

WICOMICO

GRAND JURY

INVESTIGATES

Judge Bailey Instructs Jurors To Make A Sweeping Inquiry

Reviews Interference And False Accusations

List Of 102 Witnesses Summoned To Give Testimony

The Wicomico county grand jury was instructed Monday to make a sweeping investigation into the murder of Daniel J. Elliott, prominent lumber manufacturer at Salisbury on December 4th, the lynching of Matthew Williams, negro, the confessed slayer of Mr. Elliott, and the activities of communist organizations which preceded these two crimes. State's Attorney Levin C. Bailey handed Sheriff G. Murray Phillips a list of 102 witnesses, whose testimony is to be heard by the jury making its investigations.

Attorney General Wm. Preston Lane, who has co-operated with the Wicomico county prosecutor in conducting a quiet investigation, will come to Salisbury to assist in placing the results of the probe before the grand jurors.

In a lengthy charge that consumed more than a half hour, Judge Joseph L. Bailey brought the two crimes and the communistic activities on the lower Eastern Shore to the attention of the grand jury.

He reviewed the sequence of events which aroused the Shore following the murder of the four members of the Green Davis family in adjacent Worcester county and the activities of the representatives of the International Labor Defense. While not referring to the communist organization by name, he spoke of "an organization," with headquarters outside of this state, but with a branch with members in this state and recalled statements of the organization's members that the public officials were seeking to "legally lynch an innocent man charged with the crime of committing these four murders."

"To the sting of foreign interference, and I might say to the sting of false accusation the people not only of Worcester county, but throughout this entire section of the state, became much disturbed," Judge Bailey asserted. His charge follows:

Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, the purpose and the work of the Court as far as far as they can to the best of their ability is to adjust differences and aright wrongs. Your particular work in this court of which you have become a constituent and an important part will be to investigate all public wrongs, to present all parties who have committed within the jurisdiction of this county criminal offenses of an indictable nature. That is the work gentlemen of the Grand Jury that has fallen to your lot. Not altogether within this county but within this section of the state numerous events and much excitement has come and gone since the last Grand Jury organized here.

In an adjoining county on the 12 of last October members of a family of four were found murdered. Almost immediately following the murder of those four people in the adjoining county the members of an organization with headquarters outside of this state, in another state, but with a branch with members in this state began to charge and declare that the public officials of that county—to use their own language—were seeking to "legally lynch an innocent man charged with the crime of committing these four murders." That same man was later in due course, lawfully presented by Grand Jury for the murder of all four of these people in that county.

To the sting of foreign interference and I might say to the sting of false accusation the people not only of that county but throughout this entire section of the state became much disturbed. While unfounded charges were coming to us from hither and thither along the line of the officials of that county seeking to do something that was unlawful to an innocent man, on the 4th of last December in this county an outstanding business man of this town was mur-

Williams by the populace—by a mob was murdered by hanging to a tree in the yard of this court house.

While the four murders in the adjoining county is not for your investigation—they have already been investigated—and as far as Grand Juries are concerned has fallen into the past.

Nevertheless, Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, these two murders that occurred in this county on the 4th of last December are both for your investigation. The first one is not as far as Matthew Williams is concerned because he is dead. He himself was murdered that night, but the first of these murders is for your investigation as to whether or not anyone instigated Matthew Williams to do the crime he committed. If so, who?

The second one of these murders by the populace—by the mob—is for your investigation. First, as to who instigated the mob, who instigated the murder and in the second place as to who were the actual perpetrators of that murder.

The resources of this county and the power of this state is at your command that you may in reference to those murders make your investigation full and complete and that you may to the best of your ability present to this court each person engaged as instigators in the first murder, engaged as instigators in the second murder, engaged as perpetrators in the second murder.

During the period following these two murders in this county many unkind things were said both by us and about us. So permeated did the atmosphere become with ill will and unkind remarks that it would have been no trouble at all for one to have concluded that we were truly living in and were a part of the generation of pipers. It is not, however, gentlemen of the Grand Jury, the unkind things that we say about other people, the bad and wicked names that we call them or the unkind things that are said about us or the wicked names that we may be called that counts for worth. It is what a community, it is what an individual actually is at heart in mind and in soul that makes for worth.

In your investigation of these two murders that occurred on the 4th day of last December, the court knows you will let what has been said in the past as far as you are concerned, be forgotten, whether it was said by us or about us, but that in your investigation of those two murders as well as in all of your other investigations you will let the oath that you have taken be your guide.