

“Killing Them by the Wholesale” :A Lynching Rampage in South Georgia

By: Jewell Bridwell, Hanna Hester, Rueben Lewis, and Tyler White

Lynching:

- Dixon Smith and both Dampier's were wounded.
- Mob violence and lynchings, which have a long history in the United States, had become even more prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.
- Literally thousands of men, women, and children were murdered at the hands of mobs in this era of lynching.

Chicago Tribune:

- In 1882 the Chicago Tribune started keeping a yearly tally of such events in America.
- Academics have attempted on numerous occasions to count the number of lynching in the United States, and historian James E. Cutler recorded 2,465 between 1882 and 1903. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
- During the years 3,224 lynching's between 1889 and 1918 while Tuskegee Institute counted 4,587 for the years of 1882-1930.
- ***Our country's national crime is lynching***

Hangings and Beatings:

- Hangings were often accompanied by beatings, shootings, burning, and very a sadistic torture that included dismemberment.
- Mobs spewed racial hatred with impunity, brutality, barbarity, sadism.
- Mob violence occurred in all parts of the country it was no where more prevalent than in the south.
- 1,997 of the 2,465 lynching's (81 percent) were in the south.

Mob:

- Historians and Sociologist have put forth numerous explanation's and theories on what might provoke a violent outburst.
- Shocking is that Georgia had a law to prevent mob violence.
- County sheriffs and Georgia were intervene and many, in fact, assisted.

Georgia:

- There were more lynchings in Brooks County than any other county in Georgia.
- In May 1918 the single lynching incident claimed the most number of lives in Georgia.
- The lynchings in South Georgia fit the category of a posse and confirm the characteristics Brundage defined.
- Georgia's debt Peonage System provided people like Hampton Smith with a ready-made labor force.

Killing:

- The first mob victim was Will Head, one of the employee's who had helped plan the killing.
- Reporters suggested that the mob wanted to capture all those who was involved in the crime, and lynch them all together.
- Lowndes County was where Smith was hung under a oak tree.
 - The location, near the smiths house, was significant. These men were probably executed to quench the mobs thirst for blood.
- Many men involved were killed and hung a whole day.

Brooks County:

- This lynching spree confirms Brooks County place as the most mob-prone county in Georgia.
- Governor Hugh Dorsey responds to the lynchings in Georgia.
- The evidence suggests he took less than adequate action.
- Brooks County the governor was unsure exactly what authority he possessed in regard to the lynching of blacks.

Georgia:

- May 23 between 140 and 150 members of the Chatham Home Guard boarded a train for Valdosta.
- Almost three years later on April 22, 1921, Dorsey issued a pamphlet titled “A Statement from Governor Hugh M. Dorsey as to the Negro in Georgia”.
- Dorsey’s purpose in producing the booklet was to save Georgia from race violence.

Brooks County:

- Spartling had family in Brooks County and these relatives would certainly become targets of mobs if he testified.
- Legal action was not taken in South Georgia for yet another reason. The foreman of the Brooks County grand jury in May 1918, was William A. Whipple one of the leaders of the mob.
- The total population still did not make it one of the least populated counties in Georgia (of the 155 counties in Georgia in 1920, 126 had smaller populations than Brooks).

Lynching's:

- Condemnations of the lynching's were fairly universal.
- The Baltimore Daily Herald ran a story under the headline "*Georgia Huns Lynch Negro Woman and Three Men*".
- The Chicago Defender called the lynch mob "crackers", and the Pittsburgh Courier labeled them "inhuman fiends."
- Even the Atlanta Constitution condemned the outrages in Brooks County.
- Lynching's confirmed that Brooks County was the most mob-prone county in a state that led the nation in mob violence.

The Mobs:

- The events surrounding World War I provided another explanation for mob violence.
- The Atlanta Constitution ran a story as early as May 20 that blamed German agents for the murder of Hampton Smith.
- Other newspapers carried similar stories even though there were no known German agents in the country.
- An explanation for who became a victim of lynch mobs was put forth by Walter White in a 1934 statement to a U.S. Senate committee.

Lynching's:



- Mainly the town people would hang and burn blacks and whites.
- They would do those things for no necessarily reasons some times.

