

PAPA

Documentation:

D. S. Meredith

David Sutton Meredith was a Virginia gentleman. He was a quiet man with infinite patience, a fair and just man, kind and courteous, a devoted husband, a loving father.

Papa was a true sportsman, loving the outdoors and fishing and hunting. We had a large cabin surrounded by tall pine and sweet gum trees on a hillside at Lake Devernia. There we spent many happy weekends, fishing from row boats in early morning fog or in the last rays of a setting sun. As children all of us loved Papa's stories of fox hunting in which he would reproduce realistically the deep baying of various hounds -- our favorite being the hoarse bellow of " Old Blue ". Every hunting season, Papa and my three brothers would hunt for doves, quail, and ducks. We had a number of fine bird dogs at home always. And at one time, there were 17 bird dogs on our farm. I remember the cook muttering and grumbling about preparing food for " all them old dogs ".

Papa enjoyed giving his children surprises. One evening, he brought home a mother donkey. The next morning in the lot there was a new-born baby beside the mother to our great delight. Another time, we received a goat, harness for it, and a big red wagon. In that wagon, my brother and I would sit in state with Papa walking alongside the frisky goat as we rode back and forth, back and forth on South Fredonia. The greatest gift of our childhood, however, came one Christmas. Papa gave us a beautiful gaited saddle horse with new bridle and saddle and a high seated buggy with yellow spoked rubber-tired wheels! What

Final Tribute is Paid by Friends to D. S. Meredith

Final rites for David Estlin Meredith, 57, who died early Wednesday afternoon from an attack of pneumonia were held from the funeral home at 9 p. m. Thursday with the Rev. Joseph E. Smith, Methodist minister in charge. Services were in the Greenwood cemetery.

Mr. Meredith came to El Paso at the age of 21 from Connecticut. He was a member of the El Paso chapter of the Elks lodge. He was a member of the Elks lodge. He was a member of the Elks lodge.

Documentation: D. S. Meredith

RECALL DISAPPEARANCE CAUSES RESIGNATION OF GREECE OFFICIAL

(Continued from Page One)

Recalling the disappearance of the Greek minister of the interior, the Greek government's action to recall the minister of the interior, the Greek government's action to recall the minister of the interior.

HARRISON EXPLAINS ETEX CHAMBER STAND ON "HOT" OIL WORK

(Continued from Page One)

Explaining the stand of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce on the "hot" oil work, Harrison said that the chamber's position is based on the fact that the oil is being produced in a manner that is not in the best interests of the community.

Explaining the stand of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce on the "hot" oil work, Harrison said that the chamber's position is based on the fact that the oil is being produced in a manner that is not in the best interests of the community.

Explaining the stand of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce on the "hot" oil work, Harrison said that the chamber's position is based on the fact that the oil is being produced in a manner that is not in the best interests of the community.

Mr. Old Camp spent the day in the field. He was accompanied by his family. They were out for a day of hunting.

Mr. Henry Clark, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

Mr. J. H. Smith, of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, was in the city today. He was attending to some business.

SPECIAL SELLING OF

Drug Industries

Week-end shoppers who are thrifty and ever on the alert for outstanding values, will find a most unusual opportunity to save in the extraordinary offerings listed below:

<p style="text-align: center;">WILLIAMS' SHAVING CREAM AND AQUA VELVA A Regular 60c Value</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">35c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FITCH'S SHAMPOO A Regular 75c Seller</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">59c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NYAL MINERAL OIL Special - Pint</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">49c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MILK OF MAGNESIA Special - Pint</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">39c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thirty-Five Shaving Cream Thirty-Five After Shave Thirty-Five Talcum Regular Value \$1.05</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">79c</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AIRMAID HOSIERY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Airmaid Hosiery</i></p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.5em;">\$1.00, \$1.35, \$1.65, \$1.95</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Colgate's FACE POWDER AND PERFUME Special</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">89c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Colgate's AFTER SHAVE LOTION</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">39c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Blue RAZOR BLADES 25 Blades For</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">33c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shadow Stripe STATIONERY 60 SHEETS 60 ENVELOPES</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">59c</p>
--	---

POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The News Journal is authorized to announce the candidacy of the following citizens for the office hereunder listed, subject to the action of the Democratic Primary in July.

For Congress (At-Large District) A. T. CLAY

For Associate Justice of Court of Civil Appeals (At-Large District) REUBEN A. HALL

For Senate Second District WALTER C. BOWLEWAY (of Long County)

For District Representative (with District) CURTIS H. GIBSON

For County Judge R. A. LEAFLETTER



DAVID SUTTON
MEREDITH
1869 — 1934

David Sutton Meredith

Address 705 Magrill St., Longview TX

Year
Marker
Erected 2012

Marker
Location Greenwood Cemetery is bordered on the South by Magrill St., the West by N. Fourth St., the North by Pardon St., and the East by N. Fifth St.

Marker
Size 18" x 28"

Marker Text:

DAVID SUTTON MEREDITH WAS BORN ON FEBRUARY 2, 1869 IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA. MEREDITH CAME TO RUSK COUNTY, TEXAS IN 1891 AND MARRIED MINNIE BURR FISHER, A NATIVE OF BERLIN, TENNESSEE. THEY MOVED TO LONGVIEW IN 1895. IN NOVEMBER 1916, MEREDITH WAS ELECTED SHERIFF OF GREGG COUNTY AND SERVED UNTIL 1921 WHEN HE DID NOT SEEK RE-ELECTION. HE HELPED QUELL POTENTIAL RACE RIOTS DURING THE TUMULTUOUS LONGVIEW RED SUMMER OF 1919. AFTER LEAVING OFFICE, MEREDITH CONTINUED TO PLAY AN INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY AND WAS INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REMBERT NATIONAL BANK AND THE LONGVIEW NATIONAL BANK. HE PASSED AWAY ON MARCH 14, 1934 AND IS BURIED ALONG WITH HIS FAMILY.

*Submitted for
Marker cycle 2012*

Documentation

Related to

D. S. Meredith

In Connection With Application To

Gregg County Historical Commission

and

Texas Historical Commission

David Sutton Meredith

May 10, 2011
321 Country Place
Longview, Texas, 75605

H.M.Meredith
231 Fairlawn
Lindale, TX 75771

Dear Mr. Meredith,

In 1980 I wrote an article entitled *The Longview Race Riot of 1919* which was published in the *East Texas Historical Journal*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, pp. 13-24. The thesis of my article is that many more deaths would have occurred in the Longview Riot if Longview and Gregg County officials had not acted quickly in urging Gov. William P. Hobby to order Texas National Guard troops to Longview. These officers were County Judge E.M. Bramlette, Mayor G.A. Bodenheim, and your grandfather, Sheriff D.S. Meredith. Gov. Hobby initially ordered to Longview eight Texas Rangers from Austin and San Antonio and about 100 National Guardsmen. The Riot began on Thursday July 10 and Bramlette, Bodenheim, along with Meredith promptly called Gov. Hobby the very next day. When another a blackman was killed on Saturday night local officials promptly requested additional troops Sunday morning. Gov. Hobby responded by declaring martial law over all of Gregg County and ordering 150 more Guardsmen to Longview. The presence of approximately 250 Guardsmen and Rangers had a soothing and calming effect upon Longview, and no other violence occurred.

Mr. Meredith, your grandfather deserves credit for his responsible behavior during the Longview Riot. Only one person was killed during this time, and, Jack Howard, who served Gregg County as sheriff from 1891 to 1903 praised the local officials and the governor for their rapid action. He estimated that at least thirty blacks would have been killed if troops had not arrived promptly.

Sincerely,



Ken Durham, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of History
LeTourneau University

Mac&SaraMeredith

From: "Diane May" <dmay@tylerpaper.com>
To: <meredithstwo@suddenlink.net>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2010 1:47 PM
Subject: longview riot 1919

10/15/2007

Racial Tensions Spark Violence In Long, Hot Summer Of 1919

By ARCHIE P. MCDONALD

Veterans of the "long hot summers" of the 1960s, a time of racial tension, would have thought it "deja vu all over again" if they had remembered 1919. It was a summer of racial tension nationally, but one of its worst episodes occurred in Longview, Texas, in Gregg County, in July.

Longview was a city of approximately 5,700 people, more than 2,000 of them African Americans. Racial friction in the city focused on black leaders Samuel Jones and Dr. Calvin Davis, who had urged black farmers to bypass local cotton merchants and deal directly with warehousemen in Galveston, promising more profit if they would so do.

VIOLENT DAYS

Then, an incident sparked a major confrontation between the races. The Chicago Defender, a national publication primarily read by blacks, published an article attributed to Jones, about Lamuel Walters, a local teacher, that a black man from Longview and his paramour, a white woman who lived in Kilgore. Walters was then murdered by a white mob.

On July 15, Jones was assaulted by whites, supposedly brothers of the white woman involved.

Later, other whites decided to continue the beating at Jones' home, but when they approached it gunfire chased them away. Some were wounded, though not fatally, and one was caught by Jones' friends and beaten.

A larger mob, this time well armed, returned, burned Jones' house, Dr. Davis' home, and the homes and businesses of other African Americans.

County Judge E. M. Bramlette and Sheriff D.S. Meredith asked Gov. William P. Hobby for help. Hobby responded by dispatching eight Texas Rangers and placing companies of National Guard located in East Texas on alert. But the violence in Longview continued because the Rangers did not arrive in time to stop it.

MARTIAL LAW

When additional appeals arrived from Longview, Hobby ordered the Guard, commanded by Gen. R.H. McDill, to establish martial law. McDill arrested several whites and blacks for assault and arson, though none were ever tried, and seized all weapons he could locate. The guns were returned when civilian authorities resumed control a week later.

Much about the long hot summers of the 1960s seemed more like class struggle than pure race riot. Television coverage showed many poor or criminal whites helping black rioters loot urban stores. The long, hot summer of 1919 in Longview was all about race.

This column is provided by the East Texas Historical Association. Archie P. McDonald is director of the Association and author of more than 20 books on Texas.

No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG - www.avg.com

Version: 8.5.445 / Virus Database: 271.1.1/3156 - Release Date: 09/24/10 06:34:00

9/24/2010



MAXEY CERLIANO

Sheriff, Gregg County

September 13, 2010

H. M. Meredith
231 Fairlawn
Lindale, Texas 75771

Re: D.S. Meredith (Former Gregg County, Texas Sheriff – Deceased)

Dear Mr. Meredith,

Recently you called our office seeking information concerning your grandfather, D.S. Meredith, a former Sheriff of Gregg County, Texas. Our research indicates that D.S. Meredith was the ninth Sheriff of Gregg County, first elected on November 7, 1916; re-elected on November 5, 1918, and served until November 2, 1920. G G

If you should need anything further please feel free to contact me at 903-236-8406.

Sincerely,

Ricky Clark
Chief Deputy, Gregg County



BARBARA DUNCAN
DISTRICT CLERK
GREGG COUNTY

903-237-2663
FAX 903-236-8474

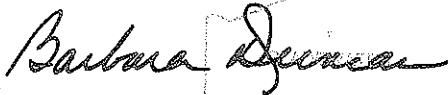
P.O. BOX 711
LONGVIEW, TEXAS 75606

101 E. METHVIN STREET SUITE 334
LONGVIEW, TEXAS 75601

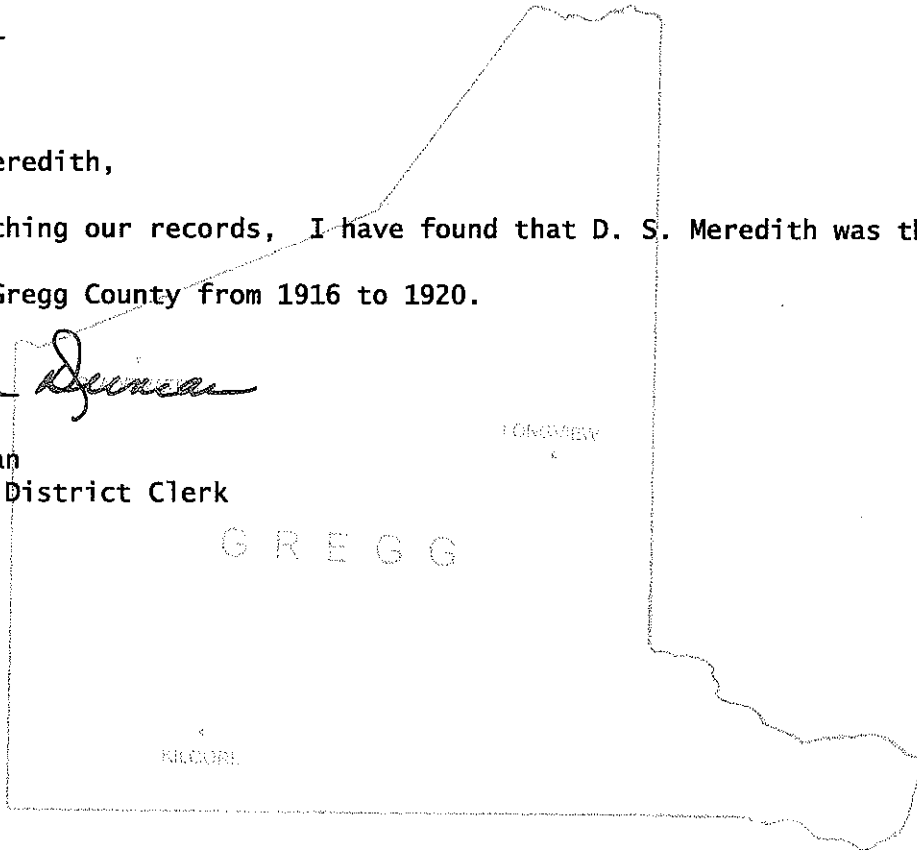
April 5, 2011

Dear H. M. Meredith,

After researching our records, I have found that D. S. Meredith was the Sheriff for Gregg County from 1916 to 1920.



Barbara Duncan
Gregg County District Clerk



- Home
- Troubled Summer
- Timeline
- Notable Figures
- Chicago Defender
- Chicago Defender Article

rachel mcreary
 rusk county, texas

**Judge
 E.M
 Bramlette**

County judge
 in Longview
 during the time
 of the race riot.

Judge
 Bramlette,
 Mayor
 Bodenheim,
 and Ras Young
 all attempted
 to prevent the
 outbreak of
 violence after
 publication of
 the *Defender*
 article. On the
 morning of July
 11, 1919,
 Bramlette and
 Sheriff
 Meredith
 alerted
 Governor
 Hobby to the
 dire situation
 in Longview
 and the need
 for military
 assistance. He
 spoke with
 Hobby again
 Friday, which
 resulted in the

arrival of 100
Nation Guard
members in
Longview
Friday night.
The citizen's
committee
formed by
General McDill
met in the
judge's office
on Monday,
July 14, 1919.
Among the
committee's
resolutions was
the ability for
Judge
Bramlette,
Mayor
Bodenheim,
and Sheriff
Meredith to
advise the
troops.
He was also a
member of the
Texas delegate
to Democratic
National
Convention in
1940.

**Gabriel
Augustus
Bodenheim
(Colonel
Bodie)**

One of the
most influential
mayors of
Longview, G.A.
Bodenheim
ruled over his

son, C.P. Davis, Jr., was a paperboy for the newspaper. His father-in-law, Marion Bush, later died after fleeing the protective custody of Sheriff Meredith.

Davis was first on the scene after Samuel Jones was attacked July 10. He later organized a group of black men to stand guard around the home of Samuel Jones, ostensibly to protect Jones in case anyone came after him again. Gunfire broke out when a mob of white men came to Jones' home, and Davis later fled Longview to avoid further attacks.

**D.S.
Meredith**

Gregg County sheriff during the summer of
the riot

the riot,
Meredith and
Judge
Bramlette
quickly realized
the need for
outside
assistance in
Longview and
notified
Governor
Hobby the
morning of July
11 that a
military
presence was
needed in
Longview to
prevent further
violence.
However, the
following
evening,
Meredith and
Ike
Killingsworth
drove to the
home of
Marion Bush to
notify Bush of
the threat to
his life if he
remained
unprotected at
home. Bush
seemed to
comply with
the sheriff at
first, but he
later turned
violent and
shot at
Meredith after
deciding to
remain at his
home. Bush
fled, and

Red Summer of 1919

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Red Summer describes the bloody race riots that occurred in the United States during the summer and early autumn of 1919. In most instances, whites attacked African Americans in more than three dozen American cities. In some cases blacks responded to an attack in groups, notably in Chicago, where, along with Washington, D.C. and Elaine, Arkansas, the greatest number of fatalities occurred.^[1]



A white gang looking for African Americans during the Chicago Race Riot of 1919

Contents

- 1 Name
- 2 Context
- 3 Events
- 4 Riots
- 5 Chronology
- 6 Responses
 - 6.1 Haynes report
 - 6.2 Press coverage
 - 6.3 Government activity
- 7 See also
- 8 References
- 9 Further reading

Name

The activist and author James Weldon Johnson coined the term "Red Summer." Employed since 1916 by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as a field secretary, he built and revived local chapters of that organization. In 1919, he organized peaceful protests against the racial violence of that summer.^{[2][3]}

Context

With the manpower mobilization and military draft of World War I and immigration from Europe cut off, the industrial cities of the North and Midwest experienced severe labor shortages. Northern manufacturers recruited throughout the South and an exodus ensued.^[4] By 1919, an estimated 500,000 African Americans had emigrated from the South to the industrial cities of the North and Midwest during World War I in the first wave of the Great Migration.^[1] They were also migrating to escape the lynchings, Jim Crow laws, lack of protected franchise and poor economy of the rural South, where the boll weevil was devastating cotton crops. African-American workers filled new positions as well as many jobs formerly held by whites. In some cities, they were hired as strikebreakers, especially during the strikes of 1917.^[4] This increased resentment and suspicion among whites, especially the working class of many ethnic whites, immigrants or first-generation Americans. Following the war, rapid demobilization of the military without a plan for absorbing veterans into the job market, and the removal of price controls, led to unemployment and inflation that increased competition for jobs.

During the Red Scare of 1919-20, following the Russian Revolution and widespread violence of the overthrow of government, anti-Bolshevik sentiment in the United States quickly replaced the anti-German sentiment of the World War I years. Many politicians and government officials, together with much of the press and the public, feared an imminent attempt to overthrow the government of the United States and create a new regime modeled on that of the Soviets. In that atmosphere of public hysteria, strikes and labor unrest, as well as radical views and moderate dissents, were all characterized as un-American or subversive. African Americans' advocacy of racial equality, labor rights, or the rights of victims of mobs to defend themselves were also suspect. The close ties between recent European immigrants and radical political ideas and organizations in Europe fed American anxieties.

Events

Following the violence-filled summer, in the autumn of 1919, Dr. George E. Haynes, an educator employed as Director of Negro Economics at the U.S. Department of Labor, reported on the events. His report was to be the brief for an investigation of the issues by the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary. He identified 38 separate riots in widely scattered communities in which whites' attacked blacks.^[1] In addition, Haynes reported that between January 1 and September 14, 1919, at least 43 African Americans were lynched, with 16 hanged and others shot; while another eight men were burned at the stake. The states appeared powerless or unwilling to interfere or prosecute such mob murders.^[1] Unlike earlier race riots in U.S. history, the 1919 events were among the first in which blacks in number resisted white attacks. A. Philip Randolph, a civil rights activist and leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, defended the right of blacks to self-defense.^[2]

**NEGROES PLAN TO
KILL ALL WHITES**

SLAUGHTER WAS TO BEGIN WITH
21 PROMINENT MEN AS THE
FIRST VICTIMS.

"WE JUST BEGUN" PASSWORD

Blacks Had Armed Themselves and
Planned to Kill Every White
Person in Sight When Riot
Was Expresed

Riots

- After the riot of May 10 in Charleston, South Carolina, the city imposed martial law.^[1] US Navy sailors led the race riot; Isaac Doctor, William Brown, and James Talbot, all black men, were killed. Five white men and eighteen black men were injured. A Naval investigation found that four U.S. sailors and one

"The Gazette"
Elaine, Arkansas
October 3, 1919

civilian—all white men—initiated the riot. ^[5]

- In early July, a race riot in Longview, Texas led to the deaths of at least four men and destroyed the African-American housing district in the town. ^[1]
- On July 3, the 10th U.S. Cavalry, a segregated African-American unit founded in 1866, was attacked by local police in Bisbee, Arizona. ^[6]
- In Washington, D.C. in July, white men, many in military uniforms, responded to the rumored arrest of a black man for rape with four days of mob violence. They rioted, randomly beat black people on the street and pulled others off streetcars for attacks. When police refused to intervene, the black population fought back. Troops tried to restore order as the city closed saloons and theaters to discourage assemblies, but a summer rainstorm had more of a dampening effect. When the violence ended, a total of 15 people had died: 10 whites, including two police officers; and five blacks. Fifty people were seriously wounded and another 100 less severely wounded. It was one of the few times when white fatalities outnumbered those of blacks. ^[7]

The NAACP sent a telegram of protest to President Wilson (he had re-segregated federal offices after he was first elected). ^[8]

...the shame put upon the country by the mobs, including United States soldiers, sailors, and marines, which have assaulted innocent and unoffending negroes in the national capital. Men in uniform have attacked negroes on the streets and pulled them from streetcars to beat them. Crowds are reported ...to have directed attacks against any passing negro....The effect of such riots in the national capital upon race antagonism will be to increase bitterness and danger of outbreaks elsewhere. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People calls upon you as President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the nation to make statement condemning mob violence and to enforce such military law as situation demands.

- In Norfolk, Virginia, a white mob attacked during a homecoming celebration for African-American veterans of World War I. At least six people were shot, and local police called in Marines and Navy personnel to restore order. ^[1]

"The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People respectfully enquires how long the Federal Government under your administration intends to tolerate anarchy in the United States?"

-NAACP telegram to President Woodrow Wilson
August 29, 1919
- Starting July 27, the summer's greatest violence occurred during rioting in Chicago. The city's beaches along Lake Michigan were segregated in practice, if not by law. A black youth who swam into the area on the South Side customarily reserved for whites was stoned and he drowned. When the police refused to take action against the attackers, young black men responded violently. Violence between mobs and gangs lasted 13 days, with white rioting led by the well-established ethnic Irish, whose territory bordered the black neighborhood. The resulting 38 fatalities included 23 blacks and 15 whites. The injured totaled 537, and 1,000 black families were left homeless. ^[9] Other accounts reported 50 people were killed, with unofficial numbers and rumors reporting more. Hundreds of mostly black homes and businesses on the South Side were destroyed by mobs, and a militia force of seven regiments: several thousand men, was called in to restore order. ^[1]

At the end of July, the Northeastern Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, at an annual convention, denounced the rioting and burning of negroes' homes then happening and asked Wilson "to use every means within your power to stop the rioting in Chicago and the propaganda used to incite such."^[10] At the end of August, the NAACP protested again, noting the attack on the organization's secretary in Austin, Texas the previous week. Their telegram said: "The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People respectfully enquires how long the Federal Government under your administration intends to tolerate anarchy in the United States?"^[11]

- In August, the Knoxville Riot in Tennessee broke out over a mob's gathering because a black suspect was accused of murdering a white woman. A lynch mob stormed the county jail searching for the prisoner. They liberated 16 white prisoners, including suspected murderers.^[1] They moved on and attacked the African-American business district, where they fought against the district's black business owners, leaving at least seven dead and wounding more than 20 people.^{[12][13][14]}
- At the end of September, the race riot in Omaha, Nebraska erupted when a mob of more than 10,000 ethnic whites from South Omaha attacked and burned the county courthouse to force the police to release a black prisoner accused of raping a white woman. They destroyed property valued at more than a million dollars. The mob lynched the suspect, Will Brown, and burned his body. They spread out through the city and attacked black neighborhoods and stores on the north side. After the mayor and governor appealed for help, the government sent Federal troops from a nearby fort to restore order. They were under the command of Major General Leonard Wood, a friend of Theodore Roosevelt and a leading candidate for the Republican nomination for President in 1920.^[15]
- On October 1, a race riot broke out in Elaine, Arkansas. Distinctive because it occurred in the rural South, it was also related to resistance to labor organizing and fear of socialism. Black sharecroppers were meeting in the local chapter of the Progressive Farmers and Household Union of America. Planters opposed their efforts to organize for better terms and they had been warned of trouble. A white man intent on arresting a black bootlegger approached the lookouts defending the meeting, and was shot. The planters formed a militia to attack the African-American farmers. In the riot they killed between 100 and 200 blacks, and five whites also died. Arkansas Governor Charles Hillman Brough appointed a Committee of Seven to investigate. The group was composed of prominent local white businessmen. They concluded that the Sharecroppers Union was a Socialist enterprise and "established for the purpose of banding negroes together for the killing of white people."^[16]



Will Brown, lynched during the 1919 riot in Omaha, Nebraska

That report generated headlines such as the following in the *Dallas Morning News*: "Negroes Seized in Arkansas Riots Confess to Widespread Plot; Planned Massacre of Whites Today." Several agents of the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation spent a week interviewing participants, but they spoke to no sharecroppers. They also reviewed documents. They filed a total of nine reports stating there was no evidence of a conspiracy of the sharecroppers to murder anyone. Their superiors at Justice ignored their

analysis.

The local government tried 79 blacks, who were all convicted, and 12 were sentenced to death. (As Arkansas and other southern states had disfranchised most blacks from 1890-1910, they could not vote, run for political office, or serve on juries.) The remainder of the defendants accepted prison terms of up to 21 years. Appeals of their convictions went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which reversed the verdicts because of trial errors. Federal oversight of defendants' rights was increased as a result.^[17]

Chronology

Based on Haynes' report as summarized in the *New York Times* except as noted.^[1]

Date	Place	Date	Place
May 10	Charleston, South Carolina	July 19	Washington, D.C.
May 10	Sylvester, Georgia	July 21	Norfolk, Virginia
May 29	Putnam County, Georgia	July 23	New Orleans, Louisiana
May 31	Monticello, Mississippi	July 23	Darby, Pennsylvania
June 13	New London, Connecticut	July 26	Hobson City, Alabama
June 13	Memphis, Tennessee	July 27	Chicago, Illinois
June 27	Annapolis, Maryland	July 28	Newberry, South Carolina
June 27	Macon, Mississippi	July 31	Bloomington, Illinois
July 3	Bisbee, Arizona	July 31	Syracuse, New York
July 5	Scranton, Pennsylvania	July 31	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 6	Dublin, Georgia	August 4	Hattiesburg, Mississippi
July 7	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	August 6	Texarkana, Texas
July 8	Coatesville, Pennsylvania	August 21	New York City, New York
July 9	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	August 29	Ocmulgee, Georgia
July 10 ^[18]	Longview, Texas	August 30	Knoxville, Tennessee
July 11	Baltimore, Maryland	September 28	Omaha, Nebraska
July 15	Port Arthur, Texas	October 1	Elaine, Arkansas

Responses

"We appeal to you to have your country undertake for its racial minority that which you forced Poland and Austria to undertake for their racial minorities."

-*National Equal Rights League to President Woodrow Wilson*
November 25, 1919

Protests and appeals continued for weeks. A letter in late November from the National Equal Rights League appealed to Wilson's international advocacy for human rights: "We appeal to you to have your country undertake for its racial minority that which you forced Poland and Austria to undertake for their racial minorities."^[19]

In September 1919, in response to the Red Summer, the African Blood Brotherhood formed in northern cities to serve as an "armed resistance" movement.

Haynes report

The report by Dr. George Edmund Haynes of October 1919^[1] was a call for national action; it was addressed in the *New York* and other major newspapers. He noted that lynchings were a national problem, as President Wilson had said in a 1918 speech; from 1889-1918, more than 3,000 people had been lynched; 2,472 were black men, and 50 were black women. Haynes said that states had shown themselves "unable or unwilling" to put a stop to lynchings, and seldom prosecuted the murderers. The fact that white men had been lynched in the North as well, he argued, demonstrated the national nature of the overall problem: "It is idle to suppose that murder can be confined to one section of the country or to one race."^[1] He connected the lynchings to the widespread riots that year:

Persistence of unpunished lynchings of negroes fosters lawlessness among white men imbued with the mob spirit, and creates a spirit of bitterness among negroes. In such a state of public mind a trivial incident can precipitate a riot.

Disregard of law and legal process will inevitably lead to more and more frequent clashes and bloody encounters between white men and negroes and a condition of potential race war in many cities of the United States.

Unchecked mob violence creates hatred and intolerance, making impossible free and dispassionate discussion not only of race problems, but questions on which races and sections differ.^[1]

Press coverage

In mid-summer, in the middle of the Chicago riots, a federal official told the *New York Times* that the violence resulted from "an agitation, which involves the I.W.W., Bolshevism and the worst features of other extreme radical movements." He supported that claim with copies of negro publications that called for alliances with leftist groups, praised the Soviet regime, and contrasted the courage of jailed Socialist Eugene V. Debs with the "school boy rhetoric" of traditional black leaders. The *Times* characterized the publications as "vicious and apparently well financed," mentioned "certain factions of the radical Socialist elements," and reported it all under the headline: "Reds Try to Stir Negroes to Revolt."^[20]

In response, some black leaders such as Bishop Charles Henry Phillips of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church asked blacks to shun violence in favor of "patience" and "moral suasion." Although Phillips said he opposed any propaganda favoring violence, he also said:

"I cannot believe that the negro was influenced by Bolshevik agents in the part he took in the rioting. It is not like him to be a traitor or a revolutionist who would destroy the Government. But then the reign of mob law to which he has so long lived in terror and the injustices to which he has had to submit have made him sensitive and impatient."^[21]

In presenting the Haynes report in early October, *The New York Times* provided a context which his report did not mention. Haynes documented violence and inaction on the state level. The *Times* saw "bloodshed on a scale amounting to local insurrection" as evidence of "a new negro problem" because of "influences that are now working to drive a wedge of bitterness and hatred between the two races." Until recently, the *Times* said, black leaders showed "a sense of appreciation" for what whites had suffered on

their behalf in fighting a civil war that "bestowed on the black man opportunities far in advance of those he had in any other part of the white man's world." Now militants were supplanting Booker T. Washington, who had "steadily argued conciliatory methods." The *Times* continued:^[1]

Every week the militant leaders gain more headway. They may be divided into general classes. One consists of radicals and revolutionaries. They are spreading Bolshevist propaganda. It is reported that they are winning many recruits among the colored race. When the ignorance that exists among negroes in many sections of the country is taken into consideration the danger of inflaming them by revolutionary doctrine may [be] apprehended.... The other class of militant leaders confine their agitation to a fight against all forms of color discrimination. They are for a program on uncompromising protest, 'to fight and continue to fight for citizenship rights and full democratic privileges.'

As evidence of militancy and Bolshevism, the *Times* named W.E.B. Du Bois and quoted his editorial in *The Crisis*, which he edited: "Today we raise the terrible weapon of self-defense....When the armed lynchers gather, we too must gather armed." When the *Times* endorsed Haynes' call for a bi-racial conference to establish "some plan to guarantee greater protection, justice, and opportunity to negroes that will gain the support of law-abiding citizens of both races," it endorsed discussion with "those negro leaders who are opposed to militant methods." The only "militant method" it cited was a call for self defense.

In mid-October government sources provided the *Times* with evidence of Bolshevist propaganda appealing to America's black communities. This account set Red propaganda in the black community into a broader context, since it was "paralleling the agitation that is being carried on in industrial centres of the North and West, where there are many alien laborers." The *Times* described newspapers, magazines, and "so-called 'negro betterment' organizations" as the way propaganda about the "doctrines of Lenin and Trotzky" was distributed to blacks. It cited quotes from such publications, which contrasted the recent violence in Chicago and Washington, D.C. with

"Soviet Russia, a country in which dozens of racial and lingual types have settled their many differences and found a common meeting ground, a country which no longer oppresses colonies, a country from which the lynch rope is banished and in which racial tolerance and peace now exist."^[22]

The *Times* noted a call for unionization: "Negroes must form cotton workers' unions. Southern white capitalists know that the negroes can bring the white bourbon South to its knees. So go to it."^[22]

Coverage of the root causes of the riot in Elaine, Arkansas evolved as the violence stretched over several days. A dispatch from Helena, Arkansas to the *New York Times* datelined October 1 said: "Returning members of the [white] posse brought numerous stories and rumors, through all of which ran the belief that the rioting was due to propaganda distributed among the negroes by white men."^[23] The next day's report added detail: "Additional evidence has been obtained of the activities of propagandists among the negroes, and it is thought that a plot existed for a general uprising against the whites." A white man had been arrested and was "alleged to have been preaching social equality among the negroes." Part of the headline was: "Trouble Traced to Socialist Agitators."^[24] A few days later a Western Newspaper Union dispatch captioned a photo using the words "Captive Negro Insurrectionists."^[25]

Government activity

J. Edgar Hoover, at the start of his career in government, analyzed the riots for the Attorney General. He blamed the July Washington, D.C. riots on "numerous assaults committed by Negroes upon white women." For the October events in Arkansas, he blamed "certain local agitation in a Negro lodge." A more general cause he cited was "propaganda of a radical nature." He charged that socialists were feeding propaganda to black-owned magazines like *The Messenger*, which in turn aroused their black readers. The white perpetrators of violence went unmentioned. As chief of the Radical Division within the U.S. Department of Justice, Hoover began an investigation of "negro activities" and targeted Marcus Garvey because he thought his newspaper *Negro World* preached Bolshevism. He built a career on the Red Scare.^[7]

See also

- African Blood Brotherhood
- Red Scare of 1919-1920
- Mass racial violence in the United States

References

1. [^] ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ *New York Times*: "For Action on Race Riot Peril," October 5, 1919, accessed January 20, 2010. This newspaper article includes several paragraphs of editorial analysis followed by Dr. George E. Haynes' report, "summarized at several points."
2. [^] ^a ^b Alana J. Erickson, "Red Summer" in *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History* (NY: Macmillan, 1960), 2293-4
3. [^] George P. Cunningham, "James Weldon Johnson," in *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History* (NY: Macmillan, 1960), 1459-61
4. [^] ^a ^b David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 279, 281-2
5. [^] Walter C. Rucker, James N. Upton. *Encyclopedia of American Race Riots*. Volume 1. 2007, page 92-3
6. [^] Rucker, Walter C. and Upton, James N. *Encyclopedia of American Race Riots* (2007), 554
7. [^] ^a ^b Kenneth D. Ackerman, *Young J. Edgar: Hoover, the Red Scare, and the Assault on Civil Liberties* (NY: Carroll & Graf, 2007), 60-2
8. [^] *New York Times*: "Protest Sent to Wilson," July 22, 1919. Retrieved January 21, 2010.
9. [^] *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "Chicago Race Riot of 1919". Retrieved January 24, 2010.
10. [^] *New York Times*: "Negroes Appeal to Wilson," August 1, 1919. Retrieved January 21, 2010.
11. [^] *New York Times*: "Negro Protest to Wilson," August 30, 1919. Retrieved January 21, 2010.
12. [^] *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*: Knoxville Riot of 1919. Retrieved January 25, 2010.
13. [^] Robert Whitaker, *On the Laps of Gods: The Red Summer of 1919 and the Struggle for Justice that Remade a Nation* (NY: Random House, 2008), 53
14. [^] Matthew Lakin, "'A Dark Night': The Knoxville Race Riot of 1919," *Journal of East Tennessee History*, 72 (2000), pp. 1-29.
15. [^] David, Pietrusza, *1920: The Year of Six Presidents* (NY: Carroll & Graf, 2007), 167-72
16. [^] Eric M. Freedman, *Habeas Corpus: Rethinking the Great Writ of Liberty* (New York University Press, 2001), 68
17. [^] Robert Whitaker, *On the Laps of Gods: The Red Summer of 1919 and the Struggle for Justice that Remade a Nation* (NY: Random House, 2008), 131-42. Whittaker's work is a detailed account of the Arkansas events, not a general study of the Red Summer.
18. [^] Robert Whitaker, *On the Laps of Gods: The Red Summer of 1919 and the Struggle for Justice that Remade a Nation* (NY: Random House, 2008), 51
19. [^] *New York Times*: "Ask Wilson to Aid Negroes," November 26, 1919. Retrieved January 21, 2010.
20. [^] *New York Times*: "Reds Try to Stir Negroes to Revolt," July 28, 1919. Retrieved January 28, 2010.
21. [^] "Denies Negroes are 'Reds'" *New York Times* August 3, 1919, accessed January 28, 2010. Phillips was

based in Nashville, Tennessee.

22. [^] ^a ^b *New York Times*: "Reds are Working among Negroes," October 19, 1919. Retrieved January 28, 2010.
23. [^] *New York Times*: "None Killed in Fight with Arkansas Posse," October 2, 1919. Retrieved January 27, 2010.
24. [^] *New York Times*: "Six More are Killed in Arkansas Riots," October 3, 1919. Retrieved January 27, 2010.
25. [^] *New York Times*: "[untitled]" October 12, 1919. Retrieved January 27, 2010.

Further reading

- McWhirter, Cameron, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America* (NY: Henry Holt, 2011)
- Dray, Philip, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (NY: Random House, 2002)
- Tuttle, William M., Jr., *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), originally published 1970

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Summer_of_1919"

Categories: [1919 riots](#) | [1919 in the United States](#) | [Anti-communism in the United States](#) | [History of the United States \(1918–1945\)](#) | [African American history](#) | [Race riots in the United States](#) | [Presidency of Woodrow Wilson](#) | [Red Summer of 1919](#)

- This page was last modified on 14 May 2011 at 00:18.
- Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. See Terms of Use for details.
Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.

Elaine Race Riot

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Elaine Race Riot**, also called the **Elaine Massacre**, occurred September 30, 1919 in the town of Elaine in Phillips County, Arkansas, in the Arkansas Delta, where sharecropping by African American farmers was prevalent on plantations of white landowners. Approximately 100 African American farmers, led by Robert L. Hill, the founder of the Progressive Farmers and Household Union of America, met at a meeting at a church in Hoop Spur in Phillips County, nearby Elaine. The purpose was "to obtain better payments for their cotton crops from the white plantation owners who dominated the area during the Jim Crow era. Black sharecroppers were often exploited in their efforts to collect payment for their cotton crops."^[1]

Contents

- 1 Background
- 2 The Violence of the Elaine Race Riot
- 3 Press coverage
- 4 NAACP Involvement
- 5 The trials
- 6 The appeals
- 7 The aftermath
- 8 See also
- 9 Citations
- 10 Further reading
- 11 External links

Background

O.A. Rogers, Jr. was President of the Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock. In the summer, 1960 issue of the "Arkansas Historical Quarterly", he wrote:

Sharecropping

The African Americans had been having trouble in getting settlements for the cotton they raised on land owned by whites. Both the Negroes and the white owners were to share the profits when the crop was sold for the year. Between the time of planting and selling, the sharecroppers took up food, clothing, and necessities at excessive prices from the plantation store owned by the planter. It was not a practice of the landowner and the sharecroppers to go together to a market to dispose of the cotton when it was ready. Rather, the landowner sold the crop whenever and however he saw fit. At the time of settlement, neither an itemized statement of accounts owed nor an accounting of the money received for cotton and seed, was, in most cases, given or shown the Negroes. It was an unwritten law of the cotton country that they could not quit and leave a plantation until their debts were paid. Many Negroes in Phillips County whose cotton was sold in October, 1918, did not get a settlement before July of the following year.

**NEGROES PLAN TO
KILL ALL WHITES**

SLAUGHTER WAS TO BEGIN WITH
21 PROMINENT MEN AS THE
FIRST VICTIMS.

"WE JUST BEGUN" PASSWORD

Blacks Had Armed Themselves and
Planned to Kill Every White
Person in Sight When Plot
Was Exposed

Headline in "The Gazette", 3
October 1919

According to the Historical Text Archive on *Revolution in the Land: Southern Agriculture in the 20th Century* in a section called ^[2] "The Changing Face of Sharecropping and Tenancy":

Late in the evening of September 30, 1919, black sharecroppers were holding a union meeting in a church in Hoop Spur outside of Elaine, Arkansas. Tensions were high and they had posted guards at the door. When two deputized white men and a black trustee pulled into view, shots rang out. Who fired first is still debated, likely unknowable, and perhaps not that important. What is important is what transpired afterwards. One of the white men was killed, the other wounded. The black trustee raced back to Helena, the county seat of Phillips County, and alerted officials. A posse was dispatched and within a few hours hundreds of white men, many of them the "low down" variety, began to comb the area for blacks they believed were launching an insurrection. In the end, five white men and over a hundred African Americans were killed. Some estimates of the black death toll range in the hundreds. Allegations surfaced that the white posse and even U.S. soldiers who were brought in to put down the so called "rebellion" had massacred defenseless black men, women and children. Nearly a hundred blacks were arrested, and in sham trials that lasted no more than a few minutes each, sixty-something black men were sentenced to prison, and twelve were slated for execution. A massive effort on the part of the NAACP and others, including a prominent black attorney in Little Rock, ensued, and by 1925 all the men were free. But planters had established that blacks had best not organize, even within the law, for racism would bring whites of different classes together to put them down.

Many more blacks than whites died as a result of the violence. Five whites and between 100 and 200 blacks were killed.^{[3][4]}

Seventy-nine African Americans were charged with crimes and tried and convicted, with 12 sentenced to death, and the remainder accepting terms of up to 21 years. Appeals of the death penalty cases went to the U.S. Supreme Court where the high court ruled in favor of an expansion of federal oversight of state treatment of defendants' rights.^[3]

About 100 black sharecroppers had gathered at the Hoop Spur Church in Elaine, Arkansas before dawn on October 1, 1919. They wanted to be able to obtain better prices for their products from the white planters who controlled the land. They considered joining the Progressive Farmers and Household Union of America. They also were discussing filing a class action lawsuit against their landlords. Union members advocating for the union brought armed guards to protect the meeting.

The summer of 1919 had been marked by deadly race riots in numerous major cities across the country, including Chicago, Knoxville, and Washington, DC. In addition, postwar tensions were high because of labor unrest across the country. Added to labor tensions were racial ones — in Phillips County, a plantation area of the Mississippi Delta since before the Civil War, blacks outnumbered whites by ten to one. Whites feared resistance to their domination.

The Violence of the Elaine Race Riot

When a white deputy sheriff and a railroad detective, arrived at the church, a fight broke out between them and the guards. In the ensuing gunfire, the railroad detective was killed and the deputy sheriff was wounded.

The parish sheriff called for a posse to investigate and capture those who were responsible for the

killing. Violence expanded beyond the meeting place. Additional armed white men came into the county from outside to support the white citizens until a mob of 500 to 1,000 armed men had formed. Fighting in the area lasted for three days. Sensational newspaper articles reported that an 'insurrection' was occurring. After arriving in Elaine, white men roamed the area randomly attacking and killing black men.

Area whites also requested help from Arkansas Governor Charles Hillman Brough, citing a 'Negro uprising'. As the mob was gathering, Brough contacted the War Department and requested Federal troops. After considerable delay, approximately 500 U.S. troops arrived and found the area in chaos. The troops made their way to the area of the Hoop Spur Church, where they exchanged gunfire with black farmers in the woods. Over the next few days, the troops disarmed both parties and arrested 285 black residents, putting them in stockades for investigation and protection.

Several African American and white citizens were killed and more wounded. At least two and possibly more were killed by Federal troops. The exact number of blacks killed is unknown because of the wide area of attacks, but estimates ranged from 100 to 200.^{[3][4]}

Press coverage

A dispatch from Helena, Arkansas to the *New York Times* datelined October 1 said: "Returning members of the [white] posse brought numerous stories and rumors, through all of which ran the belief that the rioting was due to propaganda distributed among the negroes by white men."^[5] The next day's report added detail: "Additional evidence has been obtained of the activities of propagandists among the negroes, and it is thought that a plot existed for a general uprising against the whites." A white man had been arrested and was "alleged to have been preaching social equality among the negroes." Part of the headline was: "Trouble traced to Socialist Agitators."^[6]

A few days later a Western Newspaper Union dispatch captioned a photo using the words "Captive Negro Insurrectionists."^[7]

NAACP Involvement

The NAACP promptly released a statement from a contact in Arkansas providing an account of the origins of the violence: "The whole trouble, as I understand it, started because a Mr. Bratton, a white lawyer from Little Rock, Ark., was employed by sixty or seventy colored families to go to Elaine to represent them in a dispute with the white planters relative to the sale price of cotton." It referenced a story in the *Commercial Appeal* of Memphis, Tennessee on October 3 that quoted Bratton's father:^[8]

it had been impossible for [the negroes] to obtain itemized statements of accounts, or in fact to obtain statements at all, and that the manager was preparing to ship their cotton, they being sharecroppers and having a half interest therein, off without settling with them or allowing them to sell their half of the crop and pay up their accounts...If it's a crime to represent people in an effort to make honest settlements, then he has committed a crime.

The NAACP sent its Field Secretary, Walter F. White, to Elaine in October 1919. White, who was of mixed heritage, blond, blue-eyed and able to pass for white, was granted credentials from the *Chicago Daily News*. This enabled him to obtain an interview with Governor Brough, who in turn gave him a letter of recommendation and an autographed photograph.

White was in Phillips County for only a brief time before his identity was discovered and took the first train back to Little Rock. The conductor told him that he was leaving "just when the fun is going to start," because they had found out that there was a "damned yellow nigger passing for white and the boys are going to get him." Asked what they would do to him, the conductor told White that "when they get through with him he won't pass for white no more!"

He was able to talk to members of both communities. White reported that he was told by local people that up to 100 blacks had been killed. White published his findings in the *Daily News*, the *Chicago Defender* and *The Nation*, as well as the NAACP's magazine *The Crisis*.^[3] Governor Brough asked the United States Postal Service to prohibit the mailing of the *Chicago Defender* and *Crisis*, while local officials attempted to enjoin distribution of the *Defender*.^[citation needed] Years later, White said people in Elaine told him that up to 200 blacks had been killed.^[4]

The trials

In October and November 1919, an Arkansas grand jury returned indictments against 122 blacks. Since most blacks had been disfranchised by Arkansas' requirements, they were not allowed to serve as jurors, therefore the jury members were all white. There were 73 charges of murder, plus charges of conspiracy and insurrection.

Those blacks willing to testify against others and who agreed to work for a period without pay as determined by their landlords were set free. Those who refused to comply with those conditions, or were labeled ringleaders or were judged unreliable, were indicted. According to the affidavits later supplied by the defendants, many of the prisoners had been beaten, whipped or tortured by electric shocks to extract testimony or confessions. They were threatened with death if they were to recant their testimony.^[3]

The trials were held only a month after the events, in the courthouse in Elaine, Phillips County. Mobs of armed whites milling around the courthouse. Some members of the audience were armed as well. The lawyers for the defense did not subpoena witnesses for the defense and did not allow their clients to testify. Twelve of the defendants were convicted of murder and sentenced to death in the electric chair. Their trials lasted less than an hour in many cases; the juries took less than ten minutes to deliberate before pronouncing them guilty and sentencing them to death. The *Arkansas Gazette* applauded the trials as the triumph of the rule of law, as none of the defendants had been lynched.

Thirty-six defendants chose to plead guilty to second-degree murder rather than face trial. Sixty-seven other defendants were convicted and sentenced to various terms up to 21 years.

The appeals

The NAACP also took on the task of organizing the defendants' appeal. The NAACP for a time attempted to conceal its role in the appeals, given the hostile reception its report on the violence and the trials had received. Once it undertook to organize the defense, it went to work vigorously, raising more than \$50,000 and hiring Scipio Africanus Jones, a highly respected African-American attorney from Arkansas, and Colonel George W. Murphy, a Confederate veteran, former Attorney General for the State of Arkansas and unsuccessful candidate for Governor on the Progressive Party ticket.

The defendants' lawyers were able to obtain reversal of the verdicts by the Arkansas Supreme Court in

White was in Phillips County for only a brief time before his identity was discovered and took the first train back to Little Rock. The conductor told him that he was leaving "just when the fun is going to start," because they had found out that there was a "damned yellow nigger passing for white and the boys are going to get him." Asked what they would do to him, the conductor told White that "when they get through with him he won't pass for white no more!"

He was able to talk to members of both communities. White reported that he was told by local people that up to 100 blacks had been killed. White published his findings in the *Daily News*, the *Chicago Defender* and *The Nation*, as well as the NAACP's magazine *The Crisis*.^[3] Governor Brough asked the United States Postal Service to prohibit the mailing of the *Chicago Defender* and *Crisis*, while local officials attempted to enjoin distribution of the *Defender*.^[citation needed] Years later, White said people in Elaine told him that up to 200 blacks had been killed.^[4]

The trials

In October and November 1919, an Arkansas grand jury returned indictments against 122 blacks. Since most blacks had been disfranchised by Arkansas' requirements, they were not allowed to serve as jurors, therefore the jury members were all white. There were 73 charges of murder, plus charges of conspiracy and insurrection.

Those blacks willing to testify against others and who agreed to work for a period without pay as determined by their landlords were set free. Those who refused to comply with those conditions, or were labeled ringleaders or were judged unreliable, were indicted. According to the affidavits later supplied by the defendants, many of the prisoners had been beaten, whipped or tortured by electric shocks to extract testimony or confessions. They were threatened with death if they were to recant their testimony.^[3]

The trials were held only a month after the events, in the courthouse in Elaine, Phillips County. Mobs of armed whites milling around the courthouse. Some members of the audience were armed as well. The lawyers for the defense did not subpoena witnesses for the defense and did not allow their clients to testify. Twelve of the defendants were convicted of murder and sentenced to death in the electric chair. Their trials lasted less than an hour in many cases; the juries took less than ten minutes to deliberate before pronouncing them guilty and sentencing them to death. The *Arkansas Gazette* applauded the trials as the triumph of the rule of law, as none of the defendants had been lynched.

Thirty-six defendants chose to plead guilty to second-degree murder rather than face trial. Sixty-seven other defendants were convicted and sentenced to various terms up to 21 years.

The appeals

The NAACP also took on the task of organizing the defendants' appeal. The NAACP for a time attempted to conceal its role in the appeals, given the hostile reception its report on the violence and the trials had received. Once it undertook to organize the defense, it went to work vigorously, raising more than \$50,000 and hiring Scipio Africanus Jones, a highly respected African-American attorney from Arkansas, and Colonel George W. Murphy, a Confederate veteran, former Attorney General for the State of Arkansas and unsuccessful candidate for Governor on the Progressive Party ticket.

The defendants' lawyers were able to obtain reversal of the verdicts by the Arkansas Supreme Court in

six of the twelve cases in which death sentences had been handed down. The grounds were that the jury had failed to specify whether the defendants were guilty of murder in the first or second degree; those cases were accordingly sent back for retrial.

The Arkansas Supreme Court upheld the death sentences of the six other defendants, rejecting the challenge to the all-white jury as untimely and finding that the mob atmosphere and use of coerced testimony did not deny the defendants the due process of law. Those defendants unsuccessfully petitioned the United States Supreme Court for a writ of *certiorari* from the Arkansas Supreme Court's decision.

The defendants next petitioned for a writ of *habeas corpus*, alleging that the proceedings that took place in the Arkansas state court, while ostensibly complying with the requirements of a trial, were in fact only a form. They argued that the accused were convicted under the pressure of the mob, with blatant disregard for their constitutional rights. The defendants originally intended to file their petition in Federal court, but the only sitting judge was assigned to other judicial duties in Minnesota at the time and would not return to Arkansas until after the defendants' scheduled execution date. Judge John Ellis Martineau of the Pulaski County chancery court issued the writ. Although the writ was later overturned by the state Supreme Court, his action postponed the execution date long enough to permit the defendants to seek habeas corpus relief in Federal court, where U.S. District Judge Jacob Trieber issued another writ.

The State of Arkansas took a narrowly legalistic position, based on the United States Supreme Court's earlier decision in *Frank v. Mangum*. It did not dispute the defendants' evidence of torture used to obtain confessions or mob intimidation, but the state simply argued that, even if true, this did not amount to a denial of due process. The United States district court agreed, denying the writ, but also found that there was probable cause for an appeal and allowed the defendants to take their case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In *Moore v. Dempsey*, the United States Supreme Court vacated six of the convictions 261 U.S. 86 (1923) on the grounds that the mob-dominated atmosphere of the trial and the use of testimony coerced by torture denied the defendants' due process required by the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The other six men went back to trial and received sentences of 12 years.

Prominent Little Rock attorney George Rose wrote a letter to outgoing Governor Thomas McRae requesting that he find a way to release the remaining defendants if they agreed to plead guilty. Rose's letter was an attempt to prevent Governor-Elect Thomas Jefferson Terral, a known member of the Ku Klux Klan, from getting involved in the matter.

Just hours before Governor McRae left office, he contacted Scipio Jones to inform him that indefinite furloughs had been issued for the remaining defendants. Jones used the furloughs to obtain release of the prisoners under cover of darkness. The defendants were quickly escorted out of state to prevent their being lynched.

Within a month, Scipio Jones also obtained the release of the other defendants who had pled guilty or been convicted of lesser offenses.

The aftermath

The Supreme Court's decision opened up an era in which the Supreme Court gave closer scrutiny to the criminal justice given to black defendants in the segregated South, at least in well-publicized cases. They reviewed the case of Scottsboro boys a decade later. The victory gave the NAACP greater

D. S. Meredith Sr., 66, Is Claimed By Death

Pioneer Citizen Succumbs at Home Here Following Illness of Eight Weeks

Death Wednesday claimed D. S. Meredith, Sr., community builder, business leader and former Gregg county sheriff.

Mr. Meredith was 66.

He died early Wednesday afternoon from an attack of pneumonia which developed quickly as complication to an illness of eight weeks duration.

He had lived in Longview 35 years, engaging over a long period in the dry goods business, the livery business, and working for the F. T. Rembert company. In 1916 Mr. Meredith entered the race for sheriff, winning the post. He retired at the end of four years, or in 1921.

In later years he aided in the organization of the Rembert National and Longview National banks.

Mr. Meredith was born in Lawrenceville, Va., the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Meredith. He came to Texas with his brother, Jesse Meredith, at the age of 16, settling at Henderson. There he was married to Miss Minnie Burr Fisher, member of another pioneer East Texas family. Mr. and Mrs. Meredith reached their 39th wedding anniversary two days before his death, or on Monday.

Surviving him are: Mrs. D. S. Meredith, Sr., three sons, D. S. Meredith, Jr., Perry Meredith, Wilmer Meredith, all of Longview, and one daughter, Mrs. Walton Summer, Miri, Borneo; three grandchildren, David Sutton Meredith, III, and Corrine Meredith, and Patricia Alice Meredith.

Funeral services will be conducted from the family home at 306 South Fredonia street at 4 p. m. Thursday

D. S. Meredith

(Continued from Page One)

with the Rev. L. W. Nichols, pastor of Kelly Memorial Methodist church officiating. Burial will be in Greenwood cemetery.

Pallbearers will be: Hall Wood, A. A. King, H. J. Butts, W. K. Eckman, G. A. Bodenheim, E. E. Crain, E. M. Bramlette and Gabe Whittington.

D.S.M., Sr.

b. 2 FEB 1869
BRUNSWICK CO, VA

d. 14 MAR 1934

LONGVIEW, GREGG CO, TX

DAVID WILLIAM
MEREDITH

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBJECT MARKERS:
2012 Official Texas Historical Marker
Sponsorship Application Form

Valid September 1, 2011 to November 15, 2011 only

This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for subject marker requests only. Please see separate forms for either Historic Texas Cemeteries or Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks.

Proposed marker topic (Official title will be determined by the THC): David Sutton Meredith

County: Gregg

Town (nearest county town on current state highway map): Longview

Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above: 705 Magrill St., Longview, Texas

Marker Coordinates:

If you know the location coordinates of the proposed marker site, enter them in one of the formats below:

UTM Zone Easting Northing
Lat: Long: (deg, min, sec or decimal degrees)

Otherwise, give a precise verbal description here (e.g. northwest corner of 3rd and Elm, or FM 1411, 2.6 miles east of McWhorter Creek): Greenwood Cemetery is bordered on the West side of Magrill by North Fourth St., on the North side by Pardon St. and on the East side by North Fifth St.

Will the marker be placed at the actual site of the topic being marked? Yes No
If the answer is no, provide the distance and directions to the actual location from the marker (i.e. 100 yards east). **grave site of David Sutton Meredith**

SUBJECT MARKERS

Definition

Subject markers are educational in nature and reveal aspects of local history important to a community or region. These markers honor topics such as church congregations, schools, communities, businesses, events and individuals. Subject markers are placed at sites that have historical associations with the topics, but no legal restriction is placed on the use of the property or site, although the THC must be notified if the marker is ever to be relocated.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Criteria

1. **Age:** Most topics marked with subject markers must date back at least 50 years, although historic events may be marked after 30 years, and historic individuals may be marked, or may be mentioned in a historical marker text, after they have been deceased 10 years. The THC may waive age requirements for topics of overwhelming state or national importance, although exceptions are rarely granted and the burden of proof for all claims and documentation is the responsibility of the narrative author.
2. **Historical significance:** A topic is considered to have historical significance if it had influence, effect or impact on the course of history or cultural development; age alone does not determine significance. Topics do not necessarily have to be of statewide or national significance; many historical markers deal with local history and a local level of significance.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements can be accepted or processed by the THC. For subject markers, the required elements are: sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation.

- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the CHC in the county in which the marker will be placed. Paper copies of applications, whether mailed or delivered in person, cannot be accepted in lieu of the electronic version.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be in the form of Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and submitted by email attachments to the THC no later than November 15, 2011. THC email accepts mail no larger than 10 MB.
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview and significance.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of available resources, both primary and secondary.
- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required. Please send payment with the invoice which THC provides.

APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact with the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application, throughout the review and production processes, will be by direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC contact is notifying the THC that

the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC, and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.

As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:

- Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any:

Name of CHC contact (chair or marker chair): Gem Meacham

Mailing address: 1015 Meadow Ave. City, Zip: Kilgore TX 75662

Daytime phone: 903-983-2554 Email address: gemmeacham@gmail.com

PERMISSION OF PROPERTY OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Will the marker be placed on right-of-way maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)? Yes No

If the answer is yes, the THC will secure the necessary permission from TxDOT, and no other information is required. If the answer is no, please provide the following information for the person or group who owns the property.

Property owner: City of Longview

Address: PO BOX 1952 City, State, Zip: Longview TX 75606-1952

Phone: 903-237-1392 Email address: lhill@longviewtexas.gov

NOTE: The property owner will not receive copies of correspondence from the THC. All procedural correspondence (notice of receipt, requests for additional information, inscription, shipping notice, etc.) will be sent by email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary.

SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION

Prospective sponsors please note the following:

- Payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.
- Payment relates to sponsorship of the marker in partnership with the THC, which provides the match for program costs.
- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.
- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of \$100.

- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors through marker text, incising or supplemental plaques.

Marker sponsor (may be individual or organization): **H. M. Meredith**

Contact person (if applicable): **same**

Mailing address: **231 Fairlawn Dr. City, State, Zip: Lindale TX 75771**

Phone:903-881-0537 **Email address:**meredithstwo@suddenlink.net

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

If the proposed marker site is on TxDOT right-of-way, the marker will be shipped directly to the district highway engineer for placement, with consultation from the CHC. If the marker will go on property other than TxDOT right-of-way, provide information in the space below. In order to facilitate marker delivery, residence addresses, post office box numbers and rural route numbers are not permitted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Name: **Gregg County Historical Museum, ATTN: Neina Kennedy, Director**

Street address: **214 N. Fredonia City, zip: Longview TX 75601**

Daytime phone:903-753-5854 **Email:** neina@gregghistorical.org

TYPE AND SIZE OF SUBJECT MARKER

As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size of the marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:

- 27" x 42" subject marker with post (\$1,500)
- 27" x 42" subject marker without post* (\$1,500)
- 18" x 28" subject marker with post (\$1,000)
- 18" x 28" subject marker without post* (\$1,000)

*For a subject marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:

- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

*For markers without posts, the CHC must receive prior approval from the THC for the planned placement. Such prior approval is based on the following:

- Submittal of a detailed plan for where the marker will be mounted, including the surface to which it will be placed (masonry, metal, wood); and
- A statement of why a marker with a post is not feasible or preferred.

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)

When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC by email at the following address:

markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.

- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
 - This application form
 - The subject history (including documentation)

RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC:

The CHC must retain hard copies of the application, as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, incomplete applications or applications not properly filed according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, visit the Markers page on the THC web site (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madmark.html>).

Texas Historical Commission
History Programs Division
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276
Phone 512/463-5853
history@thc.state.tx.us



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

DAVID SUTTON MEREDITH
1869 – 1934

1. CONTEXT

On April 12, 1873, during the administration of Governor Edmond J. Davis, the Texas legislature passed the bill authorizing the creation of Gregg County with 312 square miles. This new county was pruned from portions of Rusk and Upshur counties.¹

David Sutton Meredith, in his early twenties, came from Virginia and settled in Henderson, Rusk County, Texas. There he met and married a school teacher, Minnie Burr Fisher, who had come to Texas from Tennessee after graduation from Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. They moved to Longview in 1895. When he was elected sheriff of Gregg County in 1916 and re-elected in 1918,² little did he know that during his second term, he and Longview would be part of the history of Texas and the United States in the summer of 1919. He served as sheriff until 1921 and did not stand for re-election.

II. OVERVIEW

David Sutton Meredith was born February 2, 1869 in Brunswick County, Virginia. He was a quiet man with infinite patience, a fair and just man, kind and courteous, a devoted husband, and loving father.³ In 1891, he came to Texas, settled in Henderson, met and married Minnie Burr Fisher, a native of Berlin, Maury County, Tennessee. They had five children, four of whom survived to adulthood: Olivia, D. S., Jr., Perry and Wilmer. D. S. started a livery stable business and later worked for the F. T. Rembert Mercantile Company.⁴

In November, 1916, he was elected Sheriff of Gregg County to serve the 1917-18 term.⁵ D. S. received 881 votes to 22 for his opponent.⁶ He was re-elected in November 1918 to serve the 1919-20 term.⁷ In 1919 Longview was in the process of settling down

¹ *Gregg County History*, Sponsored by the Longview Junior Chamber of Commerce, Published by University Supply & Equipment Company, Fort Worth, Texas 1057, p. 3.

² Ricky Clark, Chief Sheriff's Deputy, Gregg County Letter to H. M. Meredith, Sept. 13, 2010.

³ Olivia Meredith Sumner, *The Family*, Longview Public Library, 1969, p. 45.

⁴ Obituary, Longview News, March 15, 1934

⁵ Ricky Clark Letter to H. M. Meredith

⁶ Gregg County Elections book, Volume I, p. 154.

⁷ Clark Letter.

to enjoy the peace gained in World War I.⁸ D. S. Meredith was caught in the racial unrest of the summer of 1919, called “The Red Summer”. That phase describes the bloody race riots that occurred in the United States during the summer and early autumn of 1919.⁹

The “Longview Race Riot” is chronicled in a report published by Dr. George E. Haynes, an educator at the U.S. Department of Labor, who recorded that the racial violence in the summer and fall of 1919 produced 26 separate riots.¹⁰ His chronology started on May 10 in Charleston, South Carolina and ended October 1st in Elaine, Arkansas. The report lists the Longview riot as number 13 with July 10 as the starting date; however, the murder of Lamuel Walters, a local teacher and a black man from Longview, which started the racial trouble in Longview, took place on June 17, which would place it 7th on Dr. Haynes report.¹¹

Racial friction in Longview in June 1919 was already high because two local black leaders, Samuel Jones and Dr. Calvin Davis, had urged black farmers to bypass local cotton merchants and deal directly with warehousemen in Galveston, promising more profit if they would do so.¹² Then, the Walters’ murder sparked a major confrontation between the races. Reportedly, Walters was romantically involved with a white woman from a notable family who lived in Kilgore.¹³ He was first beaten by the woman’s brothers and afterwards placed in the protective custody of the sheriff, D. S. Meredith. There are conflicting accounts about what happened next. Whether Sheriff Meredith kept Walters in the county jail or placed him on a train to get him out of town and away from the angry white men is unknown.¹⁴ Some, including the sheriff’s son, Perry Meredith, claimed that the sheriff placed Walters in protective custody at the sheriff’s own home and then, for Walter’s safety shipped him out of town, where a mob apprehended him.¹⁵ On June 17, 1919, Walter’s bullet-riddled corpse was found near an abandoned stretch of

⁸ Gregg County History, p. 19.

⁹ “For Action on Race Riot Perils”, New York Times, October 5, 1919, cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Summer_of_1919, accessed November 03, 2010.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Archie P. McDonald, Director, East Texas Historical Association, Longview News Journal, October 15, 2007.

¹³ Eugene W. McWhorter, *Traditions of the Land: The History of Gregg County, Texas*. (Gregg County Historical Foundation: Longview, Tx. 1989) p. 103

¹⁴ Rachel McCreary, “Longview Race Riot, Troubled Summer”. http://mccrearyfamily.net/rachel/LongviewRaceRiot/Noblable_Figures.html, accessed Nov. 3, 2010.

¹⁵ Ibid.

railroad tracks by Foote's Switch.¹⁶ On July, 5, 1919, The *Chicago Defender*, a national black weekly, carried an article on the alleged romance and killing.¹⁷

Affairs went from bad to worse in Longview. On Thursday, July 10, Samuel Jones, the *Defender's* local reporter-distributor was caught on a downtown street and assaulted by the family of the white woman.¹⁸ He was treated by Dr. Davis and they were both warned by Mayor G. A. Bodenheim there might be trouble later.¹⁹ That night, gangs of both races roamed the streets.²⁰ In the early morning hours of Friday, July 11, a mob burned Jones's and Davis's homes. Both Jones and Davis fled Longview. Later that morning, County Judge E. M. Bramlette and Sheriff D. S. Meredith telephoned Governor William P. Hobby, who ordered eight Texas Rangers to Longview and placed three Texas National Guard units in East Texas on alert.²¹ As the day progressed, other prominent black men's houses were burned and Judge Bramlette, Sheriff Meredith and Mayor Bodenheim appealed to Governor Hobby again, who immediately ordered the Texas Guard, commanded by General R. M. McDill, to establish martial law.²² Guard troops and Texas Rangers arrived in force on Saturday, July 12th and General McDill imposed martial law on Sunday July 13th. McDill created a citizens committee, consisting of Bramlette, Meredith, and Bodenheim, to consult with him during the time martial law was in force.²³ The committee passed resolutions expressing disapproval of the shooting and burning and pledged their support to the military authorities.²⁴ The Texas Rangers arrested seventeen white men on charges of attempted murder; each was released on \$1,000.00 bond. Twenty-one black men were arrested, charged and sent to Austin, temporarily for their own safety. Nine white men were also charged with arson. None of the white or black men were ever tried.²⁵ By Friday, July 18th, things had quieted

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ McWhorter, p. 103.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ McCreary

²⁰ McWhorter, p. 103.

²¹ Ken Durham, "Longview Race Riot of 1919", *East Texas Historical Journal*, Vol XVIII, 1980, p. 17.

²² McDonald, *Longview News Journal*, October 15, 2007.

²³ McCreary.

²⁴ Durham

²⁵ Durham.

down and General McGill reported to Governor Hobby martial law could be lifted.²⁶ Longview's race riot was now part of the Red Summer of 1919.

SIGNIFICANCE

In the report of Dr. George E. Hayes, it was pointed out that in other riots, many dozens, both black and white were killed. In subsequent trials, where mostly black men were tried and convicted, more riots broke out after the trials.²⁷ The decision of County Judge E. M. Bramlette, Sheriff Meredith and Mayor Bodenheim to not prosecute any blacks or whites that were arrested did much to quiet down tension in Longview and the town did not suffer the fate of other riot cities where violence broke out after the trials. This action can not be overstated since other sections of the country suffered from years of racial unrest and adverse publicity. Elaine, Arkansas, for example, (located east of Pine Bluff, Arkansas) had six years of trials, appeals and stays of execution which followed their riots.²⁸ The twelve Elaine blacks who were given death sentences were ultimately released.²⁹ Other parts of the United States where racial riots occurred that summer, which included many deaths of both blacks and whites, included Charleston, South Carolina, Washington, D.C., Omaha, Nebraska, Norfolk, Virginia, and Chicago, Illinois.³⁰ The Chicago riot being one of the worst with 38 fatalities, which included 23 blacks and 15 whites plus 537 injured.³¹

The Longview officials were wise to avoid post-riot trials and the years of riot related news coverage.³² Author Durham, in a letter dated May 10, 2011, opined that the timely notification of Texas Governor Hobby, by Bramlette, Bodenheim and Meredith of trouble and the governor ordering 250 National Guardsmen and Rangers had a soothing and calming effect upon Longview.³³ Only one person was killed after the riot began and Jack Howard, Gregg County Sheriff from 1891 to 1903, praised local officials and the

²⁶ McCreary.

²⁷ "For Action on Race Riot Perils", New York Times.

²⁸ Durham, p. 21.

²⁹ O. A. Rogers, Jr. "The Elaine Race Riots of 1919", Arkansas Historical Quarterly, XIX (Summer, 1960) p. 150.

³⁰ Wikipedia, Red Summer of 1919, page 5.

³¹ Ibid. p.3

³² Durham, p. 21.

³³ Letter to H. M. Meredith from Ken Durham, Ph.D., Prof. Emeritus of History, Le Tourneau University.

governor for their rapid action.³⁴ Howard estimated that at least thirty blacks would have been killed had troops not arrived promptly.³⁵ Dr. Durham stated Sheriff Meredith deserves credit for his responsible behavior during the Longview riot.³⁶

In later years, D. S. Meredith aided in the organization of the Rembert National and Longview National Bank, which helped the continued economic development of Longview and Gregg County.³⁷ He died March 14, 1934. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Longview where his sons, D. S., Jr., Perry, and Wilmer lie beside him.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Obituary, Longview News, March 15, 1934

Longview News-Journal

TAKE TWO

PAGE 2A / SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2014

Mayor Bodie: Sticks and stones may ...

As far as G.A. Bodenheim was concerned, Longview was his town.

The feisty mayor, who had his own way of doing things, prided himself in knowing everyone in town and what they were up to.

That's why, on the evening of Jan. 7, 1908, Bodenheim was surprised to see a large crowd gathered on Tyler Street in front of the First National Bank.

Bodie, as many residents called the popular two-term mayor, waded through the crowd to the gentleman on the sidewalk addressing the group.

The man turned out to be W.W. Buchanan, a well-known Texas socialist organizer originally from Ohio.

Rock throwing

A newspaper story of Jan. 9 reported what happened next:

"Mayor Bodenheim walked up and asked (Buchanan) what he was doing, to which he answered that he was doing what any American had a perfect right to do. The crowd appeared to somewhat agree with the socialist speaker."

Buchanan was promoting his Socialist Party of America and urging

to join the labor-union campaign.

At that point, "fearing his authority was being overrun," Bodenheim "ordered the man to leave and stop blocking the sidewalk" or the mayor would make a citizen's arrest and throw Buchanan in the local calaboose.

Bodenheim "emphasized his remark by picking up a rock" and again ordered Buchanan to mosey on out of town.

The man kept talking and "gesticulating to the mayor," who then threw his rock, "which the socialist dexterously dodged."

An exasperated Bodenheim then left the downtown corner and, after a quick supper at home, headed to a 7:30 p.m. city council meeting at City Hall.

Along the way, Bodenheim "was assaulted by some men concealed under a tree near his home. The mayor received one glancing blow from a club. The party ran away at the approach of an officer." The mayor received only minor injuries and was able to preside at the council meeting that night.



VAN CRADDOCK

quickly made an arrest, but the man Little arrested was Mayor Bodenheim. While Bodie couldn't identify any of the men who had attacked him, W.W. Buchanan filed charges after the mayor chunked the rock at his noggin.

Bodenheim was incensed by the arrest, but there wasn't much

he could do about it. However, Bodie made sure he was well represented at his trial, hiring "the law firms of Young & Stinchcomb, Howard & Cunningham and Turner & Campbell" to defend him.

The trial was brief with the jury promptly declaring Bodenheim "not guilty."

We don't know if W.W. Buchanan returned to Longview. In May, only four months after the Longview incident, Buchanan was one of nine Texas delegates to the 1908 national convention of the Socialist Party of America in Chicago.

Bodenheim, first elected mayor in 1904, served in the position through 1916. He declined to run that year but then won re-election again in 1918.

man by profession, Gabriel Augustus Bodenheim was a most colorful character. He also turned Longview into a modern town.

Improvements

During his time as mayor a century ago, Bodie:

- Expanded the city limits by annexing Longview Junction, a settlement just east of town, giving Longview a population of 5,000.

- Paved almost 10 miles of city streets.

- Organized the city's first paid fire department and reportedly bought the first automobile fire engine in the state.

- Pushed through a \$250,000 waterworks system and filtration plant.

- Installed a modern sewer system and initiated sanitation collection throughout the corporate limits.

- Built a "Corinthian Standard" street lighting system (which Bodie could have used in 1908 to identify his downtown assailants).

In appreciation of his efforts to develop the city, a downtown park was named "Bodie Park" in his honor.

Mayor Bodenheim died in 1957, just shy of his 84th birthday.

- Van "Rock-Solid" Craddock is author of the book "East Texas Tales." His email is vancraddock@charlebel.net