

LYNCH LAW AT CENTREVILLE.

A Body of Masked Men Take A Prisoner From Jail and Lynch Him.

The trial of Asbury Green, a negro, for a capital offense against Mrs. Mary A. Tolson, of Kent Island, wife of Howard Tolson, on February 28, was the most interesting case of the May term of the Queen Anne's circuit court. The assault was of such a nature that intense feeling was created against the assailant. The circumstances as told by Mrs. Tolson were about as follows:

Mrs. Tolson testified that on February 28 she was living on Kent Island, one mile from Stevensville. Her husband left home for the village about 9 o'clock P. M. and returned at 11 P. M. She was sewing by the cradle of her baby until 5 minutes after 11 o'clock when a rap came on the door. Expecting her husband she inquired, "Howard, is that you?" The voice, which replied seemed familiar and she opened the door a little. The prisoner, Green, rushed upon her and she tried to fight him off, but he threw something over her head and overpowered her, notwithstanding her resistance and screams for help. The witness said she knew Green, and swore positively to his identity. He afterward ran away when he heard the dog barking in the yard. The night was moonlight and the lamp from the dining-room made her recognition complete. When the man ran she went to the door and saw him going toward his home. She fastened the door and took her baby up and crouched down in the corner until Mr. Tolson's return, which was in a few minutes. The witness added that when the man ran he pulled the cover from her face and she saw him, but could scarcely rise. He cursed her and told her he would kill her if she did not stop screaming. He imitated her husband's voice at the door. She told her husband "that a scamp had been there and scared her nearly to death." She would not tell him who it was for fear he would follow and get killed. She told him it was a negro. March 8 she told her mother all the particulars, and that Asbury Green was the man. Green lived within six hundred yards of her house, but she saw him no more. The reason she stated before the justice that it was an attempted assault was because she thought the punishment would be the same, and she did not wish to tell because it was so bad.

The depraved brute succeeded in accomplishing his hellish purpose, and was arrested and lodged in jail on March 13. State's Attorney P. B. Hopper, assisted by Honorable Thomas J. Keating, conducted the prosecution. T. L. W. Harley defended the prisoner. The case was concluded on Saturday. Judges Robinson and Wicker, who had remained on the bench until after the evidence was in, were not present at the close. The jury retired at 5.40 o'clock in the afternoon and returned at 6 o'clock with a verdict of guilty. A large crowd of people followed the prisoner to the jail, but strict order was preserved, and he was safely locked up. Judge Stamp passed sentence on Monday, of twenty-one years in the penitentiary. The only weak point in the prosecution was the identity of the prisoner. This, the court, considered, did not justify a more extreme penalty. As explained by Judge Stamp, Tolson's house faces south; the moon had not been up more than three-quarters of an hour; the dining-room lamp was not in front of the hall door, and consequently when Mrs. Tolson met Green at the door, and seeing him only for an instant, she might have been mistaken.

The alibi set up, too, was regarded by the court as complete, except a short interval, but unfortunately it was at the critical time just when the assault was committed. The judge illustrated the possibility of mistaken identity in the case of Dr. Bram by the conductor at Perryville in the Richards case, and the clock-mender in Kent county, who was sworn to by a woman as her assailant, when he was proved by a number of reputable citizens to have been ten miles distant at work.

The sentence produced intense feeling, and it was feared that some extreme measures would be resorted to to bring the prisoner to what many citizens, viewing the circumstances from their standpoint, considered summary justice; indeed, it was quietly intimated that such would possibly be the result. In view of this fact, the precaution was taken to place an extra guard of twelve men at the jail door, and instead of keeping the prisoner in jail longer than necessary it was ordered that he be taken to the penitentiary on the following morning. This order was not made public, fearing, it is supposed, a popular outbreak. Indignation ran high on Kent Island, and from that point trouble was naturally feared. The busy excitement of Monday had died away, and Centreville at night was wrapped in stillness and the quiet of sleep had settled upon the town until Tuesday morning, when its quiet was disturbed.

About one o'clock a band of masked men variously estimated at from sixty to three hundred assembled at the jail. The guard were utterly helpless, and upon demand being made for entrance Deputy Sheriff Seward presented himself at the door, whereupon a rifle and double-barrel shotgun were placed under his chin and the keys of the jail demanded. Upon refusal to surrender them, he was overpowered and the keys taken from his pocket. The deputy was politely told there was no desire to have trouble, that the negro Green was wanted, and they proposed to have him. At this point Sheriff Turner presented himself at the head of the stairway when he was covered with guns and was ordered back, which order he promptly obeyed. With the keys in hand the doors to the cells were easily opened. When the crowd entered the jail, Hoskins, a negro who had been convicted of violating the local option law, became frightened, fearing that he would be taken through mistake, and readily pointed out the cell of the doomed man, who was at the time, it is supposed, asleep, having on only his under clothing. The men placed a long rope around the neck of their victim, and with yells and the firing of pistols dragged him through the streets toward the wharf near the town. It is said to be doubtful that the man was ever allowed to attain an upright position after his captors got hold of him, but was literally dragged to death, for it is supposed that he was dead before the peach tree was reached upon which he was hung. The tree was along the road in the orchard of Mr. R. Hopper Smith, not 75 yards from a residence in the town.

It is unknown where the men came from but many are supposed to have come by carriages, on horseback and in boats; it is estimated that fully fifty boats of all descriptions were anchored at Centreville in Corlica river. The leader of the band was a man of over six feet tall and wore an old-fashioned Greely white hat. After the lynching the men orderly disbanded, and only the citizens in the immediate vicinity of the jail were aware of the tragic occurrence until Tuesday morning, when excitement ran high. It was at first supposed that the negro had been shot, but an examination gave no evidence of it. So far as learned the man made no confession of

his guilt, and it is scarcely probable that his executioners gave him an opportunity.

Excitement in Centreville has been at fever heat since the occurrence. The above facts are believed to be strictly correct, and were learned from a gentleman who was in a position to know accurately.

LATER.—A dispatch from Centreville at a late hour Tuesday night, stated that two hundred negroes were talking of avenging the lynching of Green. They had no leaders, but were banding together and threatened mischief. At ten o'clock P. M. they were collecting in crowds on the streets, and it was stated that the citizens were apprehensive of mob violence, and one hundred white citizens were patrolling the streets. A telephone message to the TRANSCRIPT stated that the excitement had gradually subsided, and no more trouble were entertained at a late hour yesterday.

The remains of Green were kept at the jail all of Tuesday. It was intended by Sheriff Turner to send the remains to the dead man's relatives, but on account of the threatening attitude assumed by the negroes, no one could be found who would undertake the work of carrying the remains to the proposed place of interment on Kent Island. They were, however, afterward removed to his home.

A BILL has been passed in the Delaware House of Representatives by a vote of 14 to 4, providing for submitting the question of liquor license or no liquor license to the voters by counties at the next general election.

Political Notice.

HENRY C. CHASE respectfully announces that he is a candidate for the office of Clerk of the Circuit Court for Kent county, subject to the decision of the Democratic County Convention.

FESTIVAL AND SUPPER.

The ladies of the M. E. Church at Betterton will hold a STRAWBERRY and ICE CREAM FESTIVAL and SHAB SUPPER at the church on Thursday, Friday and Saturday Evenings, May 21, 22 and 23, 1891. Proceeds for benefit of church. M-21.

THE EVENT OF THE SEASON!

A STRAWBERRY AND ICE CREAM FESTIVAL, under the management of the Christian Endeavor Society of Kennedyville M. P. Church, will be held at Kennedyville on Thursday, Friday and Saturday Evenings, June 18, 19, and 20, 1891. Proceeds for the improvement of the parish. M-21.

PLANTS FOR SALE:

SWEET POTATO, CABBAGE, TOMATO and 2000 PLANTS, for sale in any quantity by JOHN WEIST, MILLINGTON, MD.

NOTICE.

DR. GENESE will attend at Betterton every Saturday for all duties pertaining to dentistry. March 30, 1891. DR. GENESE.

A Grand Entertainment

BY THE YOUNG LADIES OF THE M. E. CHURCH OF BETTERTON.

will be held in the building adjoining the justice office, on

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1891,

MUSIC, DIALOGUES AND TABLEAU

will compose the programme for the evening.

Proceeds for the benefit of the church. Admission 25 and 15 cents. Entertainment to commence at 8 o'clock. M.

JOHN W. BORDLEY,

—WITH—

New York Clothing House

102 & 104 E. Baltimore St., Balto., Md.

HAVING connected myself as salesman with this one of the largest and most reliable clothing houses of the South, I would be glad to show our immense

Assortment of Men's and Boys' Suits

to my many friends of Kent. Assortment, cheapness and quality are our principal attractions.

Respectfully,
M. J. JOHN W. BORDLEY.

Farmers, Notice.

In Stock At Stam's Drug Store,

Lubricating Oils.

HARVESTER,
WEST VIRGINIA,
LARD, CASTOR,
CASTORINE,
ENGINE,
LARDINE.

BEST QUALITY,

Lowest Prices, Largest Stock.

—Also—
LINSEED OIL, TURPENTINE,
NEAD'S FOOT OIL, HARNESS OIL.

FOR SALE AT
STAM'S DRUG STORE.

It Leads Them All!

The Whately Harvesters

And Mowing Machines.

For lightness of draft, durability and simplicity, are acknowledged to be the best machines offered to the Kent county farmer. The coming crop promises to be the heaviest for years past. Get ready for it and save every head of grain by harvesting with a new Whately Open-end binder.

JOHN C. P. McCLOUD, Agent,
May 7—3m. CHESTERTOWN, MD.

INSURANCE AGENCY.

HAVING made arrangements with some of the Largest and most Reliable Insurance Companies represented in America, I have opened a General Insurance Agency, and am prepared to issue both FIRE and LIFE policies in some of the strongest companies in the country.

JOHN B. FRANKLIN,
Office at Residence on Main St.,
April 9-17. Chestertown, Md.

STOCK DEALER.

Having discontinued farming, I am now engaged in the purchase and sale of SHEEP, MILCH COWS and CALVES. I give the selection of Sheep from the city pens my personal supervision, and get the best.

THOS. J. F. SMITH,
MILLINGTON, MD.