

## TWO RAPISTS TO DIE SEPT. 15TH

(Continued from Front Page)

Carthage, Aug. 15.—Seven minutes after they had retired to weigh the evidence against Angus Murphy and Joseph Thomas, negroes charged with criminal assault upon Mrs. A. Ketchen, the jury was back in the box declaring to the court that both defendants had been adjudged guilty of rape and within the hour both had been sentenced by Judge B. F. Long to be executed September 15. The verdict was returned at 4:35 this afternoon.

Two thousand and more people who crowded around the improvised bar in the tobacco warehouse where the court is sitting heard the verdict and the sentence in silence. Word was passed outside where hundreds waited in the rain for the jury's decision. The woman against whom the crime was done looked on calmly, and only the Murphy negro showed emotion. He wept silently.

### Back to Raleigh

Tonight the two doomed negroes, and the third, John Lee, who submitted to a charge of secret assault, were taken back to Raleigh under the guard of detachments from the Durham Machine Gun Company and the Raleigh Service Company, leaving here on a special train. Carthage and Moore county are settled back into their accustomed calm, satisfied with the verdict and glad that it was attained without violence.

Conclusion of the hearing came with a dash of the dramatic at 3:50 this afternoon when Solicitor Nash, who conducted the prosecution and U. L. Spence, speaking for the defense, submitted the evidence with out argument and Judge Long began his summary of the testimony and the law. Thirty five minutes later the jury retired and seven minutes later they were back with the fate of the two prisoners sealed.

Both denied their guilt, and throughout more than two hours of the morning session had unfolded a fantastic alibi, the one dittoing the other's statements with a precision that might have shaken belief in their guilt. But the State had one more witness, L. L. Honeycutt, a Seaboard flagman who saw them board the freight train on which they were arrested.

Both negroes claimed that they had left Durham on Wednesday afternoon, had gone to Raleigh on Thursday, had left Raleigh on a freight train at 9 o'clock that night, and had encountered two negroes at a station between Southern Pines and Sanford from whom they swore they bought the items of Mrs. Ketchen's personal property found on them. The young negro, John Lee, arrested with them, and whose evidence did them most serious damage, had joined them early in the morning on the train, they said.

### Rift in Story.

Conductor Baucom, in charge of the freight train on which the negroes were arrested, swore that the train did not leave Raleigh until 1:05 on the morning of the crime, that he had searched the train for hoboes three times on the trip and found none, that he made no stops between Sanford and Aberdeen. That testimony cut heavily into the statements of the negroes. Three Southern Pines negroes thought that they had seen the three prisoners on the afternoon preceding the crime, but could not be sure. It was the flagman's testimony that cut the ground from under them.

Strangely enough his name had not got to the solicitor until court adjourned at noon. The population generally had made up its mind that the negroes were guilty and no great preparation had been made for assisting the solicitor in his fight. Honeycutt was brought here from Hamlet at a most unlawful rate of speed. He was on the stand less than sixty seconds, but he was very positive that the prisoners swung on to the train as it passed Southern Pines. He had stood by when they were searched in Aberdeen.

### Mrs. Ketchen Recalled.

Mrs. Ketchen was called back to the stand early in the afternoon when she had heard both negroes testify, and had become familiar with the natural voices of both. Then she was positive in her identification of Murphy as the negro who had committed the actual assault, and of Thomas as the negro who held the light while Murphy beat her into submission. She was calm and collected on the stand, and made a good witness.

John Lee, third of the three negroes charged in the bill of indictment with the crimes of rape, burglary and secret assault, took the stand on the opening of court this morning. He was a scared, pinched scrap of a negro boy, looking not all of the 16 years that he claimed for himself. His voice was low, and it was with difficulty that he was prodded into talking loud enough to be heard.

Sharp study in contrasts was presented in the little negro, and the two against whom the judgment of death was made. Murphy is a hideous sight, a fugitive, Althy creature with a stubble of beard through which horrible syphilitic sores poke their heads. Thomas is younger, a negro with no little self assurance.

He was almost defiant at times when he gave his story to the jury. The little negro said that he had been in Greensboro, that he had drifted into the Sandhills, after hearing that work could be had there. He was hungry when he got to Southern Pines, and the two prisoners fed him. After supper they wanted to go off in the country, and the little negro went. He thought they were going to see some "country girls."

The three took the Pinchurst road, and went past the garage where the Ketchen family was camped. A mile or so beyond they sat down, and he went to sleep, he said. It was near midnight when Thomas and Murphy awakened him and said they had to get back to town. Murphy went close to the garage and looked in as they passed, and a little further on he declared that he was of a mind to go back and make those people give him money.

They went back. The little negro said he didn't go in the garage. He declared that the two went inside, and presently he heard two shots. He started back toward the place, and saw Mrs. Ketchen slumb through the window with her baby in her arms. Murphy ran after her, and grabbed her by the arm. She struggled, and while she fought, Thomas held the light. Murphy hit her back of the head with the pistol. The assault was consummated. The witness hesitated to give the details of the assault, when pressed by the Solicitor.

After the assault was consummated the Thomas negro went back to the garage where the woman's husband was lying shot through the body, and searched it for money. The Murphy negro told the woman that she had to give him money after he had ravished her. The boy said he ran down the road, he said, and was joined later by the other two. He described their wanderings during the rest of the night, and their arrest the following morning. Lawyers of the defense were unable to shake his story at any point.

### Court Marks Time.

Deputy Sheriff Beck, whose quick thinking resulted in the arrest, described it in detail. Dr. J. M. Milliken, who attended Mrs. Ketchen, her husband and the little baby, who was powder-burned from the shot that almost killed his father, described the man's condition, the wounds and condition of Mrs. Ketchen when he treated her shortly after the assault. She had scratches and bruises about the body and a heavy lump back of the head where she was struck with the pistol.

The State rested. Defense counsel startled the assemblage somewhat when the two defendants were sworn. Thomas first on the stand. He leaned against the wall and told his story indifferently. He recited it like he had drilled himself in it, and the best efforts of Solicitor Nash failed to shake him. So also with the tale of Murphy. They were on the stand more than two hours.

News of the flagman's ability to identify the negroes as the three that swung on the train at Southern Pines brought a halt in the proceedings after the prisoners had testified, and the indulgence of the court was asked until he could be brought from Hamlet. Sheriff Blue, and other deputies filled in after dinner, recounting the story of the arrest, until Honeycutt arrived in response to Solicitor Nash's request.

### Storm Hits Charge.

Another of these Sandhill storms broke just as the State rested and both sides announced their intention to curtail speaking. The warehouse has no windows, and the Judge's stand is backed up against an opening on the weather-side of the house. Judge Long had to shift some to get out of the rain and get in range of the jury. Scarcely a dozen people heard his charge outside of the men in the box to whom it was directed.

Only one issue of law was involved, and it was not contested, that being whether a second party, not guilty of an actual assault, but guilty of aiding and abetting in an assault. Judge Long simply summed up the contentions of both sides, recited the evidence of both sides, defined rape, and instructed the jury that if they believed the testimony of the two negroes on their own behalf to set them free, but if they believed the testimony of the State, and that Thomas aided and abetted in the assault, to find them both guilty of rape, but if they found that Thomas did not assist, to find him not guilty of actual rape.

### Betting on Verdict.

The jury was not long. Some were willing to bet that they would be out less than five minutes, but others were of the notion that 12 men living in Moore county since the crime and not having made up their minds about the case when they were called to the jury box, might take a little longer. Nobody doubted the verdict, and it caused no sensation.

Murphy was called to stand first to receive the verdict, and he was declared guilty. He broke down. Thomas stood up, and took the verdict as to himself calmly. Judge Long retired to dictate his sentence, and the throng stirred out of the tense attitude in which they had stood and sat down for two hours. Judge Long told the prisoners to stand up, and both asked the mercy of the court.

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### No Mercy in Court.

"If you and your associates wish to seek mercy, you will have to apply to some other tribunal," he told Murphy. Then he read his judgment, very solemnly declaring that each of the two negroes must pay with their lives for the crime committed against Mrs. Ketchen eleven days ago by electrocution at the State Prison on Friday, September 15. They have thirty days more to live. Their attorneys made no mention of appeal. Not an objection was raised during the whole progress of the trial by either side. There are no exceptions to be taken.

The prisoners slumped back into their seats. Murphy was wiping the tears from his dirty face. Thomas' countenance did not change throughout the trial. He was stolid, indifferent, but the most intelligent of the three. A few minutes later the troops formed a hollow square about the prisoners, and they marched back to the jail to wait until the special train took them away at 9 o'clock.

### Multitude Subsides.

Hundreds of automobiles that have lined the streets since the trial began yesterday morning began to trickle out of the town, and an hour later there was little to mark the fever heat of public interest that has been evident for days and days. The keepers of hot dog stands went home, mostly with their tongues hanging out. These have been strenuous days for all of them, and but most of Moore county's population would have been hungry.

Not the least strange among the manifestations of the week has been the presence of so many people from far places. Charlotte must have had a hundred people here, Raleigh nearly that many, and Fayetteville, Rockingham, Sanford, Durham and just about every town in this entire section. Carthage took little comparative interest in the proceedings, but most of Moore county population turned out en masse.

### Crowds Were Orderly.

Better behaved folks never gathered anywhere. Interested they were to be sure, and determined on just one thing—that these negroes were going to be punished. If the court did it well and good. It would relieve the community of a dirty job. If the jury didn't, somebody would have to do it. This is undoubtedly true, but nobody went around making threats. Not a threat has been heard by the court or by the officers commanding the guardsmen.

Under the command of Captain Fowler and Lieutenant Aycock the soldiers have behaved themselves mightily well. They have kept in the background as much as possible, have been courteous to everybody, made no display of militarism, but have been very firm in doing what they have been told to do. Judge Long has not liked seeing soldiers in his court with hats on, but military regulations are military regulations.

### Fine For Business.

One way it has been fine for business in Carthage. Seven times a town's population can not come here and not spend some money. Drug stores and any place that sells meat and drink have prospered like wartime profiteers. No, not that they have shot up prices. Volume of business did it. Carthage hopes it will never happen again, but the occasion has been most interesting. It was almost like Old Home Week.

Mrs. Ketchen will remain here with her husband until he is able to travel, and then they will go on with their trip, but not in an automobile. The 16-month-old baby has encared himself to the hospital staff, where the Ketchens are staying. He did not show up in court. And by way of foot-note, something happened in yesterday's story about her age. She is 23 and could pass for less in a pinch.

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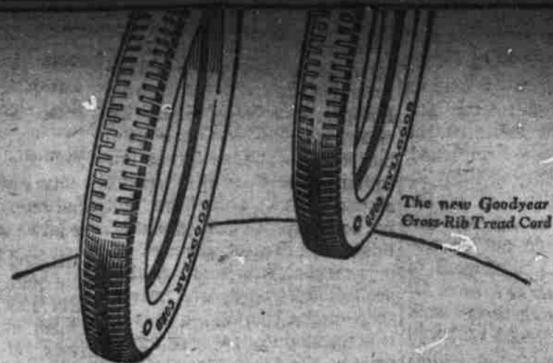
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