

OFFICIALS AIM TO PROSECUTE LYNCHING MOB

Governor Opens Investigation With Attorney-General

SPEEDY AND VIGOROUS ACTION PROMISED

Eastern Shore Police Chief And Sheriff Summoned

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uncle of the State's Attorney, termed the lynching "an awful shake-up," and Judge Pattison spoke of his regret at the occurrence.

A telephone call to him at Nanticoke, twenty miles away, brought the first information he had of the activities of the mob, the State's Attorney said, in expressing regret that he was not in Salisbury at the time to do what he could to halt the lynching and to gather first-hand information concerning the mob's membership.

Crowd Broken Up

As soon as he heard that the mob had formed and had dragged the prisoner, Matthew Williams, 35-year-old colored laborer who had killed his employer, Daniel J. Elliott, from the Peninsula Hospital, Mr. Bailey drove to Salisbury at top speed, but the crowd had broken up when he arrived.

"From Chief Holland and Deputy Sheriff John Parks, who were on guard at the hospital, I learned that there seemed to be six leaders of the mob of 200 or 300 men," Mr. Bailey said.

Chief Holland told the State's Attorney that he and Parks were at the main doorway of the hospital, about one-fourth of a mile from the courthouse and county jail, when a mob that appeared to number about 150 surged over the hospital lawn in the dusk.

"Where Is He?"

"I stood in the doorway with Parks," the chief of police said, "and some of the men came up. One of them said, 'Where is he?' and I told him that I didn't know. Another one spoke up and said: 'I know where he is, all right.'"

"Parks and I warned them to get away, and while we were holding them off a small group went around to the rear of the hospital. They entered by an emergency exit, went through the basement and to the Negro ward on the first floor.

"As soon as I saw this going on I left Parks on guard at the door and telephoned to the Sheriff's office for help. While I was telephoning I heard a commotion in the hospital and a nurse told me that the men were taking the Negro out. I ran back to the Negro ward in time to see Matthews being lifted out of the window and dropped to some other members of the mob waiting outside.

Doesn't Remember Threat

"I can't remember whether any of them threatened me, because everything happened so fast. I remember thinking that if I pulled out a gun it might start a riot and other patients in the ward might be shot. There were four other Negro patients in there and I was afraid they might take them, too.

"Through the window I saw them start toward the Courthouse, half carrying and half dragging the man."

It was related that a Negro workman passing along the sidewalk beside the hospital saw the mob with its victim coming toward him and broke into flight, leading the procession until it disappeared from the sight of those at the hospital.

Developed Spontaneously

Holland said that the authorities had no indication that a lynching was planned and that his investigation during the night produced evidences that the mob developed spontaneously, when a small knot of men near the Courthouse, apparently discussing the murder of Mr. Elliott, a box manufacturer and lumber dealer, suddenly raised the cry "Let's lynch Williams!"

They started toward the hospital, where the man had been taken after his arrest for treatment to a self-inflicted bullet wound in his chest and another wound in his head from a shot fired by the son of Mr. Elliott.

Along the short march to the hos-

tion where most of the Negro populace lives. The gasoline was poured over the man and lighted.

Off To Court

Flames leaped up for a few minutes and the mob then picked up the body and started again to the courthouse. Near the center of the city a rope was thrown over a guy wire on a telephone pole and the body pulled into the air again. It remained there and the mob dispersed. Sheriff Phillips cut the body down later.

Sheriff Phillips reported to the State's Attorney that he was knocked down and trampled by the mob when he attempted to reach the tree from which Williams was hanging.

Crowd Blocked Auto

"I was in my office when a telephone call came that a mob was gathered around the hospital," he said. "I got in my automobile and started to drive there, but the streets near the hospital were choked with parked automobiles and I got out and ran to the entrance. When I got there and asked what the trouble was, somebody yelled 'You're too late, Sheriff; they've gone with him.'"

"As soon as I found the direction the mob had gone, I started at a run after them, but when I got to the Courthouse green the man was already hanging from the tree. I tried to get through, but was knocked down and walked on. I don't think the mob recognized me. I didn't recognize any of them, and it seemed to me that they must have come from all around. There were a lot of women in the crowd.

Went For Help

"When the mob started away with the body I went to my office to get assistance. As soon as we were able to get the body we put it in a truck and hid it until the mob broke up and then turned it over to an undertaker."

The Sheriff said that the crowd around the Courthouse when he tried to break through numbered at least 1,000.

Most of the time while the lynching was under way, witnesses told the authorities, "you could have heard a pin drop." The hanging occurred, old residents recalled, within forty feet of the spot where the last lynching in the history of this county took place, far back in the last century.

Confessed Shooting

State's Attorney Bailey said that Williams had confessed to him in the hospital during the afternoon the murder of Mr. Elliott, who was killed instantly by a bullet from a pistol pressed against the back of his head in the office of his box plant yesterday afternoon. The colored man said, Mr. Bailey related, that he shot Mr. Elliott because the manufacturer would pay him only 15 cents an hour as a laborer.

The mob spirit became apparent almost immediately after Mr. Elliott was shot. Workers in the manufacturer's outer office heard two shots and ran in to find Mr. Elliott dead in his chair and Williams slumped on the floor behind him with a bullet hole in his chest. Mr. Elliott's son, Daniel J. Elliott, Jr., was among the first to reach his father's side.

Son Shoots Assailant

As he appeared Williams staggered to his feet and started out of the office. Young Elliott picked up the colored man's pistol and fired once. The bullet struck the murderer in the head and knocked him down.

When the police arrived they took Williams to the hospital and, while State's Attorney Bailey was questioning him, an angry crowd gathered outside the building shouting threats. This crowd, however, had dispersed within a few minutes after the confession was announced.

The spirit flamed up again a few hours later with renewed vigor, and when the cry to lynch Williams was raised one member of the mob ran into a fire house and secured the rope with which the man was hanged.

A nurse in the Negro ward pleaded with the six men who came in for Williams not to take him, according to the superintendent, Miss Helen Wise.

Chestertown Case Up Monday, Delay Held Unnecessary

[Special Dispatch to The Evening Sun]
Chestertown, Dec. 5—Stephen R. Collins, State's Attorney for Kent county, said here today that the preliminary hearing in the case of George Davis, colored man indicted for an attempted attack on a white woman, will not be postponed as the result of the Salisbury lynching last night. The hearing is scheduled for Monday.

Davis, however, will be kept at the City Jail in Baltimore during the hearing, the State's Attorney said. The hearing is merely to hear pleas as to the place and time of the trial, and there is no reason for removing Davis