

WHITE MAN AND EIGHT NEGROES LYNCHED BY WATKINSVILLE MOB

Accumulation Of Crimes In Oconee Results In Carni- val Of Death.

ALL JAIL PRISONERS RIDDLED WITH BULLETS

Less Than Hundred Men Participated
—The White Man Begged Piteously
For His Life—One Escaped With
Serious Injury—Attempted Rape
Precipitated Crisis.

Watkinsville, Ga., June 29.—(Special.)

—This morning at 2 o'clock a mob entered the jail at Watkinsville and took therefrom nine prisoners, eight of whom were shot to death and the ninth escaped by being thought dead by the mob. The prisoners taken out and lynched were Lon J. Aycock, white, charged with the murder of F. M. Holbrook, and wife, of Oconee county, and seven negroes, Rich Robinson, Lewis Robinson, Claud Elder, charged with the murder of the Holbrook couple; Sandy Price, a young negro, charged with attempted rape upon the person of Mrs. Weidon Dooley; Rich Allen, a negro convicted and under sentence of death for the murder of Will Robertson, another negro; Gene Yerby, another negro charged with the burglary of a rifle from Mr. Marshall and Bob Harris, a negro, charged with shooting another negro.

The mob came quietly upon Watkinsville a little before 2 a. m. There were about fifty to seventy-five men in the crowd. All were heavily masked and no one knows whence they came or to what point they returned. They went at once to the house of Town Marshal L. H. Alken and quietly called him to the door.

As he put his head out of the door, he was seized and told that he must deliver the jail keys. He refused and the men put pistols in his face and overpowered him, he being a rather small man. Alken refused to dress, but some of the party dressed him and carried him along. The mob next seized Courtney Elder, a blacksmith, and made him bring his tools along with him. On their way to the jail they were met by A. W. Ashford, a prominent citizen of Watkinsville, who had heard the noise at the marshal's house and came down town as soon as he could dress.

Cool, Sober, Determined.

Mr. Ashford begged the men to desist and let the law take its course, especially pleading for Aycock, on the ground that the evidence had not been secured to warrant his conviction. He also begged them not to lynch those not charged with capital crimes. They told him that they were cool, sober and determined and that he might as well go back home and go to bed. The jail was then opened by the mob, and under the cover of several pistols and inside the jail the mob held up Jailer Crow and demanded the keys to the cells. He refused at first, but surrendered them after being menaced with guns. Jailer Crow begged hard for Aycock, on the same ground that Mr. Ashford did, and also for the two negroes, who were not charged with capital crimes. Members of the attacking party told him to shut his mouth. They knew what to do, they said, and they were going to clear out the whole jail.

One Prisoner Escaped.

The mob got every prisoner in the jail except Ed Thrasher, a negro charged with gambling, who was on the misdemeanor side of the prison and was not noticed. The prisoners were carried to a point some one hundred yards from the jail and tied to three fence posts by their necks. Aycock protested his innocence to the last. He said they were killing an innocent man. While the general belief in Oconee county is that Aycock was not guilty, still there were many who did not believe so. Rich Robinson said it was all right, so far as he was concerned, but that three more negroes were in the Holbrook murder. He named Sidney Norris, Jim Taylor and Wiley Durham as the three implicated. These negroes had been in jail before on this charge and had been released after full investigation by the committee. The other prisoners did not open their mouths during their march to their doom.

After the prisoners had been tied to the fence posts the mob lined up and fired five volleys into their bodies. All died without a struggle with the exception of Joe Patterson, a negro, who was charged with pointing a gun at Albert Ward. Patterson was shot several times in the body but was alive after the mob left and will recover.

Aycock's body was fairly riddled with shot, a great hole was torn through his right breast.

The mob left quietly after doing its work. It is believed that the men were from neighboring counties, as the report was brought to Watkinsville yesterday afternoon by A. M. Bostwick of Morgan county, that a mob would likely attack the jail last night. This rumor, however, was not given much attention, since so many of its kind had come before. Sheriff Overby was on his farm yesterday afternoon and he was not notified by Mr. Bostwick. In fact the purpose of the mob was accomplished so quietly that the sheriff, who lives a mile from the jail, knew nothing of the occurrence until this morning and the residents of Watkinsville were taken completely by surprise.

The people of Oconee county are horrified at the occurrence. They had borne with patience the delay necessary to securing the evidence against the Holbrook murderers and had agreed to let the law take its course.

The impelling cause of the lynching without doubt was the attempted rape by Sandy Price, which excited the people all over this section.

Gov. Terrell Will Investigate.

Atlanta, Ga., June 29.—In an interview tonight with a correspondent of the Associated Press, Gov. Jos. M. Terrell said that he deplored "the horrible affair at Watkinsville."

Governor Terrell stated further that he was making a rigid investigation of the affair, and that he intended to do everything in his power to bring the guilty persons to justice.

"These men killed by the mob should have had a fair trial," said the governor.

Governor Terrell will immediately offer a suitable reward for the apprehension of the men composing the mob.