

*Paper: The Express-Star*

*Location: Chickasha, Oklahoma*

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*Victim(s):*  
*Will Davis*

*COVERAGE:*  
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Oklahoma  
July 2, 1906  
Chickasha  
Daily Express.

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Chickasha, Indian Territory, Monday Evening, July 2, 1906

NUMBER 155

## Land Wanted

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## ORDER OF JUDGE LYNCH PROMPTLY EXECUTED

THE CITIZENS AT WOMACK TOOK  
THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN  
HANDS

NEGRO HANGED AND BURNED

Near the Scene of His Crime Which  
He Confessed—Story of the  
Crime.

Will Davis, alias Will Newbright, the negro who criminally assaulted the sixteen year old daughter of Ira Robertson near WOMACK, I. T., was hanged and burned near the scene of his crime at three o'clock Sunday morning.

The negro was a stranger in the community and he told one person that he was from Marshall, Texas, and another that he was from San Antonio.

Within an hour after the crime had been committed hundreds of armed men including all the farmers around and officers with a posse from Purcell, were scouring the country in search of the perpetrator of the crime and late Saturday afternoon he was overtaken about a mile and a half from Bradley. He made no effort to resist capture but submitted at once and confessed that he was the man wanted. Deputy Marshal Bird of Purcell attempted to take possession of the prisoner but the leader of the mob, which numbered about four hundred, said, "No Mr. Bird, we like you but we can't let you have this man, we will take care of him."

Soon after the capture the mob took up the march toward WOMACK, about twenty miles to the north, carrying the prisoner in a buggy. A little before three o'clock that morning WOMACK was reached and the procession moved a mile and a half east to the home of the assaulted girl where a half was made and the young lady was carried out to the buggy to identify her assailant. The moment she set her eyes upon him she said, "That's the man" and the negro replied, "Yes, lady, I'm the one. Gentlemen, I admit the crime."

No time was wasted but immediately the mob proceeded a quarter of a mile east past the spot where the awful crime was committed and then turned south another quarter, halting under a large oak tree in the middle of the road near the banks of Walnut Creek. The crowd numbered nearly five hundred people but it was quiet and orderly and entered upon its work in a cold determined manner. When the preparations for the execution were completed, one of the mob said to him, "Why did you commit such a crime?" and he replied "The notion just entered my head and I decided it was no worse to do the deed than to ask to do it." Did you not know that we would get you?" was inquired and he answered "Yes." Then he again confessed his crime but said he had repented and believed God had forgivem him and he would go to heaven. After he had uttered a fervent prayer, the rope was adjusted about his neck and he was drawn into the air, the rope being thrown over a limb about eighteen feet from the ground. Before life

was entirely extinct, the body was lowered and placed in the midst of a mass of logs and burning brush. Only a quivering of the flesh and a few faint groans told of the final agonies of the dying man. The crowd soon began to disperse, part of them firing their guns as they left, and within two hours practically all had departed. Under the direction of officers the charred remains were buried a few feet from the burning.

By 8 o'clock WOMACK and the surrounding country was as quiet as if nothing unusual had happened during the night. There was no disturbance, no excitement apparent. A farmer in the neighborhood was asked "What did they do with the negro?" he merely replied "Oh they attended to his case early this morning" and the people seemed to take it as only an act of duty performed.

Additional details in regard to the crime make the story a peculiarly revolting one. Miss Mary Robertson who is a pretty girl of an humble but highly respected family, started about six o'clock Friday afternoon to walk at the home of a kinsman, J. B. Arnold, a half mile away, to spend the night. As she was descending the hill just beyond sight of her home, she met the negro who was walking. He was a mulatto, weighing about 165 pounds and about five feet ten inches in height. The girl saw him coming and when he spoke to her in insulting terms, she attempted to run, but he had seized her off and seized her by the wrists. "If you scream, I'll cut your throat," he cried and when he had accomplished his purpose he said "If you say anything about this I'll kill you." The girl started toward her home, but he compelled her to go in the opposite direction and she made her way to the home of Mr. Arnold where he carried the news to the Robertson home and within half an hour the search for the negro was on. The young lady is suffering greatly from the shock and her wrists are badly swollen, but her condition is not considered dangerous.

Judge Dickerson summoned a special grand jury to convene here at nine o'clock this morning to investigate the lynching and declares nothing will be left undone to vindicate the law and bring the guilty parties to justice. "It was heinous crime" said he, "but the law must take its course and be vindicated."

So far as known here this is the first lynching that has occurred in Indian Territory.

WOMACK AND THE WALNUT WOMACK, the little Indian Territory town that has suddenly flashed into prominence on account of the awful tragedy Sunday morning is located about 20 miles northeast of Chickasha and a little less than the distance from Purcell. "By the road," it is probably 25 miles from Chickasha. It is a small village, with a hotel, a store, a "joint" and a few dwellings, situated in the mist of one of the fairest regions on earth, in the valley between the two branches

(Continued on Page 5.)

## GRAND JURY SUMMONED

SIXTEEN MEN ORDERED TO INVESTIGATE THE LYNNING OF THE NEGRO AT WOMACK

### JUDGE'S CHARGE TO THE JURY

He asks that Indictments be Returned  
against Every Man Party  
to It.

Judge Dickerson had a special grand jury empaneled this morning to investigate the WOMACK lynching. The jury met once to organize and summon witnesses but it is not likely that much can be accomplished till Thursday.

In his charge to the jury the court said in substance:

"Gentlemen of the grand jury I have had you summoned to investigate a matter of recent date. My information is that crime was committed in this jurisdiction or alleged to have been committed and the perpetrator was overtaken and arrested by citizens and was killed either by burning or hanging. The crime which rumor charges was committed was one which all mankind loathes and was particularly heinous but one from which our law-makers have provided ample protection. Rape is punishable by death in this jurisdiction and so far as I know no jury has ever been accused of not doing its duty along that line. Last summer a negro was hanged at Ardmore for committing the crime against one of his own race. It is therefore with much humility that I call you together to investigate this killing without due process of law. Whether the negro was killed or burned alive is of little moment, but one of the most serious problems of our time is taking law into our own hands and doing what the officers and court must do.

"I know how this community and others adjacent to it feel on this subject. I know the usual remarks on hearing of an event of this kind. No one can feel more deeply than I the awfulness of the crime. I know with what carelessness we use language, how intemperate we feel when we have and how the passions and tempers of men run wild and have public sentiment spreads. I feel it all, but I say to you that public sentiment should not influence a public officer, nor sway him in doing his sworn duty.

"You are sworn officers of this court and have taken an oath to enforce the law."

"When men organize and take the law into their own hands, little attention is paid to the evidence; whether the right man is caught or not is a secondary question. Prejudice gets in its work and things are done that make men hang their heads in shame. In this time of race prejudice, little attention is often paid to the rights of the parties in question. Death is the proper penalty for the rapist but only by law, otherwise it is murder. The taking of human life is a fearful thing even by the law but to take it in passion, without due process of law is a dreadful thing in a free government.

"At Ada there is a white man in jail for the crime of rape, and there has been no effort to lynch. He has the protection of the law and the same protection should be given

to every man till the law takes its course. The only way to take a life is through law and any other way is ruinous to society and government. When you take the life of another you give the privilege to every criminal to hunt you down and kill you. People were not made to burn. We cannot have organized society unless we respect the jurisdiction of the courts.

"You will investigate whether the officers did their duty on this occasion. If an officer was present it was his duty to take the prisoner or to die, if necessary, in his defense; if he didn't do it, he is guilty of great crime. Every man who assisted in it is guilty of murder and should be indicted. If you can find out who took this life, I ask you to vote a true bill against every man who was party to it. The negro would have had a speedy trial and there is no excuse for people taking the law into their own hands."

The court also instructed the jury that they might investigate any other violations of the law.

### THE JURY

E. S. Burney, foreman; Emmett Goodman, Clay Donovan, J. F. Bishop, Elwood Smith, J. D. Bridges, S. J. Craddock, J. B. Boen, J. E. Holloway, A. Johnston, A. B. Stinson, M. C. Hecker, E. W. Auderson, J. A. Bateman, Wm. Davis, W. C. Pinn,

### B.Y.P.U. PICNIC.

The Baptist Young Peoples Union will have a picnic next Wednesday, July 4, and hereby extend an invitation to all the young people of the church. Meet us at the Tabernacle with your basket. Three transfer wagons have been engaged to convey the crowd to the spot where the summer a negro was hanged at Ardmore for committing the crime against one of his own race. It is therefore with much humility that I call you together to investigate this killing without due process of law. Whether the negro was killed or burned alive is of little moment, but one of the most serious problems of our time is taking law into our own hands and doing what the officers and court must do.

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