

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1931

A REGRETTABLE OCCURENCE

The NEWS joins with hundreds of citizens in regretting the lynching which took place in the largest city of the Peninsula, Salisbury, last Friday night. It is also to be regretted that the Baltimore Sun saw proper to publish such bosh and nonsense in reference thereto. Baltimore city is made up of country people, many of whom came from the Shore, and it is certainly a reflection on the editors themselves as well as upon others when our people are maligned. Undoubtedly the lynching was influenced by delays in bringing to trial two other Eastern Shore Negroes who had committed heinous crimes against white persons. The community was first stirred several weeks ago when a family of four was murdered near Berlin. The slayer was soon caught and confessed. A speedy trial was warranted and expected. Outside influence of an even unlawful organization got to work. Technicalities in the law were resorted to, and the trial has not yet started.

Since then another Negro in this community made a vicious assault upon a white woman. This man was caught in city of Wilmington a few days later. He also confessed. Both he and the slayer of the Berlin family are now confined in Baltimore jail.

It is not surprising, therefore, that when Matthew Williams, a Salisbury Negro, Friday shot down, in cold blood, Daniel J. Elliott, a local business man, and who had been Williams' employer for ten years, there should come a determination for speedy retribution and a quick decision to mete out punishment even though it meant murder on the part of what had heretofore been law abiding citizens.

The lynching is regretted exceedingly. Perhaps most of the participants share this view. Yet they doubtless feel that the time had come when the lawless element should be given a stern lesson.