

Chicago Writer Visits Shore

Editors Note:—The following article appeared in the Sunday December 27th issue of the Baltimore Sun. It is the report of a staff correspondent of the Chicago Tribune who visited Salisbury. We reprint this article without comment.

A Negro man was lynched here about a month ago and today mob spirit, revived after 20 years, still rules on the Eastern Shore. Maryland has slipped half-way into the fold of the backward States, its people are bitterly divided against one another and Gov. Albert C. Ritchie, a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, is seriously embarrassed by a local situation that may assume national importance.

Nobody has been punished for the hanging and burning of Matthew Williams, Negro murderer. A coroner's jury has taken no action. The entire Eastern Shore of the State thoroughly approves of the lynching and doubts that anyone ever will be punished for a "little demonstration that has done more for law and order than anything else down here."

Governor Ritchie has said that the members of the mob must be "apprehended and vigorously prosecuted," and has instructed W. Preston Lane, Jr., Attorney-General of Maryland, to assist Wicomico county authorities. Further than this Governor Ritchie has not gone. He considers himself extending his own powers to the limit in directing Mr. Lane and his office to take part in the investigation. Then, also, there is the danger of further alienating the eastern half of his State, which votes dry and does not subscribe to Governor Ritchie's wet views.

Chesapeake Bay divides Maryland. It might as well be the Atlantic Ocean. The Delmarva Peninsula is a country to itself. When its people speak of the outside world they include Baltimore in that category. Salisbury, a town of 12,000 is the metropolis of the Eastern Shore. It is the home of Amos W. W. Woodcock, and it once was Bishop James Cannon, Jr.'s place of residence.

A lighted Christmas tree stands on the Courthouse lawn near the oak from which Williams dangled on the night of December 4, but there is more hate than good will prevalent in the community. The *Tribune* correspondent was received courteously by the more intelligent citizens. The Eastern Shore people prefer to talk about a lynching that took place in Brooklyn, a Baltimore suburb, on Christmas Night, 1911.

Flaming bitterness was expressed against Baltimore and particularly against the Baltimore Sunpapers because of a series of editorials denouncing the lynch spirit. H. L. Mencken, famous for his bombastic writings, fanned the flames with such linotype vitrol as, "... A public obscenity worthy of cannibals" and "... A natural culmination of a degenerated people."

The report also stated the facts in regards to the case of Yuel Lee, the negro who murdered the family of four in Worcester county, and at the present is safely confined in a Baltimore jail, while judges and lawyers argue about where he will be tried.