

"Infuriated Mob Takes Three Negroes from Police Station Hanging Them to Light Pole".

INFURIATED MOB TAKES THREE NEGROES FROM POLICE STATION HANGING THEM TO LIGHT POLE

Thousands Gather in Streets Tuesday Evening, Force Way Into Jail, Smash Bolts and Bars and Drag Negroes to Their Doom.

Duluth had the first lynching in its history last night.

A mob estimated anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 bent on avenging an assault on a young West Duluth girl, lynched three negroes held as suspects, two of whom, it is claimed, had confessed to the crime and the third who was being held as a material witness, hanging them to an electric light pole in front of the Shrine auditorium. The mob wrecked police headquarters and wounded several policemen in taking the negroes.

The three negroes whose dead bodies are today at Grady & Horgan's undertaking rooms are Isaac McGhee, age 20, Elmer Jackson, age 29, and Elias Clayton, age 18. McGhee is the only one of the trio who, to the last, claimed innocence of the crime.

The gathering of the mob started early in the evening. It is claimed that a truck on which was the label "city truck" came from the western end of the city shortly after 7 o'clock carrying a gang of young men. Attached to the truck and dragging behind was a long rope. The truck traveled through the streets slowly while those on the truck shouted "Come on fellows, join the necktie party."

Men and boys grabbed the rope and marched behind the truck through the street. Finally stopping opposite police headquarters on the upper side. The crowd gathered rapidly. Truck loads of others joined, many of these truck loads coming from the western end of the city. The truck riders coming later made no demonstration. Apparently no attempt was made to stop them.

Youth Incites Crowd.

When the first truck stopped a young man, whose age was judged at about 20 years, got up on the top of the truck and began to address the crowd. His talk is said to have been exceptionally inciting. He told the crowd that the girl who was attacked by the negroes laid in the hospital at death's door and called on the crowd for vengeance.

The police barricaded the door of police headquarters and called every man off duty to report. A reserve of twenty-five policemen was at the station when the mob began its assault on the jail. Sergeant Oscar Olson was in charge. The police were holding the fort, both front and back, when the crowd flanked them by climbing the fire escape between the city hall and police headquarters and breaking in through the windows. Before the police knew what was taking place several hundred men had forced their way in and begun the process of battering the jail.

Fire hose turned on the mob by the fire department, which was called out to disperse the mob, apparently only added to the fury. The mob took the hose out of the hands of the firemen and turned the water on the police. Hundreds of feet of fire hose was destroyed.

Bricks, paving blocks, rails and heavy timbers were used in battering the way into the jail. After breaking into the main cell house the mob tore loose the locks on several of the cells. Finding only one of the negroes

downstairs the mob went upstairs to the boys' department where the other five were being held.

Steel saws were used when it was found that the battering ram was of no avail. Two steel bars holding the big door were sawed through. This process was too slow for the mob, which took another battering ram and broke through the wall, making a hole three feet wide by two feet high. The wall at this point is sixteen inches thick. Through this hole the terrified negroes were dragged.

Negroes Dragged to Doom.

The negroes were taken up the hill to First street, following a mock trial held just outside of the cell room.

McGhee was the first to be strung up. He begged for mercy, stoutly declaring his innocence. Father W. J. Powe said: "Father P. J. Maloney pleaded with the crowd to allow the law to take its course, but were greeted with boos and yells and with the remarks 'remember the girl' and 'lynch him'."

The first of the negroes to hang, Isaac McGhee fell to the ground when the rope broke. The mob members nearest to the victim kicked him and jumping on him until he was about dead. Elmer Jackson, the next to die, met death calmly. He threw some dice to the crowd with the remark that he would not heed them where he was going. The crowd cheered during his dying convulsions. When dead he was lowered to within a few feet of the ground and left hanging.

stripped of most of his clothes and covered with blood.

Begs Mercy; Gets Brutality.

Elias Clayton, the third negro, who had witnessed the hanging of the other two, wept and begged for mercy, but there was no mercy in the crowd and he was quickly hoisted high and, with hands lifted in supplication, received the kicks and blows aimed at him as his body dangled against the pole. One young man, who, it was claimed, was the brother of the assaulted girl, stood high up on the pole and kicked repeatedly at the face and head of the dying wretch.

When the hanging was over the crowd stood and, with the aid of a searchlight focused on the two men dangling in the air, viewed the results of its defiance of all law and order with calm satisfaction. The mob slowly dispersed and it was about 1 o'clock when the police were able to get close enough to the bodies to cut them down and turn them over to a local undertaker. Two were still hanging to the pole and one was lying on the ground, battered and bruised, where the mob had stamped and kicked the body fiendishly.

Headquarters a Wreck.

The headquarters station is a wreck from basement to the third floor. The mob apparently was insane with desire to destroy and wreak vengeance. Windows, furniture, office records, and even the battery room on the third floor were destroyed. Everything was soaked with water from the hose handled by both sides and the floor of every room was ankle deep.

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in water. Hardly a whole window is left in the building.

The first demonstration which caused some apprehension came early in the evening, when Sergeant Olson called Commissioner Murnian to the station. Rumors of impending trouble had reached the police and every preparation was made to be ready for trouble. Reserves and every available policeman from all districts were called into headquarters. Commissioner Murnian took charge and as the crowd grew and became more threatening, barricaded all doors. Bim timbers and steel rails were obtained and while these were being used to batter down the doors others furnished the crowd stones and bricks from Michigan street with which to bombard the windows and every policeman they could see.

Chief Murphy, on his way from Virginia with eight other prisoners connected with the assault, was met on the Vermilion road and informed of the trouble in time to avoid bringing his prisoners to the notice of the mob. A hasty run was made to a farm house on the Vermilion road, where the prisoners were left under guard. On the arrival of Chief Murphy the police were equipped with guns and bayonets and ordered to clear the streets, which they did with little difficulty, as the crowd's bloodlust had been satisfied.

One May Be Innocent.

That there is a possibility that the mob has killed an innocent man was brought to light by Chief Murphy, who declared that one of the six prisoners was being held simply as a witness against the others and was in no way connected with the crime. Whether one of the men lynched was this man, Chief Murphy had had no time to investigate before spiriting them away last night. He declared this morning that one of the men killed was one who had confessed and implicated the others and had given most of the information of the assault to the police.

With the death of this man the police are without means of fastening the guilt on the remaining three, outside of the statements made to the police by the prisoners during their first examination by the chief yesterday morning.

Mob Well Prepared.

That the men taking part in the lynching came well prepared is borne out by the number of tools and other instruments brought with them for the purpose of forcing the jail doors. Stuck fast in the steel bar of the door leading into the boys' department cells was a first-class machinists' steel saw. Several blades were broken in sawing the steel bars two of which were cut through.

This mob brought a heavy battering ram, which had no effect on that door. The gang then put into play picks, sledge hammer and other instruments and smashed their way through the wall, breaking through sixteen inches of brick and mortar. A hole three feet wide and two feet high was made.

Through this hole men with leveled guns went at the negroes and chased them through the hole into the arms of the waiting mob. After the negroes were outside of the cell room a short mock trial was held. The impromptu jury found them "guilty" and the mob cheered and dragged them to the scene of the hanging.