

Whitewash for Maryland's Lynch Town, Salisbury

Four months after an undisguised mob in Salisbury, Maryland's Lynch Town, took an alleged murderer from a hospital, and, in the presence of hundreds, hanged him in front of the courthouse, dragged his body through the public streets, publicly burned it and mutilated it, a grand jury declared after four days of purported investigation and deliberation:

"We find there is absolutely no evidence that can remotely connect anyone with the instigation or perpetration of the murder."

It is to be noted, of course, that this grand jury terms a lynching a murder, and talks of "PERPETRATION" instead of "PARTICIPATION."

What Salisbury and Maryland suffer from in this case is not due to lack of witnesses, for 120 of them filed before the grand jury during the four days it sat. Also there testified two detectives from Baltimore who made an investigation of the lynching and State's Attorney General William Preston Lane who for three months has investigated the case representing Governor Ritchie.

Back in 1911, Archer Owens, black detective, unaided, investigated a lynching at Fairfield, Maryland, acting for Governor Phillips Lee Goldsborough. He secured enough evidence to convict the lynchers and send them to prison.

Maryland needs a state anti-lynching law and a stern governor, declares the Baltimore morning *Sun*. Perhaps it does. However, we can punish lawless criminals without any new laws, provided the governor will enforce the laws which we have, and provided there are at least 23 American citizens on the backward and barbarous Eastern Shore of this state who have decency enough to respect the laws they have made themselves.

Little comfort can be drawn from the fact that the Chesapeake Bay separates the Lynching Shore of Maryland from its more civilized Western part.

What we need immediately from the next legislature is, to be sure, a state anti-mob law; but what we must have ultimately is a bridge across the Bay so that missionaries may carry sweetness and light to the benighted and ignorant heathen in the Salisbury area.