday night by a Baltimore representative of a Communist organization, which they assert was held to create sentiment against the trial of Lee, which was set for Tuesday in Cambridge, thirty-two miles from here.

"Blot On Community"

"This affair, which is a blot on the community, would never have occurred if it had not been for the interference in the Lee case of an agency in Baltimore known as the International Labor Defense League," Levin C. Bailey, State's Attorney, said.

"If that man accused of the murder of four people in Worcester county had gone to trial in the regular manner, this murder here would not have happened, and if it had the persons responsible for what happened last night would have allowed the law to take its regular course."

Mr. Bailey said the cooperation of

leaders of the Negro element to prevent possible further disorder was sought early yesterday morning. Not only was word flashed to outlying sections but employers of Negroes in this city were asked to release them from work early, with instructions to remain in their homes last night.

Mr. Bailey said he had interviewed a number of persons, but was unable to obtain any clue to the identity of the leaders of the group who marched to the hospital Friday night and, while several of them talked to N. H. Holland, chief of police, and Don Parks, a deputy sheriff, took Williams from his bed and hurled him out of a window to the crowd waiting outside.

Knew None Of Mob

Chief Holland said he does not know those who approached him, but asserted he would be able to identify them if he saw them again. The chief of police and the deputy were guarding Williams. The deputy made the same statement to authorities.

A coroner's jury was impaneled by Magistrate S. King White to investigate the case. The jury viewed the body of the Negro, recovered at day-break yesterday from a wood on the old Mount Hermon road, two and a half miles from Salisbury.

Previously the body had been taken from the scene of the lynching to the Negro quarter of the town and burned. No one could be found today who could explain the second removal.

The jury adjourned after the formality of viewing the body, subject to the call of Sheriff G. Murray Phillips.

Personnel Of Jury

It is made up of:

W. ARTHUR KENNERLY, foreman, former Mayor of Salisbury and head of a laundry company.

S. FRANK HOLLOWAY, insurance broker.

JOHN M. RICHARDSON, hardware merchant.

JOHN H. TOMLINSON, Republican county leader and retired business man.

S. IRVIN JOHNSON, manager of a chain clothing store.

WADE H. BEDSWORTH, deputy game warden, retired from active business.

VIRGIL J. DOWNING, automobile salesman.

CHARLES C. HURTT, insurance.

W. GORMAN HASTINGS, printer.

WALTER R. DISHARON, lumber dealer.

FRANK A. MITCHELL, auditor of the Eastern Shore Public Service Company.

P. MARK CAREY, insurance broker.

Jury Action Doubtful

The State's Attorney declined to state whether a special session of the grand jury would be called to aid in the investigation of the case.

"We will cross that bridge when we come to it," he said.

No special term would be warranted, he said, unless the coroner's jury, which has no set date for considering the case, places the blame for the lynching on definite persons.

Judge Joseph L. Bailey, an uncle of the State's Attorney and member of the First Judicial Circuit, who was at his home here last night when Williams was hanged, left early this morning for Cambridge, where the jurists of this district debated whether they should proceed with the trial of Yuel Lee as scheduled Tuesday.

They decided to forward the case to the Court of Appeals for a decision on the petition of Bernard Ades, Lee's counsel, for removal to Baltimore.

"All Quiet," Mayor Says

Mayor Wade H. Insley, in a formal statement issued Saturday stated that a careful investigation of the situ-

Salisbury Can Handle Situation, He Declares



MAYOR WADE H. INSLEY,
of Salisbury

ation "shows that everything is quiet."

There is no racial feeling, he asserted, and "what has happened can be safely classed as an indication directed only toward the individual concerned. There never has been any trouble here and there is not going to be now."

An additional squad of six deputy sheriffs was placed on duty with the regular force of three uniformed police for tonight. This, according to the Mayor, was done "simply as a precautionary measure." He added that "the city feels that it is amply able to handle the situation without outside help."

Sheriff Phillips said he was conducting an investigation, which, from its very nature, would have to be done on the quiet.

According to report, plans were being laid to lynch Williams at 10 P. M., but they were interrupted temporarily by an erroneous report by the Salisbury Times of the Negro's death at the hospital. He was shot by himself and by James Elliott, son of the dead crate manufacturer, after he had killed the elder Mr. Elliott.

Sponsored In Delmar

Later, the newspaper flashed a bulletin in its office window, reporting the Negro still alive, and from this point, it is said, the march to the

hospital started spontaneously. The planned descent on the hospital was sponsored in Delmar, a community on the border of Maryland and Delaware, six miles from here, and set for a specific hour.

Delmar, according to Salisbury residents, was one of the centers of Ku Klux Klan activities on the Shore when that organization was at its height. About a year and a half ago a young resident of Delmar was killed near Salisbury by a Negro who was never apprehended.

The lynching mob, however, according to eyewitnesses, was made up of residents of all parts of the lower Eastern Shore, even as far as Chincoteague, in Virginia, fifty miles away.

Today's issue of the Salisbury Times devotes eleven paragraphs to the account of the lynching, asserting that "the opinion prevails that many of those participating in the actual hanging came from other sections of the peninsula" and that "their actions were prompted by events which have occurred in their own communities."

According to those who say they have received information from their Negro employees, the Communist meeting on which they place the blame for the lynching was held in the Negro section of the town and the audience was composed entirely of Negroes.

The reports they said they received from their Negro friends—and the speakers were some of the highest city and state officials—are to the effect that the organizer from Baltimore asserted that the white employers were oppressing the Negroes on the Eastern Shore, defrauding them of their just wages and directly responsible for their unemployment.

The Negro who was lynched, it was reported, was on the borderline between low-grade intelligence and subnormality. Some persons have told authorities that they saw him pacing up and down in front of Mr. Elliott's factory on Lake street for nearly an hour before he entered and fired at his employer.

Said To Have Quoted Communist

Several hours before he is said to have repeated remarks attributed to the Communist organizer and is reported to have asserted if he ever killed a man he would shoot himself.

Williams had been employed by Mr. Elliott as a laborer in his factory at about \$1.50 a day for the last seven or eight years. Mr. Elliott, persons here who knew him said today, has stated that his factory should have been closed because of bad business conditions, but he was keeping it open to "give some of those who have worked for me a long time something to do because it's getting so near Christmas."