

HENSON LYNCHED.

HE IS SUMMARILY TAKEN FROM JAIL
AND HANGED.

Masked Men Do the Work—The Doomed man Appeals for Mercy, But as He showed none Himself He is Hurried to a Tree—The Work Done at Midnight Quietly, Surely and Swiftly—No Excitement Afterwards—Full Details.

Jacob Henson, Jr., confined in the jail here for the murder of Daniel F. Shea, between the hours of 12 and 1 o'clock Monday night last was taken from the jail by persons unknown and hanged to a tree near the residence of Hon. Reuben D. Johnson, on Merrick Avenue.

It had been more than hinted that there would be no miscarriage of justice in Henson's case. The entire community was of the opinion that he richly deserved the extreme penalty of the law, and the recent attempt on the part of the prisoner's friends to reach a commutation of his sentence to imprisonment for life on the ground that he was weak-minded and not morally responsible for the act, only increased the excitement and we have the end—naturally enough under the circumstances.

The affair was carried through with dispatch, and few of the citizens of the town knew of the occurrence until Tuesday morning. It is generally believed that the lynching party, all of whom wore masks, and were well armed, were citizens of Ellicott City. Since the question of Henson's sanity has been raised several physicians have visited the jail and examined the prisoner. On Monday another delegation, consisting of Drs. L. G. Smart, of the Sheppard Asylum; Chas. G. Hill, of Mount Hope, and R. W. Dashiell and William Lee, members of the State Lunacy Commission, were sent here by Governor Brown to examine the prisoner. They made a report of their examination to the Governor Tuesday to the effect that Henson was responsible. The citizens, however, could not foresee this, and they feared that the execution would not take place at the appointed time, and the lynchers, it is supposed, came to the conclusion that they would take time by the forelock, and make sure that Henson suffered death.

The plans were laid in the quietest manner, and when the people of Ellicott City went to their repose on Monday night, they little realized that Henson would be a dead man before daylight. Not the slightest apprehension was felt at the jail, which was in charge of Deputy Warden Robert H. Holtman, in the absence of Warden John J. Lilly, who was at Wheeling, W. Va., attending a court case. No death watch guarded Henson, and the only near companion he had was William Wicks, another colored man, who is waiting trial for alleged mayhem.

THE JAIL SURROUNDED.

Henson occupied the first cell on the right side of the corridor, near the main door, while Wicks had the freedom of the corridor. Adjoining the jail proper is the warden's residence, and the only occupants in it Tuesday morning when the lynchers put in their appearance were Deputy Warden Holtman and his wife, Mrs. Sallie Lilly, his mother-in-law, and Mrs. Jennie Donnelly, his sister-in-law. Deputy Holtman went to bed after ten o'clock, and was not aware of the presence of the lynching party until his wife awoke him and told him there were some men in the back yard. Deputy Holtman rushed to a door leading to a portico that overlooks the back door, and just as he stepped on the portico he saw a masked man standing below with a shotgun leveled at his head. Near him stood another masked man armed in a similar manner. The man with the raised weapon shouted: "— — —, get inside that door, or I'll make mincemeat of you." Deputy Holt-

man then realized the purpose of the men, and, jumping inside the door, told his wife to hide the keys of the cell, and at the same time he dashed down the back staircase, so he could reach the jail corridor. Just as he reached the bottom of the steps another shotgun was thrust in his face, and the masked man behind it hissed out: "Stay up there or I'll murder you." This man's companion was armed with an ax. Deputy Holtman had been caught in a trap, and there was nothing left for him to do except remain quietly in his room, as he could neither make his escape nor give an alarm.

DRAGGED FROM HIS CELL.

To reach the jail corridor from the house the lynchers had to pass a heavy iron door, but this was soon opened after the lock had been knocked off with an ax. Beyond this was a frail wooden door, which soon gave away to the lynchers. Wicks, who had been in the corridor of the jail, heard the men approaching, and became so badly frightened that he crept in a cell that had been fitted up as a library, and hid himself under some furniture. From his room Deputy Holtman heard the determined men knock the lock off the cell occupied by Henson, and heard the poor, trembling wretch yell: "Lord, have mercy upon me." This he repeated three times, while the men were getting him into a shirt and a pair of trousers, and incidentally placing a rope of half inch hemp around his neck, which was tied in a regular hangman's noose. This operation took but a few minutes, and, without further ceremony, Henson was dragged, groaning and appealing for mercy, through the jail corridor, then through the house, and out into the back yard. In the meantime consternation was reigning on the second floor of the household, where Deputy Holtman and the ladies of the house were. The ladies had become greatly agitated, and their fear became more intense when they thought that the lynchers would execute Henson in the yard of the house. They screamed to the lynchers, who appeared to be about twenty in number, to take the man away, and the lynchers lost no time in doing so. When Henson was taken from his cell he was dressed in a cotton shirt, a pair of trousers and a pair of shoes. Just beyond the yard of the house is a field that lies at the foot of the Patasco Institute, now conducted as a summer boarding-house. The incline here is very steep, and Henson was dragged up this slope with a rope around his neck. At the brow of the hill he lost one of his shoes, which was found some time after the lynching had been discovered. Henson must have also fallen at the spot, for there was a trace of blood, evidently caused by a running race on the wretch's leg. The lynchers made up their minds that they would not be disturbed in their work, and they kept Henson moving until they had reached a point on Merrick's lane, about a quarter of a mile from the jail, and at a point that commands a splendid view of the valley below. The party selected for a gallows a dogwood tree, under which trailed sweet-smelling honeysuckles, and which is located in the center of a space of ground occupied by four very handsome dwelling houses. To the right is the home of Mr. Reuben B. Johnson, a prominent lawyer of the county; on the left is the home of Mr. Walter S. Hinmon; to the rear that of Mr. George Schilling, and in front the domicile of Mrs. Reus. When the tree was reached it is likely that Henson's arms and legs were bound with cords, as the ground gives evidences that

A TERRIFIC STRUGGLE TOOK PLACE.

The honeysuckle was ground to a pulp, and the ground was dotted with heavy foot prints. Henson was strung to a limb not over seven feet from the ground, and the end of the rope tied to the trunk of the tree. The lynchers did not mutilate the body in any way, but left a placard pinned to the breast of the dead man, with the writing next to the shirt. An exact copy of the placard is as follows:

Ellicott City, May 27.

Henson Hung.

Gov. Brown forced the law-abiding citizens to carry out the order of our court. We will uphold our Court and Judges. We respect them. Brown can't rule our court.

WHITE CAPS.

As soon as the lynchers had gotten clear of the jail, Deputy Holtman lost no time in communicating the news to Chief James E. Vansant, of the local police force. This was just one o'clock in the morning. Chief Vansant and Deputy Holtman then started to look for the body, and, by the barking of the dogs, were led in the direction of Merrick's lane, where, at exactly 1.50 o'clock in the morning, the two officials came upon the lifeless body of Henson dangling from the dogwood tree. On their way they found one of Henson's shoes, and two masks, that were made of some light fabric, like muslin. Henson's feet were within a short distance of the ground, and he was not only dead, but his body was cold and rigid. Chief Vansant immediately went back to the town, and summoned a jury of inquest, with Gerhard Butke as foreman. In the dim starlight the jury walked out the lonely country road. They made a weird spectacle viewing the remains under such conditions. The body was cut down, placed in a pine coffin, and driven to the jail, while the jury went to their respective homes, to meet again at nine o'clock in the morning.

At eight o'clock Tuesday morning Dr. W. E. Hodges held a post-mortem examination, and reported to Coroner B. H. Wallenhorst that Henson's neck had not been broken, but that he had

DIED FROM STRANGULATION.

When the jury met they rendered a verdict that Henson had come to his death from the hands of parties unknown.

Following were the jury: Gerhard Butke, foreman; James F. Heavey, Chas. A. Frey, John J. Lankford, Henry Talbott, Thomas Brian, James F. Bierly, Wm. G. Sykes, Albert Kern, Christian Eckert, Martin L. Rodey and Charles H. Meads:

Witnesses: Dr. Wm. E. Hodges, Robt. H. Holtman, Wm. Wicks (colored), Joe Generous (colored), Mrs. Robt. H. Holtman, Mrs. John Lilly, Michael Donnelly, James E. Vansant.

Hardly had the jury disbanded before a mob of curious people forced their way into the corridor of the jail, where the body lay, and gazed at it with much interest. Around the dead man's neck was a scapula, and at his feet were some wild flowers that some one had cast into the rough coffin. A few feet away was the cell he had been taken from a few hours before, and on a bench outside of it lay a prayer book and some other religious work he had been reading. In the crowd that came to see the body were some well-dressed women, and after they had gratified their morbid curiosity, some of them loitered in the corridor of the jail, not five feet away from the coffin, and discussed all manner of up-to-date topics. What disposition could be made of the body puzzled Chief Vansant. Jacob Henson, the father of the dead man, who lives on the outskirts of the town, said he did not want to have anything to do with it, but later in the day the chief learned that David Henson, a brother of the dead man, living in Baltimore, would receive the remains. Chief Vansant then telegraphed to Rebecca Ireland, No. 202 West Mulberry street, who is an aunt of David Henson, asking her if he should ship the remains to the above address.

Mrs. Ireland replied to Mr. Vansant's message by saying that she would not receive the body. She said she had intended to give Henson decent burial had he been executed according to law, but that she did not propose to bury him after he had been lynched.

The friends refusing to have anything to do with the body the authorities were compelled to remain in charge. After being refused permission at four different burial-places to bury the remains, Sheriff Flower advised that they be taken to a colored grave-yard on his farm, which is eight miles from Ellicott City, in the Third district. Two of the burial places applied for belonged to the colored people.

The lynching did not cause any great amount of excitement in Ellicott City, and many of the people seem to have anticipated such an occurrence. Preparations had been made to hang Henson on June 7, and a scaffold had been constructed by Mr. Fred Wayland, who lives a few miles from Ellicott City, but had not been taken to the jail. A great many persons visited the place of the lynching, and cut away portions of the

dogwood tree as mementoes.

The first man the lynchers held up was an old colored individual who revels in the name of "Joe" Generous. "Joe" slept in a shop near the jail, and, hearing the noise, put his head out of the window to see what it was all about. He was immediately covered with a shotgun, and, when the lynchers went away, he took to drowning his fright with "firewater."

The lynching of Henson is the second affair of the kind that has occurred at Ellicott City. The first occurred twelve years ago, when an armed mob took Richard Snowden, colored, from the jail and lynched him near the "Cat Rocks," which spot is across the big ravine and in a direct line west from the place where Henson was hanged to the dogwood tree. Snowden was charged with assaulting a colored girl.

Henson was convicted of the murder of Daniel F. Shea, who kept a small store on East Main street, wherein he was killed on the nineteenth of February. It was a brutal killing and Mr. Shea was one of the last of men deserving such a fate. Henson chopped him to death with a hatchet the post-mortem examination revealing twenty odd cuts on his head. The memory of the bloody deed lingering in the minds of the people there has been little disapprobation expressed against the lynching.